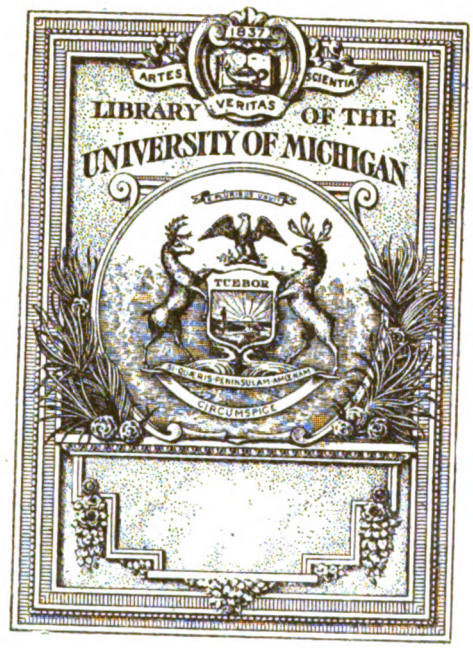
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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

A ROMANCE.

By JOHN BUCHAN,

Author of 'Sir Quixote;' 'Scholar Gipsies;' 'Grey Weather,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE ADVENTURE WHICH BEFELL ME IN THE WOOD OF DAWYCK.

I HAVE taken in hand to write this, the history of my life, not without much misgiving of heart; for my memory at the best is a bad one, and of many things I have no clear remembrance; and the making of tales is an art unknown to me, so he who may read must not look for any great skill in the setting-down. Yet I am emboldened to the work, for my life has been lived in stirring times and amid many strange scenes which may not wholly lack interest for those who live in quieter days. And, above all, I am desirous that those of my family should read of my life, and learn the qualities, both good and bad, which run in the race, and so the better be able to resist the evil and do the good.

I will begin my tale with a certain June morning in the year 1678, when I, scarcely turned twelve years, set out from the house of Barns to the fishing in the Tweed. I had escaped the watchful care of my tutor, Master Robert Porter, the curate of Lyne, who vexed my soul thrice a week with Cæsar and Cicero. I had no ill-will to the Latin, for I relished the battles in Cæsar well enough, and had some liking for poetry; but when I made a slip in gram mar he would bring his great hand over my ears in a way which would make them tingle for hours. And all this, mind you, with the sun coming in at the window, and whaups whistling over the fields, and the great fish splashing in the river. On this morning I had escaped by hiding in the cheese-closet; then I had fetched my rod from the stable loft, and borrowed tackle from Davie Lithgow, the stableman; and now I was creeping through the hazel-bushes, casting every now and then a glance back at the house, where the huge figure of my teacher was looking for me disconsolately in every corner.

The year had been dry and sultry; and this day was warmer than any I remembered. The grass in the meadow was browned and crackling, all the foxgloves hung their bells with weariness, and the waters were shrunken in their beds. The mill-lade which drives Manor mill had not a drop in it, and the small trout were gasping in the shallow pool, which in our usual weather was five feet deep. The cattle were 'stertling,' as we called it in the country-side—that is, the sun was burning their backs—and, rushing with tails erect, they sought coolness from end to end of the field. The Tweed was very low and clear. Small hope, I thought, for my fishing; I might as well have stayed with Master Porter and been thrashed, for I will have to stay out all day and go supperless at night.

I took my way up the river past the green slopes of Haswellsykes to the wood of Dawyck, for I knew well that there, if anywhere, the fish would take in the shady, black pools. The place was four weary miles off, and the day was growing hotter with each passing hour; so I stripped off my coat and hid it in a hole among whins and stones. 'When I come home again,' I said, 'I will recover it.' Another half-mile, and I had off my shoes and stockings and concealed them in a like place; so soon I plodded along with no other clothes on my body than shirt and ragged breeches.

In time I came to the great forest which stretches up the Tweed nigh to Drummelzier, the greatest

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wood in our parts, unless it be Glentress, on the east side of Peebles. The trees were hazels and birches in the main, with a few rowans, and on the slopes of the hill a congregation of desolate pines. Nearer the house of Dawyck were beeches and oaks and the deeper shade; and it was thither I went. The top of my rod struck against the boughs, and I had some labour in steering a safe course between the Scylla of the trees and the Charybdis of the long brackens; for the rod was in two parts spliced together, and as I had little skill in splicing, Davie had done the thing for me before I started. Twice I roused a cock of the woods, which went screaming through the shadow. Herons from the great heronry at the other end were standing in nigh every pool, for the hot weather was a godsend to them; and the trout fared ill when the long, thief-like bills flashed through the clear water. Now and then a shy deer leaped from the ground and sped up the hill. The desire of the chase was hot upon me when, after an hour's rough scramble, I came to the spot where I hoped for fish.

A stretch of green turf, shaded on all sides by high beeches, sloped down to the stream-side. The sun made a shining pathway down the middle, but the edges were in blackest shadow. At the foot a lone gnarled alder hung over the water, sending its long arms far over the river nigh to the farther side. Here the Tweed was still and sunless, showing a level of placid black water, flecked in places with stray shafts of light. I prepared my tackle on the grass, making a casting-line of fine horse-hair which I had plucked from the tail of our own gray gelding. I had no such fine hooks as folk nowadays bring from Edinburgh, sharpened and barbed ready to their hand, but rough, home-made ones, which Tam Todd, the land-grieve, had fashioned out of old needles. My line was of thin, stout whipcord, to which I had made the casting firm with a knot of my own invention. I had out my bag of worms, and choosing a fine red one, made it fast on the hook. Then I crept gently to the alder, and climbed on the branch which hung far out over the stream. Here I sat like an owl in the shade, and dropped my line in the pool below me, where it caught a glint of the sun and looked like a shining cord let down, like Jacob's ladder, from heaven to the darkness of earth.

I had not sat many minutes before my rod was wrenched violently downwards, then athwart the stream, nearly swinging me from my perch. 'I have got a monstrous trout,' I thought, and with a fluttering heart stood up on the branch to be the more ready for the struggle. He ran up the water and down; then far below the tree-roots, whence I had much difficulty in forcing him; then he thought to break my line by rapid jerks, but he did not know the strength of my horse-hair. By-and-by he grew wearied, and I landed him comfortably on a spit of land—a great red-spotted fellow with a black back. I made sure that he was two pounds weight, if he was an ounce.

I hid him in a cool bed of leaves and rushes on the bank, and crawled back to my seat on the tree. I baited my hook as before, and dropped it in, and then leaned back lazily on the branches behind to meditate on the pleasantness of fishing and the hatefulness of Master Porter's teaching. In my shadowed place all was cool and fresh as a May morning, but beyond, in the gleam of the sun, I could see birds hopping sleepily on the trees, and the shrivelled, dun look of the grass. A faint humming of bees reached me, and the flash of a white butterfly shot now and then like a star from the sunlight to the darkness, and back again to the sunlight.

It was a lovely summer day, though too warm for our sober country, and as I sat I thought of the lands I had read and heard of, where it was always fiercely hot, and great fruits were to be had for the pulling. I thought of the oranges and olives and what not, and great silver and golden fishes with sparkling scales; and as I thought of them I began to loathe hazel-nuts and rowans and whortleberries, and the homely trout which are all that is to be had in this land of ours. Then I thought of Barns and my kinsfolk, and all the tales of my forebears, and I loved again the old silent valley of Tweed, for a gallant tale is worth many fruits and fishes. Then, as the day brightened, my dreams grew accordingly. I came of a great old house; I too would ride to the wars, to the Low Countries, to Sweden, and I would do great deeds like the men in Virgil. And then I wished I had lived in Roman times. Ah! these were the days, when all the good things of life fell to brave men, and there was no other trade to be compared to war. Then I reflected that they had no fishing, for I had come on nothing as yet in my studies about fish and the catching of them. And so, like the boy I was, I dreamed on, and my thoughts chased each other in a dance in my brain, and I fell fast asleep.

I wakened with a desperate shudder and found myself floundering in seven feet of water. My eyes were still heavy with sleep, and I swallowed great gulps of the river as I sank. In a second I came to the surface, and with a few strokes I was at the side, for I had early learned to swim. Stupid and angry, I scrambled up the bank to the green glade. Here a first surprise befell me. It was late afternoon; the sun had travelled three-fourths of the sky; it would be near five o'clock. What a great fool I had been to fall asleep and lose a day's fishing! I found my rod moored to the side with the line and half of the horse-hair; some huge fish had taken the hook. Then I looked around me to the water and the trees and the green sward, and surprise the second befell me; for there, not twelve paces from me, stood a little girl, watching me with every appearance of terror.

She was about two years younger than myself, I fancied. Her dress was some rich white stuff which looked eerie in the shade of the beeches, and her long hair fell over her shoulders in plentiful

curls. She had wide, frightened, blue eyes and a delicately-featured face; and as for the rest, I know not how to describe her, so I will not try. I, with no more manners than a dog, stood staring at her, wholly forgetful of the appearance I must present, without shoes and stockings, coat or waistcoat, and dripping with Tweed water. She spoke first, in a soft, southern tone, which I, accustomed only to the broad Scotch of Jean Morran, who had been my nurse, fell in love with at once. Her whole face was filled with the extremest terror.

'Oh sir, be you the water-kelpie?' she asked.

I could have laughed at her fright, though I must have been like enough to some evil spirit; but I answered her with my best gravity.

'No, I am no kelpie; but I had gone to sleep and fell into the stream. My coat and shoes are in a hole two miles down, and my name is John Burnet —of Barns.' All this I said in one breath, being anxious to right myself in her eyes; also with some pride in the last words.

It was pretty to see how recognition chased the fear from her face. 'I know you,' she said; 'I have heard of you. But what do you in the Dragon's Hole, sir? This is my place. The dragon will get you, without a doubt.'

At this I took off my bonnet and made my best bow. 'And who are you, pray, and what story is this of dragons? I have been here scores of times, and never have I seen or heard of them.' This with the mock-importance of a boy.

'Oh, I am Marjory,' she said—'Marjory Veitch, and I live at the great house in the wood, and all this place is my father's and mine. And this is my dragon's den;' and straightway she wandered into a long tale of Fair Margot and the Seven Maidens, how Margot wed the dragon and he turned forthwith into a prince, and I know not what else. 'But no harm can come to me, for look, I have the charm;' and she showed me a black stone in a silver locket. 'My nurse, Alison, gave it me. She had it from a beautiful fairy who came with it to my cradle when I was born.'

'Who told you all this?' I asked in wonder, for this girl seemed to carry all the wisdom of the ages in her head.

'Alison, and my father, and my brother Michael, and old Adam Noble, and a great many more'—— Then she broke off. 'My mother is gone. The fairies came for her.'

Then I remembered the story of the young English mistress of Dawyck who had died before she had been two years in our country. And this child, with her fairy learning, was her daughter.

Now, I know not what took me—for I had ever been shy of folk, and above all of womankind—but here I found my tongue, and talked to my new companion in a way which I could not sufficiently admire. There, in the bright sun-setting, I launched into the most miraculous account of my adventures of that day, in which dragons and witches were simply the commonest portents. And she listened, and thanked me ever so prettily when I had done. Then she would enlighten my ignorance; so I heard of the Red Etin of Ireland, and the Wolf of Brakelin, and the Seven Bold Brothers. Then I showed her nests, and gave her small blue eggs to take home, and pulled great foxgloves for her, and made coronets of fern. We played at hide-and-go-seek among the beeches, and ran races, and fought visionary dragons. Then the sun went down over the trees, and she declared it was time to be going home. So I got my solitary fish from its bed of rushes and made her a present of it. She was pleased beyond measure, though she cried out at my hardness in taking its life.

So it came to pass that Mistress Marjory Veitch of Dawyck went home hugging a great two-pound trout, and I went off to Barns heedless of Master Porter and his heavy hand; and, arriving late, escaped a thrashing, and made a good meal of the remnants of supper.

CHAPTER II.—THE HOUSE OF BARNS.

THE house of Barns stands on a green knoll above the Tweed, half-way between the village of Stobo and the town of Peebles. Tweed here is no great rolling river, but a shallow, prattling stream; and just below the house it winds around a small islet, where I loved to go and fish. For it was an adventure to reach the place, since a treacherous pool lay not a yard below it. The dwelling was white and square, with a beacon-tower on the top, which once flashed the light from Neidpath to Drochil when the English came over the border. It had not been used for half a century, but a brasier still stood there, and a pile of rotten logs, grim mementoes of older feuds. This also was a haunt of mine, for jackdaws and owls built in the corners, and it was choice fun of a spring morning to search for eggs at the risk of my worthless life. The parks around stretched to Manor village on the one side, and nigh to the foot of the Lyne Water on the other. Manor Water as far as Posso belonged to us, and many a rare creel have I had out of its pleasant reaches. Behind rose the long, heathery hill of the Scrape, which is so great a hill that, while one side looks down on us, another overhangs the wood of Dawyck. Beyond that again Dollar Law and the wild fells which give birth to the Tweed, the Yarrow, and the Annan.

Within the house, by the great hall-fire, my father, William Burnet, spent his days. I mind well his great figure in the arm-chair, a mere wreck of a man, but great in his very ruin. He wore a hat, though he seldom went out, to mind him of the old days when he was so busy at hunting and harrying that he had never his head uncovered. His beard was streaked with gray, and his long nose, with a break in the middle (which is a mark

of our family), and bushy eyebrows gave him a fearsome look to a chance stranger. In his young days he had been extraordinarily handsome and active, and, if all tales be true, no better than he should have been. He was feared in those days for his great skill in night-expeditions—so much so that he won the name of 'the Howlet,' which never left him. These were the high days of our family, for my father was wont to ride to the Weaponshow with seven horsemen behind him; now we could scarce manage four. But in one of his night-rides his good-fortune failed him; for, being after no good on the hills above Megget one dark wintry night, he fell over the Bitch Craig, horse and all; and though he escaped with his life, he was lamed in both legs and condemned to the house for the rest of his days. Of a summer night he would come out to the lawn with two mighty sticks to support him, and looking to the Manor Water hills, would shake his fist at them as old enemies. In his later days he took kindly to theology and learning, both of which, in the person of Master Porter, dined at his table every day. I know not how my father, who was a man of much penetration, could have been deceived by this man, who had as much religion as an ox. As for learning, he had some ragtag scraps of Latin which were visited on me for my sins; but in eating he had no rival, and would consume beef and pastry and ale like a famished army. He preached every Sabbath in the little kirk of Lyne, below the Roman camp, and a woful service it was. I went regularly, by my father's orders, but I was the only one from the household of Barns. I fear that not even my attendance at his church brought me Master Porter's love; for I had acquired nearly as much Latin as he possessed himself, and vexed his spirit at lesson-hours with unanswerable questions. At other times, too, I would rouse him to the wildest anger by singing a profane song of my own making:

> O ken ye his Reverence Minister Tam,
> Wi' a heid like a stot and a face like a ram?

To me my father was more than kind. He was never tired of making plans for my future. 'John,' he would say, 'you shall go to Glasgow College; for you have the makings of a scholar in you. Ay, and we'll make you a soldier, John; and a good, honest gentleman to fight for your king, as your forebears did before you.' (This was scarcely true, for there never yet was a Burnet who fought in the first instance for anything but his own hand.) Then he would be anxious about my martial training, and get down the foils to teach me a lesson. From this he would pass to tales of his own deeds, till the past would live before him, and his eye would glow with its old fire. Then he would forget his condition, and seek to show me how some parry was effected. There was but one result—his poor, weak legs would give way beneath him. Then I had to carry him to his bed swearing deeply at his infirmities and lamenting the changes of life.

In those days the Burnets were a poor family—poor and proud. My grandfather had added much to the lands by rapine and extortion—ill-gotten gains which could not last. He had been a man of violent nature, famed over all the south for his feats of horsemanship and swordsmanship. He died suddenly, of over-drinking, at the age of fifty-five, and now lies at the kirk of Lyne, beneath an effigy representing the angel Gabriel coming for his soul. The folk of the place seldom spoke of him, though my father upheld him as a man of true spirit who had an eye to the improvement of his house. Of the family before him I had the history at my finger-ends. This was a subject of which my father never tired; for he held that the genealogy of the Burnets was a thing of vastly greater importance than that of the kings of Rome or Judah. From the old days when we held Burnetland, in the parish of Broughton, and called ourselves of that Ilk, I had the unbroken history of the family in my memory. Ay, and also of the great house of Traquair, for my mother had been a Stewart; and, as my father often said, this was the only family in the country-side which could hope to rival us in antiquity or valour.

My father's brother Gilbert had married the heiress of a westland family, and with her had got the lands of Eaglesham, about the headwaters of the Cart. His son Gilbert, my cousin, was a tall lad some four years my senior, who on several occasions rode to visit us at Barns. He was of a handsome, soldierly appearance, and looked for an early commission in a Scots company. At first I admired him mightily, for he was skilful at all sports, rode like a moss-trooper, and could use his sword in an incomparable fashion. My father could never abide him, for he could not cease to tell of his own prowess, and my father was used to say that he loved no virtue better than modesty. Also, he angered every servant about the place by his hectoring, and one day so offended old Tam Todd that he flung a bucket at him, and threatened to duck him in the Tweed—which he doubtless would have done, old as he was, for he was a very Hercules of a man. This presented a nice problem to all concerned, and I know not which was the more put out, Tam or my father. Finally, it ended in the latter reading Gilbert a long and severe lecture, and then bidding Tam ask his pardon, seeing that the dignity of the family had to be sustained at any cost.

One other kinsman, though in a distant way, I must not omit to mention, for the day came when every man of our name felt proud to claim the kinship. This was Gilbert Burnet, of Edinburgh, afterwards Divinity Professor in Glasgow, Bishop of Salisbury, and the author of the famous *Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Times*. I met him often in after-days, and once, in London, he had me to his house and entertained me during my stay. Of him I shall have to tell hereafter, but now he was no more than a name to me—a name which my

father was fond of repeating when he wished to recall me to gravity.

Tam Todd, my father's grieve, who managed the lands about the house, deserves more than a passing word. He was about sixty years of age, stooped in the back, but had long arms and the strength of a giant. At one time he had fought for Gustavus, and might have risen high in the ranks had not a desperate desire to see his native land come upon him and driven him to slip off one night and take ship for Leith. He had come to Peebles, where my father met him, and, admiring his goodly stature, took him into his service, in which Tam soon became as expert at the breeding of sheep as ever he had been at the handling of a pike or musket. He was the best story-teller and the cunningest fisher in the place, full of quaint foreign words, French and Swedish and High Dutch, for the army of Gustavus had been made up of the riddlings of Europe. From him I learned to fence with the rapier, and a past-master he was, for my father told how, in his best days, he could never so much as look at Tam. *Bon pied, bon œil,* was ever his watchword, and I have proved it a good one; for, short though it be, if a man but follow it he may fear nothing. Also he taught me a thing which has been most useful to me, and which I will speak of again—the art of using the broadsword or claymore, as the wild Highlanders call it. My school was on the strip of green grass beside the Tweed, and there I have had many a tough encounter in the long summer nights. He made me stand with my back to the deep pool, that I might fear to step back; and thus I learned to keep my ground, a thing which he held to be of the essence of swordsmanship.

My nurse, Jean Morran, was the only woman body about the place. She and Tam did the cooking between them, for that worthy had learned the art gastronomical from a Frenchman whose life he saved, and who in gratitude taught him many excellent secrets for dishes, and stole ten crowns. She had minded me, and mended my clothes, and seen to my behaviour ever since my mother died of a fever when I was scarce two years old. Of my mother I remember nothing; but, if one may judge from my father's long grief and her portrait in the dining-hall, she had been a good and a gentle as well as a most beautiful woman. Jean, with her uncouth tongue and stern face, is still a clear figure in my memory. She was a kind nurse in the main, and if her temper was doubtful from many sore trials, her cakes and sugar were excellent salves to my wronged heart. She was above all things a famous housewife, keeping the place spotless and clean, so that when one entered the house of Barns there was always something fresh and cool in the very air.

But here I am at the end of my little gallery, for the place was bare of folk and the life a lonely one. Here I grew up amid the woods and hills and the clear air, with a great zest for all the little excellences of my lot, and a tolerance of its drawbacks. By the time I had come to sixteen years I had swum in every pool in the Tweed for miles up and down, climbed every hill, fished in every burn, and ridden and fallen from every horse in my father's stable. I had been as far west as Tinto Hill and as far south as the Loch o' the Lowes. Nay, I had once been taken to Edinburgh in company with Tam, who bought me a noble fishing-rod, and showed me all the wondrous things to be seen. A band of soldiers passed down the High Street from the castle with a great clanking and jingling, and I saw my guide straighten up his back and keep time with his feet to their tread. All the way home, as I sat before him on the broad back of Maisie, he told me tales of his campaigns, some of them none too fit for a boy's ear; but he was carried away, and knew not what he was saying. This first put a taste for the profession of arms into my mind, which was assiduously fostered by my fencing lessons and the many martial tales I read. I found among my father's books the Chronicles of Froissart and a History of the Norman kings, both in the English, which I devoured by night and day. Then I had Tacitus and Livy, and in my fourteenth year I began the study of Greek with a master at Peebles. So that soon I had read most of the *Iliad* and all the *Odyssey*, and would go about repeating the long swinging lines. I think that story of the man who at the siege of some French town shouted a Homeric battle-piece most likely to be true, for with me the Greek had a like effect, and made me tramp many miles over the hills or ride the horses more hard than my father permitted.

Often I would take my books and go into the heart of the hills for days and nights. This my father scarce liked, but he never hindered me. It was glorious to kindle your fire in the neuk of a glen, broil your trout, and make your supper under the vault of the pure sky; sweet, too, at noonday to lie beside the well-head of some lonely burn, and think of many things that can never be set down and are scarce remembered. But these were but dreams, and this is not their chronicle; so it behoves me to shut my ear to vagrom memories.

To Dawyck I went the more often the older I grew. For Marjory Veitch had grown into a beautiful lissom girl, with the same old litheness of body and gaiety of spirit. She was my comrade in countless escapades, and though I have travelled the world since then, I never found a readier or a braver. But with the years she grew more maidenly, and I dared less to lead her into mad ventures. Nay, I, who had played with her in the woods, and fished and run with her as with some other lad, began to feel a foolish awe in her presence, and worshipped her from afar.

To her a great sorrow had come. For when she was scarce thirteen her father, the laird of Dawyck, who had been ever of a home-keeping nature, died from a fall while hunting on the brow of Scrape. He had been her childhood's companion, and she

mourned for him as sorely as ever human being mourned for another. Michael, her only brother, was far abroad in a regiment of the Scots French Guards, so she was left alone in the great house, with no other company than the servants and a cross-grained aunt, who heard but one word in twenty. For this reason I rode over the oftener to comfort her loneliness.

OUR CANAL POPULATION.

By Ernest Protheroe.

FOR years the voice as of one in the wilderness endeavoured to call public attention to the evil conditions under which the great majority of our canal boatmen and their families laboured. Though looked upon as a more or less harmless crank by many, and in other quarters as meriting only obloquy and abuse, George Smith, the towing-path philanthropist, lived to see the passing of the Canal Boat Act in 1877, which embodied some of his cherished ideas for bettering the condition of some fifty thousand men, women, and children.

Before the passing of the act a state of things existed which one would scarce have thought possible in Christian England; and the statement that 'one half of the world does not know how the other half lives' applies even now with special force to matters connected with our network of canals, which in England and Wales alone have a mileage of over three thousand miles.

In the Black Country, and in other of our great industrial centres, the grimy, evil-looking waters are navigated by all sorts and conditions of boats, from the rough, open boats used for the conveyance of coal and minerals generally, to the trim, 'fly' cabin-boats of the great carrying companies, which are timed to travel forty miles per day.

When one meets a boat in pleasant country surroundings, the horse slowly jogging along and the boatman's 'missis' lazily presiding at the tiller, it may appear to the unobservant and unthinking as perhaps a happy-go-lucky, gipsy kind of existence, presenting sufficient charms to make a spell of boating not an altogether undesirable form of holiday-making. The prospect of inhabiting for a few days the toy-like cabin, with its miniature appurtenances, causes a smile of amusement and anticipatory pleasure; but the unfortunate 'boater,' who lives here with his wife and several children in considerably less space than is afforded by a third-class railway compartment, probably views the matter with less pleasurable emotions.

The probable bestowal of such a family for sleeping purposes was a problem we approached with considerable diffidence, and, after expending far more time and thought on the subject than would have been demanded by an average Chinese puzzle, we only arrived at a solution by direct inquiry. When we were told by an old boatman that in his time one child would have slept across the top of the bed and another across the bottom, two would sleep under the bed, while yet two others would have sought Morpheus in a cupboard, leaving one to sleep on the table or elsewhere as best he could, our first thought was one of amusement; but there is a darker side to a question of this kind which can only engender pity for those who lived under such cribbed and cabined circumstances. It is a matter for congratulation that bad cases of overcrowding are now as much the exception as they were formerly the rule.

The cabins are not always only temporary homes used during ordinary voyages. In a large number of cases the cabin is the only home the boatman possesses. On this point we may quote the evidence of a witness before the Royal Commission on Labour in 1892: 'A narrow boat cabin has only 250 cubic feet of space for living, sickness, sleeping, cooking, washing, and dying, and all other incidents of family life, including confinements.'

We have personally verified a case recorded of a woman who had never slept in a house in her life, and had brought up no less than twenty-one children in a boat. Without encroaching on the space reserved for cargo, it was impossible for this brood to remain under the mother's wing indefinitely, and consequently after a certain point the latest arrival displaced the eldest, who was transferred to the towing-path to shift as he, or she, best could.

To 'swear like a boatman' is an unenviable distinction which the average member of the boating fraternity is popularly supposed to take some pains to maintain, for highly embellished figures—or shall we say disfigurements?—of speech occupy a large share of the ordinary workaday discourse. When a towing-line gets entangled with that of a passing boat, or when some attenuated specimen of horseflesh is left to wend his way unattended, and stops to graze while his master is aboard for the time being and cannot personally reach him, are occasions on which the 'boater' is apt to lose himself in the almost unfathomable depths of a mysterious and fearful vocabulary that would appal an *habitué* of Billingsgate.

Quite ninety per cent. of the adult boaters are almost utterly illiterate, and although there is an attempt to bring the canal children under the influence of the Elementary Education Act, it is a matter of extreme difficulty to give even a few days' consecutive teaching to those birds of

passage even when they are most willing to receive it, which is not by any means always the case.

Thanks to the Canal Boats Act, the registration and inspection of boats, and the efforts of numerous Boat Missions throughout the country, the whole tone of boating life is being raised very considerably. It is quite a pleasure to converse with some of the weather-stained, toil-worn old skippers, who, whatever their many failings, are simple-hearted and generous to a fault.

We recently encountered an old veteran who was accompanied on his voyages by two buxom granddaughters, while the 'old 'oman,' who was past boat-work, remained at home in a Black Country slum. One of the girls was in the habit of gathering discarded flower-roots thrown out of the gardens adjacent to the towing-path. These roots she would carefully tend in old meat-tins until she could transfer them to her 'grannie's bit of garden.' On one occasion the girl found what she surmised was a rose-tree. They were outward-bound, and the room required for the root was beyond the capabilities of a meat-tin; so she decided to plant it in a hedge. She related with glee how on later voyages she watched and tended her treasure, only to find in due course that it was but an old brier-stock, as innocent of roses as a brier-pipe.

The water-gipsies' unions, when blessed with rite or ceremony, which is not always a *sine quâ non*, are very often pure *mariages de convenance*. A young 'boater' notified his intention of being married at a church adjacent to a well-known canal-basin. The banns had been read a second time, when the prospective bridegroom waited upon the vicar and requested him to 'mek a change in the gel's name next Sunday,' as he proposed taking her sister instead. The explanation of the rigidity of the marriage laws rather staggered the simple merman; and, after taking into consideration another three weeks' waiting, to say nothing of an additional fee, he in turn surprised the incumbent by philosophically instructing him to 'goo on wi' it; I reckon I'll hev to mek shift wi' the fust.'

Some stretches of canal are very difficult to work. Entering Wolverhampton from Stafford, no less than twenty-one locks have to be negotiated in a distance of about 2000 yards to overcome a rise of about 132 feet, this providing about one of the stiffest bits in our whole canal system. It is no uncommon sight to see a girl of nine or ten summers using all the strength of her little shoulders to open or close lock-gates weighing a couple of tons.

Sapperton Tunnel, on the Thames and Severn Canal, is 3808 yards long; Lappal Tunnel, near Birmingham, 3795 yards long; and the Dudley tunnel, 3172 yards long. These tunnels possess no towing-paths, and as the services of a horse are not available, the boats have to be 'legged' through. The process of legging consists in the men in the boat lying at full length on projecting boards called 'wings' and propelling the boat by well-timed and vigorous pushes with the feet against the side of the tunnel. The passage of Dudley Tunnel takes about three hours, and the special 'legger' whose services can be retained for a modest eighteenpence deserves every penny of his money.

It is a matter of extreme difficulty to ascertain definitely the wages paid to boatmen, but it is certain they are nothing like commensurate with the toil and hardships of the life. During various perambulations along the canal-side we found the boat-people a more than fairly satisfied class, looking upon a laborious life as essentially their lot, their contentment certainly not arising from the fact that they have so much as that their wants are few.

THE GURNARD ROCK.

By JAMES PATEY, Author of *Jan Pengelly*.

CHAPTER I.

THE story of the fight on the Gurnard Rock between Gabriel Lowry of St Budoc and John Tregenna of Porthillian, concerning which there has been much false rumour and surmise, is here told for the first time.

There was disturbance in St Budoc—tumults and alarms in the straggling street of the little fisher-town, skirmishes in the vicinity of the Compass Inn, and something like a pitched battle upon the beach. And all the trouble was about a torn fishing-net.

A Porthillian boat had fouled the drift-net of a St Budoc boat, doing considerable damage. It was pure accident, a shifting patch of fog temporarily obscuring the light of the stationary boat. But the St Budoc men denied the fog, and swore that the night was clear, as indeed it was save for the fugitive film that blotted out the boat; they attributed the injury to malice, and the affair was generally regarded as the latest symptom of the traditional feud between the two communities.

No man knows the beginning of the ancient enmity between St Budoc and Porthillian. In the forgotten past there may have been some profound cause for the antipathy; the unquestioning generations loyally carry on the quarrel.

Everything pertaining to Porthillian is malodorous in the nostrils of St Budoc; and Porthillian regards its neighbour as the one blotch on the fair face of the county of Cornwall. When the bishop selected Porthillian for a brief holiday sojourn, the

episcopacy fell grievously in the estimation of St Budoc; and when a Trinity yacht anchored off St Budoc and landed officials to inspect the coast for a new light, it was considered in Porthillian that the Elder Brethren had reached senility.

It was Saturday, and the turbulence had so far subsided that the men of St Budoc were resignedly mending the torn net upon the beach, and several Porthillian fishermen strolled unmolested through the town—one fellow's bandaged head had been badly cut by a sherd of crockery which a St Budoc dame had contributed to the controversy.

With great patience the men repaired the net, piecing and joining the multitudinous meshes; and beyond the little group on the beach shone the waters of the bay, flanked by jagged promontories.

Nature is lavish with her colour in the Cornish seas; there are blues of every density, rich depths of purple where the seaweed floats, and margins of gleaming emerald where the clear water lies shallow upon the sand. The cliffs that half-frame the little bay of St Budoc are grand in contour, and the sea has worn their base into innumerable caverns, so that in places the precipitous rocks are fretted at the water-line like a stretch of punctured embroidery.

On the parapet of the little granite pier sat a girl darning a fisherman's blue guernsey. Now and again she would look up from her work and watch the group of men with a smile of scornful amusement. She was about twenty; wind and sun had given a glow to her cheek, half-red, half-brown, like the colour of a ripening hazel-nut; her hair shone blue-black in the summer light; her face was richly endowed with the gift of beauty, and she was evidently conscious of the endowment.

'You 'm a fine, peaceful lot o' chaps,' she cried at length to the men; 'patient and peaceful as a passel o' women! Mending your net, quiet an' good, while they Porthillian fellows be marching about like lords, smoking baccy.'

'Let the men bide, Miriam Roskree,' interposed an old woman who was cleaning fish on the steps of the pier; 'us have had trouble enough for wan week.'

'If I was a man,' continued the girl, heedless of the admonition, 'an' Porthillian fellows comed an' teared my net, I'd tear they. I reckon there 'd be mending both sides. I'd limb 'em! Why don't they bide their own side o' the Point?'

'You 'm a fulish maid,' said old Sam Polreggan, turning gravely to the girl. 'Porthillian men be as free to the bay as us be. You can't divide the channel up into salt-watter parishes.'

'Ripping nets is not fair fishing,' answered Miriam.

'Bless the maid! What wid 'ee do?' retorted Polreggan warmly.

'Take it peaceful, if I was an old gray man like thee, Mr Polreggan, and a chapel-steward.' Then she added with sudden vehemence, flinging her words towards the younger men, 'If 'twas my net I'd be quits with 'em—I'd sink their boats!' She had finished her darning, and she thrust her needle into the worsted ball with a vindictive stab.

'Shame upon 'ee, Miriam!' gasped the old woman, looking open-mouthed at the girl, with a gaping expression not unlike that of the hake she was gutting; 'you 'm talking terrible.'

The girl laughed, and springing to her feet, descended the water-worn steps of the pier. She paused for a moment as she passed, and stretching the mended guernsey on her palm, said: 'There 's a purty bit o' darning for 'ee, Mrs Chegwith.'

'Iss, 'tis good work enough,' assented the woman; 'but I 'm feared you 'll make more holes with your tongue than iver you 'll mend with your fingers!'

Miriam Roskree was walking away, when one of the men called derisively after her: 'You surely baint gwain yet! Haven't 'ee a few more warm words to give us?'

The girl turned sharply, and cried back: 'Only this—when you valiant chaps meet a Porthillian boat, make way, and give 'em plenty of say-room; and whenever you see a Porthillian man ashore, mind your manners, and touch your caps respec'ful to your betters, for 'tis plain that the Porthillian fellows be kings o' land and say in these parts.'

As Miriam walked along the breakwater the eyes of one of the younger men furtively followed her; and the man's heart went with his eyes.

Handsome enough in a swarthy way was Gabriel Lowry, tall and sinewy, with a touch of moroseness in his face. The girl's taunts fell on his sullen nature like sparks upon tinder; and beneath the tinder lay the gunpowder.

When the girl was out of hearing one of the men said: 'Her 's got a sharp tongue—too sharp, to my mind. I reckon her 's like the evil-teller in the Scriptur'; the pison o' wasps is under her lips.'

'The pison o' hasps,' corrected Polreggan.

'Hasps or wasps—what 's the odds? The maid 's a strife-stirrer,' said the fellow.

The smouldering Lowry became suddenly volcanic, and turning fiercely on the man, cried: 'Hold your tongue! If you say another word 'bout Miriam Roskree I'll heave 'ee in the watter!' And the threat was accompanied by an oath that was all the more emphatic from a man who seldom swore.

This outburst silenced all criticism of the vengeful Miriam, and the offender was cowed, to the suppressed amusement of his comrades.

Presently Lowry flung down the tangled tow-line he was winding, and without a word walked away along the beach, his heels sinking deep into the sand with the angry vehemence of his tread.

'Bless my sawl!' ejaculated old Simon Trewarne, 'I didn't knaw the wind was in that quarter.'

'Wind, do 'ee call it?' answered Polreggan. ''Tis

a reg'lar hurricane. But 'tis the way of 'em—half the youngsters be mazed about that maid.'

'I knaw he was coortin' her back-along,' said Trewarne, 'but I heard they falled out.'

'So they did,' said Jacob Perran, working deftly with the net-cord, 'but I b'lieve they patched it up again, same as us be patching this purty job. They quarrelled about that painter-chap that was biding here. He was on the beach painting a pictur' o' the boats, and Miriam Roskree was a-setting 'ginst wan boat, pretending to be meshing a net—an' purty enough her looked in the pictur', I can tell 'ee—when up comes Gabe Lowry in a tearing rage, an' catched the gen'leman by the scruff o' the neck an' clane pitched 'en awver. "Paint your awn women-folks," says he, "an' don't come here meddlin' with ours!" an' he snapped the painter-man's sticks across his knee an' thrawed the pictur' out upon the watter, an' away it floated on the ebb-tide—boats, an' rocks, an' Miriam Roskree! An' the most coorious part, of it all is, that when Penruddock's boat comed in wi' the fish, an' the pictur' all watter-soaked aboard, on the top o' the mackerel—for Penruddock had a-picked 'en up—durn me if Lowry didn't turn sawft-hearted, an' he carried the pictur' up to the "Compass," where the gen'leman was biding, an' offered 'en a pocket o' money if he'd finish the figur' o' Miriam; but the painter widden' take the job. I reckon he'd had enough o' Gabe Lowry.'

'Aw, well! wan thing's sure,' said Mrs Chegwith, who had finished her fish. 'If they two sawls be iver in wan house, 'twill be like vire an' brimstone!'

. . . . . .

Next day was Sunday, and the morning broke serenely, as a Sabbath should. Men who had looked picturesque and heroic all the week in their fisher-garb became piously ridiculous in black coats of antiquated fashion and archaic top-hats. The boats were drawn up high upon the beach, and everything pertaining to the workaday avocations of the little town was religiously put away—that is, everything but the smell of the fish. This persistent perfume is as the invisible soul and spirit of St Budoc; it clings to everybody and everything; it pervades the streets and houses, and fills the water-side Methodist chapel like the odour of sanctity. If you thrust your head into the cuddy of a little, half-decked St Budoc boat, you will get in one supreme sniff a concentrated stench that will haunt the memory. And the natives profess to love it. It is said that an expatriated St Budocan will yearn for the old familiar smell as a Switzer pines for his mountains. An emigrant miner at the antipodes will, haply, show a thumbed and faded photograph of St Budoc, and indicating the pier with as much pride as an Athenian might point out the Acropolis, he will say: 'There! that's St Budoc! and there's the pier, and that's the end wall o' the chapel. All my folks be dead, but I sim I shall wan time go back wance more, for there's something 'bout St Budoc that draws the sawl of a man—I reckon 'tis the stink o' the fish!'

In the course of the ages two great missionaries have left their mark upon St Budoc. The first was the Breton saint, from whom the town takes its name, who preached the faith to the heathen Celts of the Cornish peninsula; the other, long centuries after, was John Wesley, whose followers half the population are.

On this particular Sunday morning, when all right-minded people were either climbing the hill in response to the six bells of Episcopacy or wending Methodistically chapel-ward, Gabriel Lowry, looking very unsabbatarian in the working garb of yesterday, with a profane, unshaven chin, was wandering about the town like a lion seeking prey. The taunts of Miriam Roskree had sunk into the man's heart and fermented there, until he had desperately resolved to fight out, single-handed if need be, this quarrel of the torn net with the men of Porthillian—not so much for hatred of Porthillian as for love of Miriam Roskree.

He was no drinking man; but those who did not know the fellow might have taken him for quarrelsomely drunk, as he walked savagely along, a scowl upon his dark face and his hands clenched in anticipation of the encounter he was seeking.

The Porthillian boats had not left the bay on Saturday night; therefore it was certain that some of the men would be ashore for the morning service. There was no calculation in his wrath; one man, two men, three men, he would not count the odds, but would strike whenever he found the enemy.

Old Sam Polreggan, glorious but uncomfortable in a starched shirt-front, met him in the street and asked: 'Baint 'ee gwain to chapel this morning, Gabe?'

Lowry answered sullenly: 'Mind your awn business.'

''Tis my business,' rejoined Polreggan. 'When I see a young chap like thee trapesin' about on a Sunday morning looking like Satan, 'tis my business to speak to 'ee.' But Lowry strode on.

A few minutes later a stranger walked up the steps of the little Methodist chapel, and Gabriel Lowry intercepted him at the door. He was a yellow-bearded man, uncommonly handsome; he wore the blue guernsey and cap of the working week, and although he made no pretence to Sunday attire, he was scrupulously neat and clean.

Inside, the service had begun, and there arose the strains of the quaint hymn:

> O brothers, let us arise and tell
> The glories of Immanuel!

with the feminine antiphon:

> O sisters, let us arise and tell
> The mercies of Immanuel!

'Be you a Porthillian chap?' asked Lowry, standing rudely in the doorway.

'I'ss, I be!' answered the stranger simply.

'Then, take that from St Budoc!' shouted Lowry, striking the man heavily on the head.

The stranger reeled beneath the unexpected blow, and staggered down several steps. Then, recovering his balance, he stooped to pick up his cap, which was knocked off, and advanced towards Gabriel. The voices and the scuffle had been heard inside the building; and Polreggan, hymn-book in hand, appeared at the door, speedily followed by a score of men; and the singing, which had begun sonorously with treble and bass, dwindled to a feeble finish in the treble.

Polreggan took in the situation at a glance, and stepped between the two men, holding aloft the hymn-book with a gesture of adjuration.

'What's the man's name?' demanded the stranger, with more calmness than might have been expected under the provocation.

'Gabriel Lowry, at your service,' replied Lowry himself.

'And mine's Tregenna,' rejoined the other; 'John Tregenna of Porthillian. I was niver reckoned a fightin' man, least of all a Sunday fighter, but when Monday comes, Gabriel Lowry, I'll teach thee Sunday manners.'

With these words, he walked into the chapel, where his presence during the remainder of the service excited more interest than the preacher.

The congregation was slow at dispersing that morning; it lingered on the chapel steps and stood in little groups in the street discussing the incident. The stranger, who had lifted a clear, tenor voice during the singing, had quietly left the chapel before the Benediction. The news of the scrimmage had been whispered from one to another at odd moments during the service, till everybody was more or less informed. While all deplored the Sabbath-breaking violence of Lowry, there were some who considered that a Porthillian man was beyond their sympathy.

'Lowry wid be peaceful enough if he was let bide,' said Jacob Trewarne; ''tis that maid o' Roskree's has a-set 'im on—'tis a cruel pity the fule hearkens to her.'

'Her 's been spaking about sinking Porthillian boats; but 'tis no fitty talk for a woman,' said old Simon Rodda.

'Aw, iss! 'tis all for pride o' St Budoc,' remarked Joe Kevern, lighting his pipe. 'Her gran'fer was just the same soort. I mind wan night he got his boat into a pickle in Bubbly Cove, an' a rope was thrawed to 'en; gran'fer Roskree calls out in the dark: "Who 's t'other end o' this yer rope?" "'Tis Dick Sprague o' Porthillian!" and old Roskree dropped the rope like a hot cinder an' swimmed for his life. If a feller goes a-coortin' in sich a fiery family, he must expect to be set ablaze.'

So the blame of the quarrel was partially shifted from Gabriel Lowry to its instigator, Miriam Roskree; some of the younger women being very bitter in their condemnation.

'Come, come! us'll give the devil his due,' interposed Polreggan with some warmth; 'when Rebecca Trewhella died o' the fever, who tended they dree children? Was it thee, Mrs Penruddock; or thy wife, Joe Kevern? No, I reckon! When Doctor Pascoe said some woman must go out to Quayle an' nurse they children for the love o' God, not wan of 'ee stirred—the fear o' death was in the faces of 'ee; but Miriam Roskree tended 'em for a month, an' pulled 'em through the fever; an' here you all be casting reproaches at her.'

'An' there's another thing us mustn't forget,' said old Mrs Trefusis. 'When Nance Carlyon's son was drownded, Miriam gived her a pig.'

'So her did!' assented Polreggan heartily. 'I mind 'twas a spotty pig, an' 'twas oncommon kind o' the maid. Iss, her's a bit of a spitfire, an' in many ways a weak vessel, an' not awver reg'lar at meetings; but 'tis my belief thicky pig will be accounted unto her for righteousness.'

'As for Gabe Lowry,' said old Trewarne, 'he was always a bit hot-headed; but us baint all made alike; some of us be the salt o' the earth, an' some of us, I reckon, be the pepper.'

So they dispersed to their homes, and told their neighbours the story of the encounter; and the tale grew as it travelled, till by nightfall it had assumed epic proportions, and was big with portent.

'THE RIDERS OF THE PLAINS.'

THE CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE.

By Roger Pocock.

IN her Majesty's great triumph on the 22d of June 1897 all the cavalry of the empire were represented for the first time in London. And among the men who have fought on the frontiers for England, and who for the first time came home, there was a detachment of the North-west Mounted Police. Their brilliant uniform had never before been seen in England, and the general public probably took them for Australians.

Considering the record of one of the finest cavalry regiments in her Majesty's service, it seems curious that it should be absolutely unknown beyond the limits of Canada.

To join the 'Riders of the Plains' you must be

of a girth and stature which Providence has withheld from most of the applicants; you must be able to speak French or English, read and write passably, and above all things show testimonials of good moral character. You may be a retired horse-thief, a starving tramp, a fugitive from the United States marshals, a broken-down gentleman, or a healthy young farm-lad from Eastern Canada; the letters testimonial may have been given by your friends and the clergy to get rid of you; but 'a good moral character' is indispensable. In my time a third of the crowd were broken-down gentlemen, many with titles or a purser's name; a third were Canadian bucolics; the rest promiscuous desperadoes, old soldiers, cowboys, sailors, and hellrake adventurers from all the ends of the earth. Not one of us had the least difficulty in proving our good moral character. The fact that all the lawlessness of the great plains would be enlisted sooner or later in the cause of law and order was the pride and glory of the corps. We made the life of bad citizens so very uncomfortable that sooner or later they joined us in despair.

Once on the strength of the force, given a regimental number, uncomfortably breaking in new clothes and boots, we were shoved into the awkward squad at headquarters to learn the goose-step. I remember that my chest expanded at the rate of an inch a week, because the life was perfect bliss, with three meals a day regular as clockwork—an astonishing experience after casual work, hard frontier life, and occasional starvation.

The pay begins at two shillings, rising every year till the fifth, when, if you are good, you can re-enlist at three shillings a day. About a third of the men get 7½d. a day extra for staff duties, and there is plenty of promotion even to commissioned rank. A shilling in the North-west Territories buys about as much as sixpence will at home; but so liberal is the provision of food and clothing that, beyond the laundry and the tobacco-pouch, there are few expenses. Six months of the year there are no temptations; out on the great plains money is useless except for playing cards; and so for at least three days after the monthly distribution of pay one feels like a millionaire.

Of course we grumbled at our hard fate—'growsing' was part of the fun; we were severely critical about every order given, rather looked down on the officers, were sometimes insubordinate, occasionally mutinous. Indeed, the Commissioner must have wept himself to sleep three nights a week over his woolly lambs, about as easy to govern as a shipload of pirates. He was rarely troubled with any malingering, skulking, or cowardice, his difficulty being to control our misdirected energies, and, without insulting us, to make it quite plain that he wanted us to behave like Christians. The civil population seemed to expect every morning that we had been out overnight and torn the whole country to pieces. I doubt if we ever worked hard enough. Our saddle bronchos would buck themselves hoarse on the first day of a trip, hang their tails limp the second, and very likely die before the end; but I never knew hardship so great or times so desperate but some of us would fill up spare moments by misbehaviour.

However much we may have 'cursed the outfit' among ourselves and called it the last refuge of the destitute, the civilian who ventured to join in the chorus of disparagement probably got a black eye. As to any other military force in the empire, we only wanted an opportunity to compare notes. We were ready to outride, outdare, and thrash any regiment in her Majesty's service. That was ten years ago, when we numbered five hundred men—now there are eight hundred to take up the challenge. It is very difficult with a mere string of words to give the actual touch and taste and feel of that jolly headlong frontier life, as it was then and as it is to-day. It is a life that only the adventurer knows, the gentleman-adventurer of Kipling's Lost Legion, who helps to build big historical empires, and does it all for fun.

A scarlet regiment—that was to impress the Red Indians—we were technically mounted infantry. The uniform was like that of the Dragoon Guards, with a white canvas helmet instead of the 'tin hat,' a Winchester carbine, a belt of flaming-bright brass cartridges, and a foot-long service revolver instead of the cavalry sabre. The horse was a half-broken broncho raised under the shadow of the Rockies, a humorous beast, standing, say, fifteen hands, with all the vices and an artistic thoroughness in bucking. The saddle weighed forty pounds, and was of the Mexican type, high in horn and cantle, with broad-webbed *cinchas* instead of the English girth.

Apart from headquarters at Regina, which was only meant for the chastening of recruits, we numbered four troops, each with a tract like France to keep in order. If there were barracks, we built them and walled them round with a stockade commanded by two bastions on the alternate corners. Each troop had the duties of an army corps—cavalry, infantry, artillery of old brass seven-pounders, transport, commissariat, hospital, jail, with the flag over all as a reminder. In the morning the work was to shovel coal or make a water-colour sketch for the officer commanding; in the afternoon, to exercise horses, shovel snow, or paint a barrack-room. On Monday one would drive a wagon; on Tuesday, wash dishes for the cook; on Wednesday, clean stables; on Thursday, drill; on Friday, mount regimental guard, escort prisoners, and spend most of the night pacifying horse-fights, making a round of the barrack stoves, and taking temperature-readings on flying sentry.

That was a sample of winter duty in barracks when the midnight thermometer stood at fifty degrees to sixty-five degrees below zero, or refused duty altogether on account of the cold. Even in

the depth of the wonderful, delightful winter, when the air made one drunk, and running a couple of miles meant scarcely an effort, there was an occasional trip on duty. The uniform then was a black fur cap, a short buffalo-coat—now changed to bear-skin because the bison is gone the way of all flesh—long stockings, deerskin shoes, called moccasins, and mittens or fingerless gloves. A light hard-wood sledge was used for travelling the jumper; but woe to the idiot lazy enough to spend the day in it! One must trot alongside until every finger tingled with warmth before it was safe to rest. There was more than frost-bite to fear—the chilling of the brain and of vital organs, delirium, coma, death! Even recovery from the brain-chill was a sorrowful tragedy enough—the intellect unbalanced, the head drooped, a languor lasting through months or even a year or two, which took away all ambition, virility, and active manhood. But death? Well, we were very hard to kill, and I only know of one case when the searchers came too late.

The winter is terribly beautiful when the immeasurable spaces of the plains lie glistening under the moonlight; when the red sun rolls up over the edge of the world and the steel-blue mists flush like the petals of a wild rose; in the infernal, bewildering horror of the blizzard; in the death-hush of the evening; or when the Northern Lights march blazing up the heavens like legions upon legions of armed angels.

Spring was displeasing, because the sun sends up a damp heat from the snow which causes blindness, with a great deal of pain worse than toothache. Also there were the setting-up drills, when we had to wear uniform and play at soldiers for a whole month, probably because the officer commanding wanted to make himself detestable. We always put down the drills to his personal spite.

But then came the summer, which was too good to talk about. We were scattered out on the plains, visiting the Indian Reserves, chasing horse-thieves, patrolling the nine hundred miles of the United States boundary—a life of hard work, hot, dusty trails, lonely outposts; of bathing, hunting, growling viciously; of tents and bivouac, riotous rows in the villages, and all the fun in the world. There was no soldiering; save for the clipped tails of the horses, the police outfit made us look like a party of wandering cowboys or desperadoes. We were brown as Indians, dusty, hungry, thirsty, dressed anyhow in the frontier clothes which put civilised gear to shame, because they are beautiful.

To keep the country in order? Why, we caused more trouble than the twenty-three thousand Indians and the twenty odd thousand settlers put together! But getting into trouble was our privilege, our monopoly; nobody else was allowed to misbehave—we saw to it. The Great Plains, nine hundred miles by five hundred, a country as big as Western Europe, was kept as peaceable as an English country parish. No civilian carried arms for self-defence, because if the law was broken the fugitive was hunted down, if it took months. He might fly to the northern forest; but he would be tracked and delivered in serviceable condition for the common use as a jail-bird. Once, when some criminals took refuge in the United States, they were followed, in defiance of law and treaty, for one hundred and sixty miles into Montana, to be turned into jail-birds without the great American nation being any the wiser. There is but one thing on this planet longer than the equator, and that is the arm of British justice.

Once only we failed to keep the mastery of the plains. Under one Louis Riel, a religious monomaniac who claimed divine attributes, the French Canadian half-breeds, the old voyageurs of the fur-trade, led half the Red Indian tribes to war against us. The campaign was long and bloody; indeed, all the power of Canada had to be brought to our aid; but in face of overwhelming numbers the insurrection was stamped out, the leader judiciously hanged, and the peace restored. Apart from that lapse from virtue the force is without a history; only disorder makes history-books.

I have never seen any body of men so thoroughly alive as the mounted police. Big Bear, last of the rebel chiefs, had just been taken single-handed by Constable 'Sligo' Kerr, and his hundred and eighty pursuers were coming down out of the northern forest. There for weeks they had kept themselves alive by hunting rabbits, many of the horses had starved to death, and the whole crowd seemed worn out, hopelessly discouraged. Suddenly it occurred to somebody in the ranks that this was the 24th of May. 'Queen's birthday!' he yelled, flinging his slouch-hat in the air. A man behind him drew his revolver and fired, so down came the hat with a bullet-hole in the crown. Every hat went up, all came down riddled, then the fusillade was drowned in a volley of cheering, and that in turn by the National Anthem. Many a time have I known the advance-guard to start a song, the wagons to take up the chorus, the rear-guard to join in behind, until the plains rang with music. In camp and barracks it was the same—the song, the chorus, the riotous fight with belts. There was a total prohibition of liquor throughout the territories, by which it became incumbent upon the force to drink or destroy all liquor, lest the Indian tribes and the civil population should be demoralised. But our ambitions were not confined to noise or liquor. One man would farm pigs, another trade in cigars, a third edit the local paper, and a fourth add to his pay by making water-colour sketches for the rest.

Arrests of criminals are often complicated and exciting. Some years ago Deerfoot, a well-known Indian athlete, was wanted for killing people, but resisted arrest, defying three constables with an axe. A constable is not allowed to bring in prisoners dead, that being contrary to a regimental order on the subject, and punishable with three months in the guard-room. Deerfoot was allowed to escape,

and that also is punishable with three months' imprisonment.

Some time after, an interpreter attached to the force, camping over-night at a trader's cabin, was told that Deerfoot had set up his lodge in a meadow close by. The Indians had, indeed, shown a poster to the trader advertising him, Deerfoot, *alias* Dried Meat, to run in the skating-rink at Calgary. Next morning the interpreter walked over to the lodge, watched the young Indian running to drive in the ponies for travel, compared him with a photograph of the man wanted, called him up, and arrested him. The Indian dodged out of his blanket, broke away, yelled to his squaw, who fetched out his rifle from the *tepee* (tent), and gained the abrupt bank of a rivulet close by. Meanwhile the interpreter had fired once, seemingly without 'reaching his meat.' On the top of the bank the Indian danced his little war-dance, prayed to his gods, took cover, and levelled his rifle. When the white man charged up the bank the Indian ran. He ran two miles, going to cover at last in a farmhouse, where he sat down by the stove. Until he actually entered the house the interpreter never guessed that this Indian who had beaten him in a two-mile race was desperately wounded in the thigh. Curiously enough, this was not the man who was wanted for murder. It transpired that there were two Indian runners named Deerfoot, of the same age and stature, the one called 'Dried Meat,' the other called 'Putrid Dried Meat.' The prisoner was pensioned for life.

On May 31, 1897, a report came from Duck Lake, in Saskatchewan, that an Indian, whose name was 'Almighty Voice,' had shot a non-commissioned officer named Bowringe, from ambush, and also a settler named Venne, who was brought to the Duck Lake detachment station wounded in the shoulder. Next morning the detachment located 'Almighty Voice' in a bunch of timber, where he was aided and abetted by other Indians. In the dispute which followed, Constable Kerr and a volunteer named Guadry were killed, Corporal Hocking mortally wounded, Inspector Allen and Surgeon Raven wounded, and one Indian killed. A field-gun being sent for, the occupants of the timber were severely incommoded, 'Almighty Voice' and another Indian being killed.

One might recite for hours the various adventures of the frontier patrol along the United States border, the nine hundred miles of which are traversed once a week; or tell wonderful stories of the detachment, two thousand miles to the northward, which protects the Yukon gold-diggings on the border of Alaska. The last news thence was that a city, exclusively inhabited by American desperadoes, had invaded Canada, was preparing to attack the diggings, and at the time the mail-carrier left had the confident expectation of 'wiping out' both mounted police and Canadian miners.

From Manitoba to the Rocky Mountains, from the Montana border to the Arctic, the British peace is in the hands of that grand cavalry. The records of the force ever since 1873, when it was founded, have been one long roll of impossibilities made facts, heroic adventures, great tragedies. But a man has never been lynched, a murderer has never known a moment of safety, justice has never been sold, nor has any injustice been done to the Indian tribes. The greatest boast of the force is, that it is scarcely ever mentioned in the newspapers.

Of my old comrades, A. died in poverty, D. in an English workhouse, E. of fever, K. deserted, M. broke his neck when his horse stumbled, J. went mad, W. shot himself, O. was last seen as a tramp, P. died of starvation, and L. was frozen to death. If the rest are scattered all over the world, this magazine may reach them sooner or later. To them—regards!

Three of us, Corporal John Donkin, author of *Trooper and Redskin;* Corporal John Mackie, author of *The Devil's Playground, Sinners Twain,* and *They that Sit in Darkness;* and myself, began in leisure moments to write down the things we saw. Donkin is dead, but Mackie and I are busy novelists now. My first sketch of this life appeared in *Chambers.*

The life of the force was a gorgeous romance, but it had its shadows. Men got bored and deserted, say one-tenth in the year; or, brooding over all that they had lost—love, hope, ambition, honour—they would go away quietly into a corner and blow their brains out. The death-rate was always high, especially from typhoid-malaria, caused by bad sanitation in barracks; a number of men were killed on duty; others again met their end by fall from a horse or other misadventure on the plains. The very life was unsettling; men could not leave it and settle down to any monotony of clerical work or farming, because adventurers are not built that way. The tamest and quietest of us have bad spells when the blood runs wild for the old freedom, when there is no peace by day, no sleep night after night; when one must be in the saddle again, or off to sea, or away to some mining rush; war, exploration, anywhere beyond the fences, out on the frontier.

One hears again the dip of the paddles, the click of the trigger, the roar of the surf, the thunder of horses. Is there any Englishman who will blame us for making empires?

[Was this prophetic? Mr Pocock had disappeared, in the direction of Alaska it was believed, when wanted to correct this proof.]

AN EPISODE.

By DAVID LAWSON JOHNSTONE, Author of *The Rebel Commodore*, &c.

'THIS is a charming spot—for two,' he said, settling himself comfortably at her feet.

'We are lucky to find it unoccupied,' she said, 'especially at one of Mrs Gurdon's garden-parties. She will be pleased. I don't believe there is a square inch of the lawn to be seen.'

'The whole world is here. I know, Miss Lindsay; I have shaken hands with it.'

'It is one of the penalties of being a great author.'

'Or of being notorious?'

'You are too modest, Mr Holland. Have you not shared the honours of the afternoon with the Prince and the latest lion—just imported from South Africa, was it not?'

'And felt like a martyr all the time. But there you have the proof, Miss Lindsay. Don't think I am complaining. Fame and notoriety mean the same—in London. And in this'—he indicated the screen of shrubbery which cut off the little nook from the rest of the garden, but did not shut out the strains of the Blue Hungarians or the hum of many voices—'in this I have my reward. I forgive the lion-hunters.'

'It *is* a relief to be out of it,' she admitted. 'Do you know, Mr Holland, that these nooks—yes, there are more of them—are a pet idea of Mrs Gurdon's?'

'I must thank her. She is a woman of genius.'

She laughed merrily. 'Oh no! she is only an incorrigible match-maker—and finds them useful.'

'So she, at least, believes in love?' he asked, picking up the thread of a former conversation.

'Or in marriage. It is not always the same thing, is it?'

'It should be,' he replied, with an air of the deepest conviction. He was looking up into her eyes.

'What does somebody say?—that in woman love is a disease; in man it is an episode.'

'I seem to recollect that,' he said. 'But it is nonsense; love cannot be summed up in an epigram.'

Again she laughed. 'I am afraid you have a very bad memory, Mr Holland. Is it another of the penalties of—notoriety?'

'In my case I am afraid so. Is Meredith the culprit?'

'I must leave that to your conscience, sir. The sentiment appears in a brilliant study of society, entitled *Providence and Mrs Grundy*, for which, if the title-page is to be trusted'——

'Ah! I remember now. Please spare me, Miss Lindsay. You don't know the evil effects of phrase-making—it saps a man's morals until he has not even a nodding acquaintance with the truth. And you have taken your revenge.'

'But, really, Mr Holland, I trusted to your—your knowledge of human nature, shall I say? I was glad, for my own sake'——

'For what, if I may ask?'

'That, "in man it was an episode." It makes life so much easier to believe so.'

'You will let me retract in sackcloth and ashes, Miss Lindsay? Honestly, I have some reason to do so. It is three years since I wrote that miserable book. Can you not guess my excuse?'

'It seems to infer a compliment—somewhere,' she said, rather doubtfully.

'I am very much in earnest,' he said, getting up and standing above her; and he looked it. 'I didn't know you then. If I had, the thing—call it an epigram if you like—would never have been written. How could it, when——?'

Here the bushes were parted, and a face—a tanned, handsome, open face it was, albeit just now the expression was not too pleasant—showed in the interstices. Miss Lindsay nodded brightly.

'Come in, Ralph,' she said.

'Very sorry, I'm sure,' said the new-comer. 'I didn't know, Nell'—— Then he disappeared.

Miss Lindsay smiled.

'Captain Havelock seems—out of sorts,' remarked her companion, sitting down again.

'Probably he is looking for my mother,' said she. 'I told him to attend to her.'

'He is a capital fellow,' he said indifferently. 'Done something in India, hasn't he?'

'A small affair of outposts,' she replied, in the same tone. Only, perhaps, it was as well that he was not studying her eyes very intently at that moment. 'He held a fort somewhere on the frontier for a fortnight against a couple of thousand tribesmen, with only a European sergeant and fifty Sikhs under him; and he was reduced to thirty rounds of ammunition and no provisions before he was relieved. It is quite a common thing out there. He told me so himself.'

'He is modest—as well as lucky,' said Holland. 'You and he are old friends, Miss Lindsay?'

'We were brought up together.'

'Like brother and sister?'

'Exactly. We quarrel quite as much, at least.'

'And make it up, I dare say? But I am sure the quarrels are not serious. Apropos, am I forgiven?'

'Was there a crime, Mr Holland? Really, I have forgotten.'

'We were discussing'——

'George Meredith, was it not?'

'Then I am *not* forgiven for that unfortunate fault of my youth? You are very hard, Miss Lindsay. You have taught me the error of my ways, and yet you refuse to credit the conversion! How can I convince you? I am quite serious'——

'Oh! I hope not,' she said. 'It is too warm for anything but frivolity.' He reddened a little, and nervously plucked the grass round him. Miss Lindsay watched him with some curiosity out of the corners of her eyes: the symptoms were not unknown to her. 'There is a green thing on your coat, Mr Holland,' she went on.

'Thanks.' He flicked the insect off. 'I have something to say, Miss Lindsay—a kind of confession. It is stupid; but I don't quite know how to say it.'

'Is it necessary?' she asked innocently. 'I don't like confessions, Mr Holland. We are Low Church people.'

'It means a lot to me,' he continued, and again there was silence. Then he rose for the second time, perhaps feeling that an upright position conduces to a proper dignity.

She perceived her opening, and rose also. 'It *is* time we were returning,' she remarked.

'Don't go just yet, Miss Lindsay,' he pleaded, putting out a hand to detain her. 'I want you to listen to me for a moment. I won't keep you if'——

But already she was half-hidden by the shrubbery, and her only answer was a bewildering smile. He had perforce to follow.

'It seems more crowded than ever,' she said as they picked their way through the throng. 'Ah! there are my mother and Captain Havelock. Shall we join them?—I hope you are attending to your duties, Ralph? Mr Holland and I have been discussing Meredith—and things. Tired, mother? Oh! you must be. Mr Holland, will you find my mother a seat somewhere—near the band, if you can? The Hungarians are so good.'

'Delighted,' he replied. Then lower: 'I may see you again before you go, Miss Lindsay?'

'If you can,' she repeated.

She watched them until they were lost in the crowd, and then deliberately led Captain Havelock back to the little nook. Some girls have no originality. But it was still empty.

'Better sit down, Ralph,' she said, taking her old place.

'Thanks; I prefer to stand,' he said stiffly.

'It is a matter of taste—or of comfort.' She gave him a swift glance. 'Not up to Simla, is it?'

'I'm sick of it. Beastly pack. I haven't had a chance of speaking to you all afternoon, Nell.'

'Philanthropy is its own reward,' she said.

'It's not that—Mrs Lindsay is all right. But there's that scribbling fellow who's always dangling after you.'

'He is very amusing—and clever.'

'Is he? He doesn't know one end of a gun from the other, and I suppose he thinks that horses were invented to drag the Chelsea 'bus—or wherever he stays.'

'Why, dear boy, to be a groom is not man's chief end. And you are very rude. Mr Holland speaks very nicely of you.'

'Confound his impudence!' and, by way of relief, he proceeded to kick a hole in Mrs Gurdon's turf. 'Look here, Nell,' he said presently; 'I'm going off to Egypt.'

'Indeed! I thought winter was the proper season. Won't it be rather warm there just now?'

'That is, if they'll have me,' he continued, paying no heed. 'I've volunteered for Dongola. Kitchener is going up to Khartoum in the autumn—at least I hope so.'

'In Cook's boats? What fun!'

'It will be—for Fuzzy and the dervishes. But you might have the decency to say you are sorry, Nell. I mayn't come back, you know.'

'So that is why you told me?' she asked. 'Don't you think it is rather crude, Captain Havelock?' But she was not looking at him, being engaged in tracing fancy patterns on the grass. Not that it would have mattered; for he, on his part, was also regarding the point of the sunshade with apparent interest.

'Oh, I dare say that writing chap would have done it better,' he said savagely. 'It's his trade. I suppose you mean to marry the beggar, Nell?'

'His name is Holland,' she suggested.

'I know that. You can see his portrait in any illustrated paper for a sixpence. It's in them all.'

'Which is really no reason why he shouldn't be addressed properly, is it? I have some idea that I have seen another portrait in the same places, with the letters D.S.O. after the name.'

'You need not get nasty. Besides, you haven't told me yet if you are engaged to him.'

'Well, you see'—here she ventured another glance—'he hasn't asked me yet.'

'I suppose you *will* marry him, though,' he persisted. 'It's natural enough, perhaps—he's a genius and all that—and of course I'm not. Wait a minute, Nell! I can't stand this any longer, and I'm bound to have it out for good. You were always cleverer than I was; but you know what I've wished for ever since I was an unlicked cub at Eton. I wasn't afraid to tell you *then*. You remember, Nell?'

'I remember thinking that those lickings—which you did not get—might have done you good.'

'Well, you didn't say so! And all the time I was stewing in India it was the same; and when I was down with fever in the plains I kept shouting one name—so the doctor told me.'

'It was in very bad taste,' she murmured.

'Oh! Then that fort on the frontier, with the Waziris howling round—and not five minutes' sleep on end for fear they should rush us—and the grub running out—and the only idea in my head was to see it through somehow, and get home to ask you to marry me! There, Nell, it's out at last!'

She was looking at him now, but there was a world of reproach—and perhaps something else—in her eyes. '*You* haven't asked me yet!' she cried.

'But, Nell—good heavens!—you don't mean to say'——

And then—well, in some mysterious fashion he

managed to gain possession of her hands, and to say the rest without words. As for her:

'You might have seen it, you foolish boy!' she said.

And that was all.

Except that, a little later, she met Mr Holland.

'I have been looking for you, Miss Lindsay,' he said; 'I had something to say. Not going already, surely? I may call to-night, then? I need not tell you what it is—perhaps you can guess—I—I hope so.'

'I think it would be better not to come, Mr Holland,' she replied, giving him her hand. 'I am sorry, but—will you oblige me by considering the episode as closed? I am engaged to Captain Havelock.'

UNCLAIMED FORTUNES.

By Sydney H. Preston.



EW people would imagine that news of very considerable windfalls is occasionally to be gleaned from what is generally supposed to be the driest of dry reading—parliamentary returns. Yet remarkable facts and figures relating to hidden wealth are annually to be found in such official papers, and during the parliamentary session just closed some interesting particulars have come to light.

Funds in Chancery.—The receipts and transfers into the Supreme Court of Judicature (England) during the year ended 29th February 1896 were £15,383,257, 1s. 1d. This sum, added to the balance in hand on 1st March 1895, makes a grand total of £76,768,417, 3s. 5d. After payments out of court to successful claimants and others, amounting to £17,035,648, 14s. 10d., there remained in hand, in cash and securities, on 29th February 1896, the large balance of £59,732,768, 8s. 7d., exclusive of a large item under the head of 'Foreign Currencies.' The proportion of this balance which may be classed as 'unclaimed' is not stated, but no less than £2,327,822, 13s. 5d. has been appropriated, in the absence of claimants, to various objects. The Consolidated Fund is liable in respect of this appropriation in the event of legitimate heirs at any time substantiating their claims. The number of suitors' accounts is 49,924, of which some 5000 relate to funds unclaimed between 1720 and 1877.

The funds in the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) on 30th September 1896 were £5,381,213, 4s. 8d. In the Chancery Division there is a large sum of unclaimed money, but the exact amount is not stated. More than £250,000, part of such unclaimed funds, has been appropriated towards the cost of building the Law Courts and Law Library in Dublin.

Unclaimed Dividends on Government Stocks.—The dividends due and not demanded on 2nd April 1896 were £288,545, 2s. 8d.; on 3rd July, £276,374, 12s. 6d.; on 2nd October, £288,986, 10s. 6d.; and on 2nd January last, £265,303, 0s. 7d. The greater portion of these sums were advanced to the government, pursuant to Act of Parliament, till claimants appear. The total amount of accumulated unclaimed government stock and dividends is about £5,000,000.

Unclaimed Dividends (Bankruptcy).—The Consolidated Fund is liable in respect of a sum of £1,141,319, 2s. 6d., part of the unclaimed money arising from bankrupts' estates. The Exchequer is also liable for the sum of £39,787, 12s. 5d., interest on South Sea Stock, paid over to the government between the years 1845–52.

Estates reverting to the Crown.—Intestates' estates in England, of the value of £47,654, 19s. 4d., fell to the Crown during 1896 in the absence of heirs or by reason of illegitimacy. The balances in hand at the commencement of the year were £125,275, 15s. 8d., and, after payment of the Crown's share of estates, grants to next-of-kin, &c., the balances on 31st December last were £119,397, 8s. 3d. A similar return relating to intestates' estates in Scotland shows that on the same date the Queen's Remembrancer had balances in hand amounting to £40,316, 11s. 3d.

Army Prize-Money.—The balance of unclaimed army prize-money in hand on 31st March 1896 was £77,138, 9s. It is interesting to note that during the preceding year only £13, 7s. 5d. was paid to soldiers or their representatives, while £1620, 19s. 2d. was utilised towards the maintenance of Chelsea Hospital and grounds.

Soldiers' Unclaimed Balances.—The unclaimed effects of soldiers, accumulated since 1863, has reached £140,848, 1s. 3d. This fund has been transferred to the Patriotic Fund Commissioners.

Naval Prize-Money.—The unclaimed naval prize-money due to sailors or their representatives on 31st March 1897 was £261,958, 16s. 10d. There are also considerable sums in hand arising from unclaimed wages and effects of deceased seamen.

Unclaimed Bank Deposits.—Mr J. E. Gordon, M.P., suggested the advantage of such legislation as would grant to the State custody of unclaimed funds now in the hands of bankers and others; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer regretted that he could not undertake to deal with the matter in the manner suggested.

Other returns might be noticed, but the foregoing jottings seem to be sufficient to justify the publication of an annual list of all unclaimed funds in government departments. Such a return would certainly be more widely read than most of the parliamentary papers at present issued.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE FATE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT'S MANUSCRIPTS.

PART I.

LORD TENNYSON once said, 'I would have given anything to have seen Sir Walter Scott.' To him 'he was the most chivalrous literary figure of this century, and the author with the widest range since Shakespeare.'

Many of us who might also like to have seen him must rest content with his works, or a sight of his manuscript. It is not easy to measure the prodigious literary activity of Sir Walter Scott, for he flung off letters, poems, essays, review articles, and his matchless novels with marvellous ease and felicity, and his flowing, lawyer-trained handwriting betrays wonderfully few corrections and interlineations. Of his manuscripts, of which over fifty were on view at the Scott Centenary Exhibition in Edinburgh in 1871, whole pages of the novels might be seen without one change. In the case of Scott, writing was begun at first as a labour of love; by-and-by it became a necessity of his nature, then an additional necessity when he was plunged into his own and the financial difficulties of others; and there is no braver story in literature than that of the heroic efforts he made to remove a mountain of debt, with failing powers and a tired and worn-out brain. 'After all,' he said to his friend Morritt in the heyday of his reputation, 'scribbling is an odd propensity. I don't believe there is any ointment, even that of the *Edinburgh Review*, which can cure the infected.' An edition of his entire works issued in 1871 occupied a hundred volumes. That meant much toil and the covering of an immense amount of manuscript either by his own hand or through dictation by the hand of an amanuensis. The manuscripts are in manageable bulk, but the weight of the stereotype plates from which one edition of his works was printed was twenty-eight tons.

One gazes with wonder at any one of the manuscript volumes left by Scott, which the printing-press has multiplied beyond all hope of reckoning. For instance, three million volumes alone of one of the cheaper issues were sold between 1851 and 1890. This was through Messrs A. & C. Black. Robert Cadell, who held the copyrights for the twenty years previously, sold at least two million volumes. Of the people's editions of the writings, in weekly sheets, over eight millions of sheets were printed during the same period. Constable, their first publisher, had also done well with the dearer form. Now various publishing houses have vied with each other in reprinting them. Who can estimate the widespread pleasure and profit from the perusal of these writings? Scott in this respect has been, and is still, a great benefactor, not to speak of the army of papermakers, printers, and bookbinders to whom he has given employment.

There is no evidence that Sir Walter himself set any value on his manuscripts; at least, he never showed the slightest desire to retain them in his own possession. Although, like Mr Gladstone's post-cards, Scott manuscript is plentiful, yet when it changes hands it steadily rises in value. For instance, *Old Mortality*, which Tennyson thought his greatest novel, and for which Cadell paid £33, was sold at Sotheby's in June 1897 for £600; while the *Lady of the Lake*, which brought 264 guineas at Cadell's sale, again changed hands at the same time for £1290. This manuscript is all in the author's own hand, and exactly in the condition in which it was sent to the printer. *Old Mortality* had been bought by F. Richardson from Mrs W. J. Paton, a daughter of R. Cadell. *Rob Roy*, presented to Lockhart by Cadell, was sold about three years ago to Mr William Law for £600. It seems a misfortune that Scott's manuscripts have been scattered to the four winds of heaven. A room in the Scott Monument, Edinburgh, or at Abbotsford, would have been a suitable abiding-place for them.

When the authorship of the novels was being jealously kept, the usual proceeding on Scott's part was to hand over his tales as written to James Ballantyne, who had them copied for press. The popularity of *Marmion* led Constable to ask Ballantyne to preserve all future manuscripts. Although Scott used an amanuensis freely, yet much of his

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best writing was done by his own hand, in the early morning, in his 'den' at 39 Castle Street, at Ashestiel, or his study at Abbotsford. In addition to authorship he had always a heavy letter-bag—a considerable tax on his good-nature, purse, and patience.

After seeing the small parlour, some twelve feet deep by eleven wide, with its single window, on the north side of the ground-floor at Ashestiel, the home of Scott when he wrote, it was presumed, the greater part of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *Lady of the Lake*, and began *Waverley*, John Ruskin concluded that a small chamber, 'with a fair world outside: such are the conditions, as far as I know or can gather, of all greatest and best mental work.' We fancy everything depends upon the kind of man you have got within the small chamber.

Miss Russell of Ashestiel afterwards corrected this statement of Ruskin's. It appears that the small study here described was a storeroom in Scott's time, and that the quaint, old-fashioned room on the east side of the entrance-porch, with one window, was his writing-room, while he kept his books upstairs in his dressing-room. When occupied by Scott it had two additional windows, one on each side of the fireplace, from which the Tweed was visible. His greyhounds, Douglas and Percy, were always going in and out of these windows while he was busy with *Marmion*. For this, and all the Scott localities, the reader is recommended to consult that beautiful volume, the *Haunts and Homes of Scott*, by Mr G. G. Napier, or Mrs Maxwell-Scott's *Abbotsford*.

But much more was written by Scott in his 'den' at 39 Castle Street, a square, small room behind his dining-room. It had a single Venetian window, opening on a very small patch of turf; and according to Lockhart, the aspect of the place was rather 'sombrous.' The walls were clad with books, systematically arranged; the volumes for immediate reference lay on a small movable frame. The massive writing-table was constructed after the pattern of one at Rokeby, with a desk on either side, at one of which he worked, his amanuensis being opposite. It had small tiers of drawers reaching all round to the floor. Session papers lay on the top; and on the desk, besides the manuscript at which he might be writing, lay parcels of letters and proof-sheets, neatly done up in red tape. His writing apparatus was an old box, richly carved, lined with crimson velvet, with ink-bottle and taper-stand in silver, all in perfect order, as Dickens liked his table and room to be. Lockhart recalls, when at a gathering of young men in George Street in a room overlooking Scott's study, how the sight of 'that confounded hand,' as Scott filled page after page, kept the host from enjoying himself. 'I have been watching it,' he said; 'it fascinates my eye—it never stops; page after page is finished and thrown on that heap of MS., and still it goes on unmoved, and so it will be until candles are brought in, and God knows how long after that.'

His study at Abbotsford with its private entrance will be familiar to most people. His usual habits were to rise at 5 A.M., light his own fire when it was required, and shave and dress with care and precision. Arrayed in a shooting-jacket, or whatever garment he meant to use for the day, he would be at his desk by 6 A.M., with all his papers arranged before him in accurate order, and his books of reference ready on the floor. Such were the conditions and surroundings of Scott when much of his best work was done.

Sir Walter, then on terms of the greatest friendliness with Constable, presented him on 10th March 1823 with thirteen volumes of the original manuscripts of all his works then in his possession. Scott's letter ran as follows:

'CASTLE STREET, *10th March* 1823.

'DEAR CONSTABLE,—You, who have so richly endowed my little collection, cannot refuse me the pleasure of adding to yours. I beg your acceptance of a parcel of MSS., which I know your partialities will give more value to than they deserve, and only annex the condition that they shall be scrupulously concealed during the author's life, and only made forthcoming when it may be necessary to assert his right to be accounted the writer of these novels.

'I enclose a note to Mr Guthrie Wright, who will deliver to you some of them which were in poor Lord Kinnedder's possession; and I will send some from Abbotsford, which will, I think, nearly complete the whole, though there may be some missing leaves.

'I will set about the Romance (for *Encyclopædia Britannica*) immediately, which will relieve my other labours. I hope you are not the worse of our very merry party yesterday.—Yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT.'

The merry party mentioned above was the first Bannatyne Club dinner, at which Scott presided. This club, of which he was the moving spirit, had for its object the printing of Scottish books of history and antiquities. William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinnedder, a bosom-friend of Sir Walter's, was a little man of feeble make, with 'small, elegant features, hectic cheek, and soft hazel eyes, the index of the quick, sensitive spirit within.' He it was who was 'chased out of the world by a calumny, killed by its foul breath.' In a word, a trumped-up story was circulated to his hurt, which broke his health and his heart.

On the envelope of the above letter Constable wrote, 'The most kind and valuable letter I ever received;' and in his reply a fortnight later he said that he would have great pride in 'preserving these invaluable treasures as memorials of your liberality and confidence; indeed, the gift is such as you only could bestow—and, you will forgive me for adding, such as you yourself only would have made. The whole shall be carefully arranged with my own hand, and be forthcoming when required.' Then the shrewdness of the publisher showed itself.

Constable forecasts the day when there would be attempts at illustrating the novels, when notes would be written full of absurdities and blunders. With Scott's consent he would get a set of all the novels, tales, and romances interleaved and neatly done up, which might be placed ready to his hand, when, if so disposed, the author could himself add suitable notes on the characters, scenes, and incidents. This was the earliest suggestion of the annotated edition of Scott's works, of which his creditors and Cadell, his publisher, were to reap the main benefit.

After Constable's failure there arose a delicate question as to the ownership of these Waverley manuscripts; did they really belong to the bankrupt estate? Lord Newton decided that they did, and these were sold by Evans, 93 Pall Mall, on 19th August 1831, for £317. One of the lot in 1897, as we have seen, brought double the amount of the whole thirteen. Constable had begun to collect Scott's manuscripts before the date of the gift already recorded. In 1821 he had noted on the flyleaf of *Rokeby* that he also possessed *Marmion*, *Don Roderick* and *Field of Waterloo*, *Lord of the Isles*, and *Life of Swift*. He added that 'the original MS. of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was not preserved; such things not having been thought important till the publication of *Marmion*, when I desired Mr Ballantyne to preserve the manuscript for me.' At that time John Ballantyne had the original MS. of the *Lady of the Lake*. We believe there is a copy of the original edition of the *Lay* in the library at Windsor Castle with Scott's MS. annotations.

The following are the prices realised in 1831 for Constable's manuscripts. A note in the catalogue was to the effect that these were all in the handwriting of Sir Walter Scott, and that the annals of literature scarcely afforded a similar instance of facility of composition. 'The public will be astonished to perceive the few erasures, alterations, or additions which occur from the first conceptions of the author to the final transmission to the press.' Although the saleroom was crowded by those curious to see these manuscripts, the public might be justly surprised to remark the small sums they brought. The first six were perfect, or nearly so; the rest were not complete. Some of them were bought on commission:

	Price.	Purchaser.
The Monastery	£18 0 0	Mr Thorpe.
Guy Mannering	27 10 0	Mr Thorpe.
Old Mortality	33 0 0	Mr Robertson.
Antiquary	42 0 0	Captain Basil Hall.
Rob Roy	50 0 0	Mr Wilks, M.P.
Peveril of the Peak	42 0 0	Mr Cochran.
Waverley	18 0 0	Mr Wilks, M.P.
The Abbot	14 0 0	Messrs Poole & Edwards.
Ivanhoe	12 0 0	Mr Rumbold, M.P.
The Pirate	12 0 0	Mr Molteno.
Fortunes of Nigel	16 16 0	Mr J. Bain.
Kenilworth	17 0 0	Mr Wilks, M.P.
Bride of Lammermoor	14 14 0	Captain Basil Hall.
	£317 0 0	

A second collection of Scott's manuscripts was sold by private bargain to Cadell on November 9, 1833. These were the property of David Constable, advocate, son of the publisher, and consisted of the poems already mentioned as belonging to his father. In addition Cadell purchased the early letters of Scott in five quarto volumes (1796-1832). The price he paid for the letters was £105, and for the poems only £60, which contrasts strongly with the price recently brought by the *Lady of the Lake*, but which had evidently been regulated by the poor prices of the sale in 1831.

Guy Mannering, here bought on commission for Mr Heber, was resold in 1836 for £63, and was bought, it is said, for the Duke of Devonshire. It was sold at Sotheby's in 1880, 'forming a select portion of Lord Clare's books,' and brought £390. It is understood to have gone to America. *Rob Roy*, resold in 1847, was bought by Cadell and presented to Lockhart, and changed hands three years ago, as we have said, for £600. Another fragment of the *Bride of Lammermoor* was in the hands of Christopher Douglas in 1871; David Laing had a fragment of the *Legend of Montrose* at the same date; the *Monastery*, bought for Heber as above, passed into the hands of Sir Thomas Phillips, Middlehill, Worcestershire, for £45, 3s.; the *Abbot*, as will afterwards be seen, passed into the hands of John Murray; *Kenilworth*, bought at the Wilks sale in 1847 by Peter Cunningham for £16, was resold in 1855, and bought for the British Museum; the *Pirate* is in the hands of the widow of the Rev. Dr R. H. Stevenson, Edinburgh, second eldest daughter of Cadell; *Peveril*, bought on commission in 1831 for Mr E. V. Utterson, passed into the hands of Sir W. Tite.

The manuscript of the *Pirate* has the following note on the flyleaf in Cadell's handwriting (1834): 'A part of this, the original manuscript of the *Pirate*, purchased by me at the auction on 19th August, 1831. What makes it complete I received from Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford, on 9th April 1831.' The three volumes are bound in one, and eight pages are awanting. We are indebted for this and several other important facts to Cadell's grandson, Mr J. H. Stevenson, advocate, Edinburgh.

Mr Robert Cadell, successor to Constable as Scott's publisher, had twenty-seven manuscript volumes, bound in full leather, with his crest in an oval ribbon on each side—a stag's head and the motto, *Vigilantia non cadet*. These he kept in a cabinet in his publishing office, 31 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh. Of the poetical works Cadell had *Marmion*, *Lady of the Lake*, *Don Roderick* and *Field of Waterloo*, *Rokeby*, *Lord of the Isles*, *Introduction to Popular Poetry*, *Halidon Hill*, &c. He had in 1835 also twelve of the Waverley Novels—namely, *Old Mortality*, *Abbot*, *Pirate*, *Quentin Durward*, *St Ronan's Well*, *Redgauntlet*, *Tales of the Crusaders*, *Woodstock*, *Chronicles of the Canongate*, *Anne of Geierstein*, *Count Robert of Paris*, and *Castle Dangerous*, the last of which was in

Mr and Mrs Laidlaw's handwriting. Of two fragmentary volumes, one contained about a volume of *Ivanhoe* with a small portion of *Waverley*, and the other a portion of *Tales of a Grandfather*. There were also five volumes of original letters (1796–1832).

In the same cabinet there was an interleaved set of the whole series of the Waverley Novels in thirty-two volumes, containing the new prefaces and annotations—the suggestion of Constable (which proved such a success) at last carried out. This, we believe, is now in the hands of Messrs A. & C. Black. The Abbotsford edition cost more than £40,000 to produce. From 1829, when the novels came into Cadell's hands, until his death in 1849, as we have seen, the sale of Scott's works never slackened; while he paid no less a sum than £37,000 for Scott's copyrights before he had them under his wing, and not £8500 as stated in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. His own fortune of £130,000 was mainly earned by the sale of Scott's works. The profits gained have been set down at £300,000.

A writer (from internal evidence, apparently Mr Robert Chambers), who saw Cadell's manuscript volumes, and described them in *Chambers's Journal* for 1835, was struck, as every one has been, by the neatness and uniformity of the handwriting and the absence of blotting and interlineation. In *Ivanhoe* especially he noted that there was as much manuscript as would fill five printed pages without a single correction, or even the appearance of a slip of the pen. The songs introduced seemed to have been struck off with the same easy grace as the connecting narrative. In the manuscript of the poems, the battle of Flodden, in *Marmion*, with its fiery, galloping verse, seemed also, so far as the handwriting showed anything, to have flowed as easily as the rest of the poem. Some of the manuscripts bore evidence of having been sent by post, in considerable portions at a time, and, as the postmark showed, from different parts of the country. The beginning of *Marmion*, with its description of a Scottish pastoral winter, addressed from Ashestiel to Mr Stewart Rose, was actually sent from London under a frank from the then Marquis of Abercorn.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER III.—THE SPATE IN THE TWEED.

THE year 1683 was with us the driest year in any man's memory. From the end of April to the end of July we had scarce a shower. The hay-harvest was ruined beyond repair, and man and beast were sick with the sultry days. It was on the last Monday of July that I, wearied with wandering listlessly about the house, bethought myself of riding to Peebles to see the great match at bowls which is played every year for the silver horn. I had no expectation of a keen game, for the green was sure to be well-nigh ruined with the sun, and men had lost spirit in such weather. But the faintest interest is better than purposeless idleness, so I roused myself from languor and set out.

I saddled Maisie the younger—this is a family name among our horses—and rode down by the Tweed-side to the town. The river ran in the midst of a great bed of sun-baked gravel, a little trickle that a man might step across. When I came to the Manor Pool I stood still in wonder, for there for the first time in my life I saw the stream dry. Manor, which is in winter a roaring torrent and at other times a clear, full stream, had not a drop of running water in its bed—naught but a few stagnant pools green with slime. It was a grateful change to escape from the sun into the coolness of the Neidpath woods; but even there a change was seen, for the ferns hung their fronds wearily, and the moss had lost all its greenness. When once more I came out to the sun, its beating on my face was so fierce that it almost burned, and I was glad when I came to the town and the shade of tree and dwelling.

The bowling-green of Peebles, which is one of the best in the country, lies at the west end of the High Street, at the back of the Castle Hill. The turf had been kept with constant waterings, but notwithstanding it looked gray and withered. Here I found half the men-folk of Peebles assembled, and many from the villages near, to see the match, which is the greatest event of the month. Each player wore a riband of a special colour. Most of them had stripped off their coats and jerkins to give their arms free-play, and some of the best were busied in taking counsel with their friends as to the lie of the green. The landlord of the 'Cross-keys' was there, with a great red favour stuck in his hat, looking, as I thought, too fat and rubicund a man to have a steady eye. Near him was Peter Crusterackit the tailor, a little wiry man, with legs bent from sitting cross-legged, thin active hands, and keen eyes, well used to the sewing of fine work. Then there were carters and shepherds, stout fellows with bronzed faces and great muscular chests; and the miller of the Wauk-mill, who was reported the best bowl-player in the town. Some of the folk had come down, like myself, merely to watch, and among them I saw Andrew Greenlees the surgeon, who had tended me what time I went over the cauld. A motley crowd of the odds and ends of the place hung around or sat on the low wall—poachers and black-fishers and all the riff-raff of the town.

The jack was set, the order of the game arranged,

and the play commenced. For some time I watched the players. Then, when the game no longer amused me, I fell to looking over the country, down to the edge of the water, where the small thatched cottages were yellow in the heat, and away up the broad, empty channel of the Tweed.

Even as I looked I saw a strange thing on the river-bank, which chained my languid curiosity. For down the haugh, swinging along at a great pace, came a man the like of whom I had seldom seen. He ran at a steady trot, more like a horse than a human creature, with his arms set close by his sides, and without bonnet or shoes. His head swung from side to side as with excessive weariness, and even at that distance I could see how he panted. In a trice he was over Peebles Water and had ascended the bank to the bowling-green, cleared the low dike, and stood gaping before us. Now I saw him plainer, and I have rarely seen a stranger sight. He seemed to have come a great distance, but no sweat stood on his brow; only a dun copper colour marked the effect of the hot sun. His breeches were utterly ragged, and in places showed his long supple limbs. A shock of black hair covered his head and shaded his swarthy face. His eyes were wild and keen as a hawk's, and his tongue hung out of his mouth like a dog's in a chase. Every man stopped his play and looked at the queer new-comer. A whisper went round the place that it was that 'fule callant frae Brochtoun;' but this brought no information to me.

The man sat still for maybe three minutes with his eyes fixed on the ground as if to recover breath. Then he got up with dazed glances, like one wakening from sleep. He stared at me, then at the players, and burst into his tale, speaking in a high, excited voice.

'I hae run frae Drummeller to bring ye word. Quick, and get the folk out o' the waterside hooses, or the feck o' the toun 'll be soomin' to Berwick in an 'oor.'

No one spoke, but all stared as if they took him for a madman.

'There 's been an awfu' storm up i' the muirs,' he went on panting, 'and Tweed 's comin' doun like a mill-race. The herd o' Powmood telt me, and I got twa 'oors start o 't, and cam' off here what I could rin. Get the folk out o' the waterside hooses when I bid ye, wi' a' their gear and plenishing, or there 'll no' be sae muckle as a groat's worth left by nicht. Up wi' ye and haste, for there 's nae time to lose. I heard the roar o' the water miles off, louder than ony thunderstorm, and mair terrible than an army wi' banners. Quick, ye auld doited bodies, if ye dinna want to hae mourning and lamentation i' the toun o' Peebles!'

At this, as you may believe, a great change passed over all. Some made no words about it, but rushed into the town to give the alarm; others stared stupidly, as if waiting for more news; while some were disposed to treat the whole matter as a hoax. This enraged the newsbearer beyond telling. Springing up, he pointed to the western sky, and far off we saw a thick blackness creeping up the skyline. 'If ye 'll no' believe me,' said he, 'will ye believe the finger o' God?' The word and the sight convinced the most distrusting.

Now the Tweed, unlike all other rivers of my knowledge, rises terribly at the first rain, and travels slowly, so that Tweedsmuir may be under five feet of water and Peebles high and dry. This makes the whole valley a place of exceeding danger in sultry weather, for no man knows when a thunderstorm may break in the hills and send the stream down a raging torrent. This, too, makes it possible to hear word of a flood before it comes, and, by God's grace, to provide against it.

The green was soon deserted. I rushed down to the waterside houses, which were in the nearest peril, and in shorter time than it takes to tell we had the people out, with as much of their belongings as were worth the saving. Then we hastened to the low-lying cottages on Tweed Green, and did likewise. Some of the folk seemed willing to resist, because, as they said, 'Wha kenned but that the body micht be a leear, and they werena to hae a' this wark for naething?' For the great floods were but a tradition, and only the old men had seen the ruin which the spate could work. Nevertheless, even these were convinced by a threatening sky and a few words from the newsbearer's trenchant tongue. Soon the High Street and the wynds were thick with household belongings, and the Castle Hill was crowded with folk to see the coming of the flood.

By this time the grim line of black had grown over half the sky, and down fell great drops of rain into the white, sun-baked channel. It was strange to watch these mighty splashes falling into the little stagnant pools and the runlets of flowing water. And still the close, thick heat hung over all, and men looked at the dawnings of a storm with sweat running over their brows. With the rain came a mist, a white, ghastly haze, which obliterated the hills and came down nigh to the stream. A sound, too, grew upon our ears, at first far away and dim, but increasing till it became a dull, hollow thunder, varied with a strange crackling, swishing noise which made a man eerie to listen to. Then all of a sudden the full blast of the thing came upon us. Men held their breaths as the wind and rain choked them and drove them back. It was scarce possible to see far before, but the outlines of the gorge of Neidpath fleeted through the drift, whence the river issued. Every man turned his eyes thither and strained them to pierce the gloom.

Suddenly, round the corner of the hill, appeared a great yellow wave crested with white foam and filling the whole space. Down it came, roaring and hissing, mowing the pines by the waterside as a reaper mows down hay with a scythe. Then with a mighty bound it broke from the hill-barriers and spread over the haugh. Now the sound was like

the bubbling of a pot ere it boils. We watched it in terror and admiration as it swept on its awful course. In a trice it was at the cauld, and the cauld disappeared under a whirl of foam; now it was on the houses, and the walls went in like nut-shells and the rubble was borne onward. A cry got up of 'The bridge!' and all hung in wonder as it neared the old stonework, the first barrier to the torrent's course, the brave bridge of Peebles. It flung itself on it with fiendish violence, but the stout masonwork stood firm, and the boiling tide went on through the narrow arches, leaving the bridge standing unshaken, as it had stood against many a flood. As we looked, we one and all broke into a cheer in honour of the masons who had made so trusty a piece of work.

I found myself in the crowd of spectators standing next to the man who had brought the tidings. He had recovered his breath and was watching the sight with a look half of interest and half of vexation. When all was past, and only the turbid river remained, he shook himself like a dog and made to elbow his way out. 'I maun be off,' he said, speaking to himself, 'and a sair job I'll hae gettin' ower Lyne Water.' When I heard him I turned round and confronted him. There was something so pleasing about his face, his keen eyes and alert head, that I could not forbear from offering him my hand and telling him of my admiration for his deed. I was still but a boy, and he was clearly some years my elder, so I made the advance, I doubt not, with a certain shyness and hesitancy. He looked at me sharply and smiled.

'Ye're the young laird o' Barns,' said he. 'I ken ye weel, though ye maybe are no acquant wi' me. I'm muckle honoured, sir; and gin ye'll come Brochtoun-ways some time and speir for Nicol Plenderleith, he'll tak' ye to burns that were never fished afore and hills that never heard the sound o' a shot.'

I thanked him, and watched him slipping through the crowd till he was lost to view. This was my first meeting with Nicol Plenderleith, of whose ways and doings this tale shall have much to say. The glamour of the strange fellow was still upon me as I set myself to make my road home. I am almost ashamed to tell of my misfortunes; for after crossing the bridge and riding to Manor Water, I found that this stream likewise had risen and had not left a bridge in its whole course. So I had to go up as far as St Gordian's Cross before I could win over it, and did not reach Barns till after midnight, where I found my father half-crazy with concern for me, and Tam Todd making ready to go and seek me.

SEA-GIRT SOCOTRA.

SOCOTRA is neither a large nor a commercially important island. Its position, however, on the highway between the Mediterranean and India, and the Far East generally, gives it other claims to fame or notoriety. Situated as it is where the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean combine their waters, Socotra is an important landmark for vessels navigating those seaways. It lies some 220 miles from the Arabian coast and 150 from Cape Guardafui, and may be regarded, in fact, as a sort of outpost to that African headland, whose bold and forbidding character forms such an appropriate finial to the rugged and dreary tracts of sunburnt Somali-land. Seen at a distance from the deck of some liner, Socotra forms a picture at once beautiful and impressive. The island approximates in shape to that of an elongated ellipse, being some 70 miles long and 22 in width, with the major axis running from east to west. Surrounding the coast-line at varying distances from it are numerous reefs, many of them altogether submerged, but still sufficiently near the surface to give evidence of their whereabouts by intercepting and converting into a tumbling mass of white, broken water the heavy swell which ever sweeps upon some part or other of the coast. Beyond the broken surf-line there lies in some parts a sandy beach, in others a bold and rock-strewn shore, which affords a fair index to the inhospitable character of the island itself. But these low-lying regions are of no great extent. They form a sort of girdle round the island proper, for they vary in width from two to four miles, and beyond them rises in grand abruptness the volcanic peaks which form the real Socotra. These, viewed from a passing vessel, with all their repellent features shrouded in purple mist rising skyward from a deep-blue sea, relieved with the white line of broken water, form a picture which, once seen, is never forgotten. A closer inspection of the island, however, discloses numerous ravines or wadys of varying degrees of fertility, permitting communication with the high lands of the interior. Here dwell the nomads who constitute a considerable proportion of the population. Their mode of life does not differ much from that of other nomadic Arabs, their flocks and herds supplying them with the necessities and the means of securing from the more commercial population centred about Tamacreed the luxuries they require. This section of the inhabitants is of mixed origin; Arabs, East Indians, and Portuguese all sharing in the little trade which the island enjoys.

But the seaways surrounding Socotra are, in view of the enormous volume of traffic which navigates them, of quite equal interest with the island itself. The granite mass of Socotra rises with an approach

to abruptness from the sea-bed. In fact, the average depth of the sea-floor upon which Socotra rests may be put down at 1000 fathoms, while seawards from the eastern extremity a depth of 2000 fathoms is rapidly reached. The surface-water about the island drifts in directions which vary with the prevalent winds, and it is the imperfectly understood direction and force of these currents which constitute not the least danger which the island offers to the navigator.

Generally speaking, but two winds are known at Socotra—one from the north-east and the other from the south-west. These are the seasonal aerial movements called the monsoons; and it will be readily understood that these winds are capable of producing oceanic currents which, eddying round Socotra and deflected from the African and Arabian coasts, will produce a variable drift which may carry a vessel miles from her assumed course. It is during the prevalence of the south-west monsoon that Socotra is most dangerous. Then the superheated lands of Asia have superincumbent to them a hot, and consequently rare, atmosphere; and to compensate for this extensive region of low barometric pressure steady winds of increasing force blow in from the south-west. Naturally these winds will attain to their maximum strength during the months of June and July. Coming, too, as they do, from the regions of the southern winter, and crossing an expanse of ocean, they supply all the requirements necessary to enshroud with mist and bathe in a copious rainfall any high lands which intercept them. This monsoon is sometimes called on this account the *wet* monsoon; while, from the force of the wind as compared with the more trifling aerial disturbance produced by the north-east seasonal wind, it is frequently alluded to as the monsoon simply. But perhaps the worst source of danger which this monsoon brings to the navigator is the obscuration of the heavenly bodies by a partially-condensed moisture resulting from the admixture of atmospheres of different temperatures. Thus it is no uncommon experience for a ship making a voyage across the Arabian Sea to be for four days at a stretch unable to obtain an observation.

This implies, of course, great uncertainty as to the vessel's position; and if we add to this the strong winds and heavy seas encountered, and the fact that the surface-drifts are exceedingly variable, it is quite easy to understand that a shipmaster may be carried far out of his course, and that without knowing it. Some such weather-conditions as these doubtless obtained when the *Aden* made her last and fatal voyage from Colombo. Of course it may be urged that, knowing the track as commander and officers would, the disaster should not have happened. But, as we have already shown, the risk factors would be of the greatest. Monthly current-charts of the Indian Ocean, compiled by the Meteorological Office and based upon observations extending over a long period of years, show during the month of June no less than three distinct currents running in different directions between Guardafui and Socotra. Add to these adverse factors the probability that the island was approached during a dark or misty night, and it would have been matter for wonder had the vessel escaped the treacherous reefs that line the coast. But apart from the question of professional failure to avoid Socotra, it must be admitted that the tragedy enacted on the doomed ship brings out into bold relief the sterling self-sacrificing bravery of the British sailors. Of the navigational staff not one has escaped, so far as is known, to tell the official story of the disaster. They died where British sailors never fear to face death—at the post of duty, striving to save the lives of those entrusted to their care. And shortly before the *Aden* was battered to pieces by the fearful seas which swept over her, an equally horrible tragedy of the sea had been enacted but a few miles away. A pilgrim ship, the *Sultan*, bound for India, was overwhelmed by the fury of the monsoon; and had not the *Valetta*, an Australian mail-boat, appeared upon the scene, not a soul would have escaped to tell the tale.

Although the perils of this ocean route are so materially augmented by the interposition of Socotra, and though England has had a vested interest in the island since 1877, and a real stake since 1886, when it practically became a British possession, little or nothing has been done to safeguard from its dangers the enormous tide of shipping which sweeps past its shores. Of this commerce the traffic passing through the Suez Canal may be taken as the approximate measure, and this amounts in a single year to about 3500 vessels of a net tonnage of about eight and a half million tons, of which over seventy per cent. is British. There is thus every reason for the provision of warning lights and fog-signals upon the island of Socotra. And this obligation is strengthened by the fact that a very considerable number of the British vessels navigating the Gulf of Aden have a large passenger-list. Of course it will be maintained by some that ships should give Socotra a wide berth; that there is abundant sea-room for a vessel to avoid the island altogether, and thus run no risk whatever, &c. Man, however, may propose to avoid Socotra, but the uncontrollable forces of wind and sea may dispose otherwise, as they did in the *Aden* case. Besides, if Socotra is not to have light-warnings because vessels need not sight the island, the same argument would be equally applicable against the majority of lighthouse and fog-signal erections. But it is not only sea-girt Socotra which requires bringing into line with the requirements of the times; the shores of the Gulf of Aden also need additional warnings. The straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, though less the 'Gate of Tears' than they were in bygone times, are none the less a place of great peril to the navigator, as, in fact, is the southern section of the Red Sea generally. During the past twelve years over seventy disasters have occurred to British vessels either in the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aden, adjacent to the

dreaded straits. Many of these casualties were strandings of a trivial character, the vessels getting off without having sustained much damage. A study of these cases shows that the chief cause of catastrophe was the unknown currents. Quite recently the unlucky *Oratava*, the steamer which capsized in a London dock, went ashore some twenty-five miles from Perim; and for services rendered the Admiralty Court made an award of £11,000—a sum which shows how serious is the risk a vessel runs by stranding upon a Red Sea coral reef. Currents, of course, are encountered by night as well as day, and it would therefore be almost an impossibility to spend too much money in lighting the shores, insular and continental, of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. A reliable light and fog-signal on Socotra would prove of inestimable value, for in fair weather and foul mariners would not only be warned off the rock-girt coast, but they would also be enabled to fix their position, and so pursue the remainder of their voyage with a more accurate knowledge of their exact whereabouts. Up to the present Socotra has not proved of much use to England. Commercially it never can, for, with the exception of aloes, it produces little or nothing. Strategically it has a potential use; but were a good lighthouse erected upon it, Socotra would become a friend instead of a foe to the mariner, and a valuable link in the chain that connects us with India and our other possessions in the eastern hemisphere.

THE GURNARD ROCK.

CHAPTER II.

ON Monday morning the news was brought to Gabriel Lowry that the Porthillian man was waiting for him on the pier; and Lowry walked down the street with a following of many men and boys, and a few of the coarser women of the place.

The stranger sat at the end of the pier placidly smoking. Lowry advanced towards him, and the expectant crowd fell behind in a half-circle.

'So you 'm come?' said Tregenna, calmly knocking the ashes from his pipe.

'Iss, I 've come,' answered Lowry.

'An' you 've brought a purty tribe at your tail,' continued the other, glancing contemptuously at the crowd.

'I didn't bring 'em; they comed,' said Lowry sullenly.

'Hearken to me, Gabriel Lowry,' said the Porthillian man, rising to his feet; ''tis a likely day for the mackerel, an' my mates 'll be busy. Good fishin', as thee knawst, comes o' the Lord's bounty; but fightin 's a fule's job, an' can be had any day; so, with your favour, us 'll fish to-day an' fight to-morrow.'

'Any time,' answered Lowry; ''tis no odds to me.'

'An' look here, my man,' continued Tregenna. 'I 've got a wife an' two children in Porthillian, an' 'tisn't fitty for me to be makin' a shaw an' a shame of myself before a passel o' St Budoc good-for-norts. I warn't fight 'ee here with these gaping fules around us; but I 'll meet 'ee man to man, us two together, an' us 'll fight it out quiet to ourselves.'

'Anywheres,' assented Lowry.

''Twill be low-water on the Gurnard Rock to-morrow forenoon—us shan't be interfered with there. If you 're man enough you 'll meet me on the Gurnard, an' us 'll fight out this quarrel to the finish.'

'I 'll meet 'ee,' responded Lowry.

'I 'll be here with my boat to-morrow morning: wan boat's enough for two men, though they 'm adversaries. I 'll take 'ee to the Gurnard, an' I 'll bring 'ee back—what 's left of 'ee.'

'So be it,' said Lowry.

Tregenna swung himself lightly from the pier, and dropped into his boat. With a few strokes he put a stretch of water between himself and the disappointed crowd of St Budocians; then, staying his oars for a moment, he called back to Lowry:

'The Gurnard Rock!'

'The Gurnard Rock!' echoed Lowry.

'To-morrow forenoon—I 'll be here with my boat for 'ee in the morning.'

'Right!' shouted Lowry.

He looked strangely handsome, this yellow-bearded Porthillian fellow; there was a fascination in his face, and he spoke throughout the brief parley in a tone of good-humoured disdain.

Lowry watched him as he rowed out to the little fleet of fishing-boats; and he repented in his heart that he had struck the man.

. . . . . .

The little pier at St Budoc was built in 1755, by Lady Deborah Polperro, to the glory of God and the pious memory of her father, Sir Reginald Polperro, for the protection of the fishing-vessels from the waves of the Atlantic. This was originally inscribed upon the granite, but the waves of the Atlantic resented the inscription, and long ago washed it out; they have as yet, however, failed in their frequent attempts to wash away the structure itself.

St Budoc is a gossipy town, where a communal publicity is given to everybody's private affairs, and the pier is its favourite meeting-place, its forum and its lounge. The stones of the parapet are worn and polished by the elbows and haunches of the generations. The children sprawl prone

upon this wide sea-wall, and swop marbles and play at knuckle-dibs; the youths and hobble-de-hoys sit thereon and dangle their legs, and the kicking of heels for a century and a half has worn irregular furrows on the granite; men of graver years will lean upon the wall in a solemn row, and meditatively smoke their pipes; and on fine days old, vacant-eyed men will crawl hither on two sticks, and stare significantly seaward.

The pier juts south, with an extension that trends to the south-east, and in the angle a large block had been dislodged by a storm, leaving a chair-like niche, which by general consent was the privileged seat of Captain John Johns—locally 'Cap'n Jan Jans,' intimately and affectionately 'Old Jansie.'

Captain Johns, retired master of a coasting-schooner, was a short, stoutish man, with a puckered face, a jovial mouth, and gray-blue eyes that looked kindly on the world and found it humorous in the main. He had an encyclopædic knowledge of maritime matters, and could be profitably consulted on anything from an equinoctial gale to the price of a new tar-brush. If a man desired to forecast the weather, the simpler and better way was to ask Captain Johns, the alternative being to consult the barometer at the 'Compass.' This instrument, by the way, was responsible for much of the drinking habits of the fishermen, every reference to it being accompanied by a mug of cider; and on thirsty days the fluctuation of the mercury was a matter of absorbing interest. It is a saying in St Budoc when a man staggers with liquor that the 'b'rometer's purty low.'

It was Tuesday morning, and there were many loungers on the pier, for a fisherman's leisure falls at strange times. Sea and sky were blue with an Italian blueness, and a week's placidity had given a phenomenal clearness to the water, which on this clean coast of rock is translucent fathoms down.

The great topic of conversation was the impending fight. There was at first a strong feeling of resentment at the conditions of privacy, which some considered an unwarrantable infringement of their proper and natural rights as spectators; but the strange compact and the idea of this fight between the two men on a desolate rock was full of romantic possibilities that stimulated the imagination and compensated somewhat for the disappointment. Gossip had already, in local phrase, 'made wonders' of the coming combat. It was to be no mere bout of fisticuffs, but something gladiatorial in fierceness and result. All the rivalry and animosity between St Budoc and Porthillian would culminate in this supreme encounter; and Porthillian was to be licked.

'What do 'ee think of this yer fight, Cap'n Jan?' said old Caleb Hocken the sailmaker.

Captain Johns gravely shook his head. 'I doan't like it. 'Tis onnatural and onseemly for they two poor sawls to be a-lerrupin' one another like haythen on thicky rock, with niver a man to see fair and enjye the sport; to my mind 'tis most onrighteous.'

'Will 'em fight fair with their fistis?' asked Jacob Trewarne (an absurd rumour of weapons was abroad); 'or will there be shootin' or knivin'? I hope there warn't be any foreign iniquity o' that kind.'

'All fighting's bad,' said Polreggan, who had vainly attempted to avert the combat by remonstrating with Gabriel Lowry.

'An' yet there's some rare good fightin' in the Scriptur',' argued Nick Maddern the tinker. He was a gipsy-looking fellow, with silver rings on his brown fingers, and was commonly suspected of rank unbelief.

'Iss, an' some rare good fishing,' responded Polreggan; 'but the fighting's wan end, an' the fishing's t'other, an' I reckon 'tis only the fishing that consarns a man's sawl.'

'As for Scriptur' fightin',' said Joe Kevern, 'they fought for their awn 'ginst their nat'ral enemies; an' when a Porthillian scum comes here an' catches our fish an' rips our nets, what is 'a, so to spake, but a durned Amalekite?'

'Us mustn't take the Scriptur' too literal,' said Captain Johns solemnly; 'that's the mistake old Cap'n Jarvis made. He was mazed wi' drink, an' he imagined in his fulishness that he was King Saul, an' he made Billy the boy stand before 'en and play upon the 'cordian. "I'm mortal sorry there isn't a javelin aboard," says he, "but us must steer as near the Scriptur' as us can;" and wi' that he flinged a handspike at Billy the boy. Now if old Cap'n Jarvis hadn't a-been so durned partic'lar literal he might ha' been sailing the salt say to this day, instead of which he's beached high and dry in Bodmin Asylum.'

'I was niver in a fight myself,' said Calab Hocken, a diminutive, wizened man, 'but I wrastled wanse to Tregartha fair. They matched me 'ginst Anak Varkar—his name warn't rightly Anak, but they called 'en Anak in sport, on account of the stature of 'en—though to my mind 'tisn't fitty to sport wi' Bible names—an' Anak catched me by the slack, an' shaked me like a boy shakes a rabbit; an' he calls to old Moll Trevance the fish-woman, "Spread wide thy apern, Moll; yer's a purty little man for 'ee."'

'The only fit wrastlin' for thee, Uncle Caleb,' said one of the younger men, 'is the wrastlin' o' the sperrit.'

'Trew, trew,' replied the old fellow, with some pride; 'I'm mortal cripply in the back an' limbs; but I was always reckoned terrible strong in supplication.'

At this point there was a cry of 'Yer he comes!' and all eyes were turned to the approaching boat of the Porthillian fisherman.

It must be confessed that the people of St Budoc did not give the stranger a very chivalrous reception. The boys wasted howls upon him long before he was within hail, and when he brought

his boat to the pier-steps he was greeted with a tumult of jeers and denunciations. There were some women of the rougher sort in the crowd, and these were loudest in their maledictions. They flung fish-heads at the man, and epithets that were worse than fish-heads. They derided his birthplace and flung aspersions on his origin. They would gladly have ridiculed his personal appearance, but the fellow was unassailably handsome, and it was a poor expedient to prophesy that he 'widden' look so purty when he comed back.'

As for John Tregenna, he minded their abuse and execrations as little as he heeded the water that dripped from his oars. There was laughter in his eyes as he dodged the fish-offal that never struck him, and he looked up at the crowded row of his assailants with a smile that was half amusement and half disdain.

There was a noisy ovation for Gabriel Lowry as he walked along the beach to the pier, looking stalwart and fit, with an appropriate scowl upon his face. They made a lane for him, and patted him boisterously on the back as he passed to the pier-head; and their fragments of pugilistic counsel were numerous and varied.

'Doan't 'ee spare the toad!' cried one woman, red-faced and raw-elbowed.

'Smite 'en hearty, my sonny, an' be spry with 'en,' said Ned Trewithey the ropemaker.

'He's weightier than thee, Gabe; spar round nimble, and he warn't last!' counselled Nick Maddern.

Perhaps this fistic advice found its highest expression in the impromptu couplet of Captain Johns:

'Hit 'en awft,
And doan't 'ee hit 'en sawft,'

which was afterwards remembered and quoted as a saying of some brilliancy.

To do Gabriel justice, it must be recorded that he ignored these encouragements of his friends, and resented their treatment of his adversary. He turned for a moment as he descended the pier-steps, and cried fiercely to the rabble of women who were simultaneously vociferous as he passed: 'Git 'long home—the whole pack of 'ee!'

As Lowry stepped into the boat Tregenna greeted him with a nod, and said quietly, 'You take the tiller,' and ducked his head at a missile of mackerel, which struck the other in the face.

They were strangely in contrast: Lowry sullen and dark of face, Tregenna yellow-bearded and debonair, looking absolutely joyous in the morning sunshine. The heart of more than one woman secretly changed sides as she watched the man.

Tregenna took the oars and pulled away from the pier amid cheers and hootings—the latter being his share of the mingled valediction.

They were some hundred yards from the shore, when a tall figure broke frantically through the crowd and climbed the sea-wall; a gaunt old man with a ragged white beard and a long-tailed black coat. It was Malachi Praze, the wayside preacher, known in the mining villages as 'Old Wrath-to-come' on account of the fervour of his denunciations; a worthy, half-demented creature, whose picturesque utterances were not without attraction to certain of the rougher people.

He stood on the very edge of the parapet beneath the lantern at the pier-head, and gesticulating wildly with his long arms, cried aloud: 'Turn back, turn back, ye that smite with the fist o' wickedness!' But the boat sped on.

'Turn back!' shrieked Malachi at the top of his voice; 'turn back before your hands be defiled wi' blid and your fingers with iniquity—turn back, ye evil-doers!'

But the boat continued its course, and the evil-doers were beyond hail of imprecation or entreaty.

Lowry steered south-west, and as the boat turned, his eyes sought a certain whitewashed cottage on the slope beyond the coastguard station; and behind the fuchsia hedge he caught the glimpse of a white sun-bonnet and the flutter of a handkerchief.

RARE AND PECULIAR DRUGS.

WERE Wayland Smith at this day in want of the particular drug without which his electuary, to act as antidote to the 'Manna of St Nicholas,' taken in the sturgeon-sauce by the Earl of Sussex, was useless—and which the apothecaries of Fleet Street either knew nothing about or were sceptical of the existence of—he would probably not have occasion to hunt up any obscure Jew chemist for it, nor exercise the passage of wit, or quackery, he found necessary in obtaining it from Zacharias Yoglan. Probably nowadays it would be widely advertised as a patent medicine, warranted to cure a greater list of ills than ever the farrier of the Vale of the White Horse thought flesh heir to. And the quack of to-day, if in possessing it he has not himself attained the 'Elixir of Life,' yet succeeds pretty well in persuading his patients that they may buy it of him; and, in their keenly-aroused faith, will have succeeded, any way, in the second main aim of his ancestral humbug, the alchemist—the ready handling of much gold.

The chemist of to-day is a much less picturesque individual than his mediæval prototype, and the bulk of his orthodox trade far more commonplace in character. The mass of drugs nowadays, including, fortunately, most of those of proved value—

senna, squills, quinine, and so forth—are cheap enough; still, there are yet to be found in his shop a few rare and peculiar ones, around which the imagination and philosophical speculation can have some amount of room for play. A fair indication of this rarity is, naturally, to be found in price; and the layman, running through the items in the price-list of a druggist, could easily pick the rare ones out by remembering this fact alone. Why they should be so is another, and oftentimes interesting, matter.

Saffron, for instance, would strike an ordinary observer as decidedly expensive at fifty-six shillings a pound, until told that it is composed of the central small portions only of the flowers of a species of crocus, seventy thousand of which it takes to yield the material for one pound. The wonder then becomes that it is so cheap, that it can pay to grow and gather at the price. As a matter of fact it has failed to pay the English grower—by this retaining, in the name of his town of Saffron-Walden, but a hint of former importance in this particular direction; French and Spanish soils being more suitable to the full growth of the flowers, and foreign labour cheaper in the work of picking. Its use in medicine has practically died out, bar perhaps the popular belief that, steeped in hot milk or cider, it helps the eruption of measles to fully appear. As a dye in creaming curtains, and to give a rich appearance to cake, it is still, however, in general demand; for which purpose it is well suited, in being both harmless and strong, one grain, composed of the style and stigmas of nine flowers, being sufficient to give a distinct yellow tint to ten gallons of water. Its high price, by the way, has led to a peculiar form of adulteration; for, apart from the crude and commonplace one of dusting with a heavy powder, such as gypsum, to give weight, the similar portions of other and commoner flowers have been specially dyed and worked thoroughly in amongst the genuine ones.

Of similar origin, though chosen for scent in lieu of colour, are the essential oils of many flowers; and easily first of these must rank that of the rose, known commonly as otto, or attar, of roses. Roses being so common, it may be imagined how small the yield of oil must be to account for a quoted price of thirty-six shillings an ounce, or £28 odd per pound; and this to the chemist himself. What it resolves itself into as a retail price is hardly worth going into, as a retail demand—beyond an occasional drop at sixpence upon a handkerchief, upon a special occasion—is unknown; its chief use being in scenting powders and the making up of fancy compound scents. Ten thousand pounds—or nearly five tons—of roses it takes to obtain one pound of the oil. These are distilled with twice their bulk of water, and the otto skimmed—very carefully skimmed—off the surface of the distillate in the receiving vessel. The adulterator has again here a field for action—which he avails himself of—in distilling a proportion of geranium flowers, the oil of which has a somewhat similar rosy smell, with the roses; this paying, in that it takes but the comparatively humble number of five hundred geranium flowers to yield a pound of their oil. Constantinople being a port of shipment, sailors, after their usual amiable weakness of being swindled, buy cheaply there, for presentation to appreciative wives and sweethearts at home, long, narrow, gilded bottles of supposed otto of roses; in reality, bottles which the genuine article has been poured into, and out again, and then filled with a clear, scentless oil of the same appearance and specific gravity as the true; the few remaining drops, clinging to the interior of the bottle, being strong enough to convince the smelling buyer that he has got the right thing on the spot.

Another peculiar—and at a sovereign an ounce rare—vegetable drug, though less harmless and pleasant than those already mentioned, is curare—the arrow-poison of the South American Indian. Very powerful it is as a death-dealer in the rough subcutaneous method of administration, smeared over an arrow-head, of the native exploiters, though it is said to be harmless when not taken directly into the circulation; the natives, at any rate, eat freely of the bodies of animals killed by its means. As a medicine it has been advocated and used as an antidote to strychnine poisoning—setting a thief to catch a thief, this, with a vengeance.

If peculiarity be held to include strength as a poison, we can safely add strychnine, with a dose of one-twentieth, and atropine, the active principle of deadly-nightshade, with that of one-sixtieth, of a grain. Small doses; but the palm must be given, as the very strongest poison, to one yet more powerful, in the shape of aconitine, an alkaloid extracted from the root of monkshood, with the phenomenally small dose of one-six-hundredth of a grain. Being so very small, we can well afford to look with equanimity at the price—£27 per ounce; and a drug firm, in however big a way of business, would probably look twice at, and require confirmation of, an order from any chemist customer for a pound.

'How are these small doses certified to be of the exact strength prescribed?' will perhaps, and naturally enough, be asked. In the case of a soluble drug the answer is of course plain, for a handleable quantity has simply to be dissolved in a certain quantity of water and the solution suitably divided. In the case of its not being soluble, the function of the water is fulfilled by a bulky, inert powder, such as a liquorice powder or sugar of milk, with which it is thoroughly rubbed down, and the intimately mixed whole divided into calculated doses. Little difficulty is found in doing this in careful practice, ophthalmic discs, for the use of eye-specialists, weighing but one-fiftieth, and containing one-five-thousandth, of a grain of the active body, figuring in the official pharmacopœia.

Turning from the vegetable to the animal world in search of rare drugs, we have to go to quiet and little-known regions—the high-lying plains of Asia, for instance, where lives a small deer, described as 'solitary, shy, and nocturnal in its habits.' With good reason has he, poor little fellow, evolved these habits in his painful struggle for existence; for does he not carry about him a couple of small pouches containing musk, which, at £6 to £7 an ounce, must be a prize to the wily hunter—besides what he can make, in addition, by taking the true article, with the exception of a few grains, out of the pouches, filling them up again with dried blood (very much resembling the original contents in appearance), and selling them as genuine? The old-fashioned use of musk as a remedy for epilepsy has—as much perhaps from the discovery of stronger and more reliable ones as from a question of cost—pretty well died out; but as a scent it is well worth its high price in the persistence of its sweet smell. Did not some ancient Egyptian masons thousands of years back—and, emphatically, before the day of the jerry builder—mix musk with their mortar; and has not the scent lingered, a perennial incense, over their work to this day? Has it not also been said that a little musk, kept in a vase with a perforated lid, will scent a room for years, and when weighed at the end, show no appreciable loss?

A fact this, by the way, offered by scientists to prove the extreme divisibility of matter, for the at most very small amount lost must ever have been floating as particles in the air, knocking up against nerve-endings in the nose, to have produced the sense of smell. And *particles* of musk must, further, be huge lumps by comparison with the size of the constituent *atoms* of the bodies that chemically go to make it up.

Leaving land, and taking to sea, in our search, it may be our extreme good fortune, particularly in the seas washing Madagascar, Surinam, and Java, to come across a floating, sweet-smelling, grayish mass of ambergris, worth at present £5, 10s. per ounce, or £88 a pound, in the market. Such a find need not either, like the other, in which an innocent and inoffensive animal is killed for having about it a possession it cannot help, psychologically distress the finder; for 'ambergris' is held to be a 'diseased biliary product' of the whale, of which, as such, it doubtless considered itself to be well rid.

Another peculiar animal product in use as a drug is a solution of the pure venom of the rattlesnake, given occasionally in malignant scarlet fever; whilst less strong, if perhaps hardly less repulsive, is powdered cockroach, which, in six-grain doses, has been prescribed—with good effects, it is said—for dropsy.

But let the reader take heart of grace, they must be in extremely limited use, and it is not likely that he will ever be called upon to personally swallow them; although the lining of a pig's stomach, scraped and dried, he must not object to, if his doctor prescribe it as pepsine, for indigestion.

With respect to this body, some short time back, a logical observer, whilst giving full credit to the pig as a powerful digester, argued that, the ostrich being apparently a more powerful one still, pepsine prepared from its stomach must be proportionately stronger; and that, if capable of digesting, at its best, the brass taps, buttons, sardine-tins, knives and forks, dish-clouts, and so on that an ostrich is said to eat with apparent relish, even in a reduced form it would be strong enough to easily digest anything in reason in the human stomach. The experiment was carefully tried, and the digestive values of the two pepsines put to the test, with the result that the ostrich 'wasn't in it.'

A HANDFUL OF PERILS.

YOUNGER sons are given to grumbling at their lot. I was an Irish younger son and a gentleman-farmer, and I considered it one of my luxuries to have a good grumble to myself whenever I liked.

I was one evening thoroughly enjoying a pipe over my fire and the afore-mentioned amusement, and was just murmuring to myself, 'Peace and quiet at least till to-morrow morning,' when I heard a whistle at the window, and started to my feet. I knew that whistle well enough; it was old Mike's 'lookout' call. He was my uncle's keeper, and I had known that signal from my boyhood.

But why should he come and whistle under my window? We were not out ferreting; and for the first moment I felt inclined to tell him to go and knock at the door like a Christian; but in those days a man was easily put upon his guard, and so I silently raised the window-sash and looked out into the night.

'Your honour will be taking a turn round the haystacks,' whispered a voice; and I knew, more than heard, that some one moved away from the window.

Happily you English people cannot understand the state of things which used to exist here; for no one who has not experienced it can really understand it. I dare say what I am saying to you sounds like the absurd mysteries of a stage conspiracy, but to me it was terrible earnest.

Taking a revolver in one hand, I sauntered out, pipe in mouth; and after a pause and gaze at the river, planned to disarm suspicion in case of watching eyes, I strolled on to the haystacks.

It was all but pitch-dark; there was barely

enough starlight for me to make out a figure, which by its voice I recognised as Mike.

'Ah, your honour! it's at the peril of my life I've come to bid you ride the hour that is to Finnsmore, and stop Sir Patrick from going to the fair to-morrow, or never will he come home a mortal man! Never speak a word of how you got warning, and indeed I trust you for that; but, maybe, if the young mistress had not been so good to my Mary, who is gone to the angels, I might have looked far for the courage to be here this night.'

'I have not seen any one here,' I replied. 'I have heard a whisper; that is all.'

There was a slight rustle of leaves, then silence. The dear old fellow was gone.

I stood about a bit in the yard, and then went in again, loitering in the doorway, so that old Bridget, my housekeeper, might not think anything had flurried me.

As I sauntered along, however, I thought over the position and made my plans.

The affair was anything but pleasant. Sir Patrick O'Hara was my brother-in-law, married not six months to my only sister, Theresa. Like so many Irish gentlemen, Patrick had a model farm, and, as is so often the custom with the resident landlords, would be going early the next morning to the neighbouring cattle and butter fair. Mike evidently meant that there was to be an attempt on his life as he drove there in the twilight of the early morning.

I thought my brother-in-law would be starting not later that five o'clock—it was now only nine in the evening; so, though I had twenty-five miles of mountain road to traverse, there seemed to be plenty of time to do it in.

The nearest way was by a ferry; but on Mike's account that was out of the question, as it entailed knocking up the ferryman and making a commotion. I settled that, though it was a bad road, I must go over the mountain.

'Bridget,' I called, 'I am going off to stay with a friend. Don't expect me till you see me.'

Bridget was accustomed to my going and coming with little or no notice, so, though I did not generally start at nine at night, I did not expect her to show much astonishment. As it was she merely said, 'Yes, your honour,' with an audible aside to herself, 'Glory be to goodness! now I'll get the washing done in peace.'

I packed a small bag and saddled 'Tommie,' a big, strong pony, who, I thought, would be more fitted for the expedition than my mare.

I led Tommie quietly down a grass byway to avoid clattering past a row of cottages. I did not wish to attract attention to my movements. Once on the road, I mounted and trotted along; for some way I had to go along the valley, then to turn up to the mountain through a glen to the right.

This glen was not exactly the ride I should have chosen for a dark night; the road was made along a rocky bank, and on one side there was a sheer descent of some thirty feet into a chasm, at the bottom of which a mountain stream hurried down to the river in the valley.

Naturally I let the pony take his time over this bit of road, and we did not get on very fast, as it was a stiff pull; but at last we had nearly come to the end of it, and I was looking forward to a trot over the mountain turf, when suddenly Tommie gave a violent shy, his hind-legs went over the edge, and for a moment we swayed on the brink, while I felt his hoofs scratching for foothold among the rocks; then he got a point of leverage, and, with a desperate lunge, swung himself up again on to the road, where he stood shaking from head to foot.

'A near thing that, my good Thomas,' I observed as I dismounted in order to find out what it was that had made him shy. To my astonishment, I found in front of me a large black coffin!—not a pleasing sort of package to be thus 'left till called for' upon the open road. Not a creature was to be seen near it; but as I could see but a few yards through the darkness, that was not saying much. Like the Chinese admiral, I reflected, 'This is no place for me,' and after a tussle with Tommie, managed to get him past the coffin, and led him up the road as fast as ever I could.

Once on the open mountain turf, I mounted, promising myself a fast trot; but, to my disgust, I found the pony had twisted his foot in our small adventure, and, vexed as I was, there was no help for it—we had to proceed at a walk.

The night had cleared during the last half-hour, and the moon was rising—that was one comfort. I have been through open dangers many a time, so I trust I'm no coward; but I allow that black, stray coffins on dark nights are not to my taste, and I felt a bit of a shiver as I thought of it, and remembered, moreover, that I had to pass the ruined chapel on the mountain, whose graveyard was said to be 'as full of ghosts as the river of fish.'

I will not say I altogether disbelieve in ghosts, as generally known; and it flashed into my mind that I was likely to come in for ghosts of a more substantial kind, and with some excitement I remembered the whispered reports of moonlight funerals which were heard from time to time.

I must explain that when a man was injured in some lawless outrage, the first thought of his companions was to get him carried away to some secluded spot, since the fact of finding a wounded man might very likely give a clue to the police which would help them to identify the rest of the party.

If the wounded man recovered, good and well; if he died, a public funeral was out of the question, but a midnight funeral in one of the many graveyards round ruined churches was possible. An obliging priest would come for a consideration from some distant place, and a company of well-armed friends assembled at dead of night to lay their comrade to rest in holy ground.

So strongly was I possessed with the idea that there was going to be a funeral that I dismounted when about a quarter of a mile from the chapel, and fastened Tommie, with a long halter I often took with me, to a thorn-tree. Then I walked forward to spy out the land. The road here lay through a glen or dip in the mountain, on either side the ground rose in a steep, rocky slope, and only on the highest point of the little pass did the track widen out, leaving room for the ruined chapel and burial-ground. Keeping to the side of the road and walking as noiselessly as possible, I advanced slowly, and as I drew near the chapel I heard the murmur of voices.

Fortunately for me, the people were too much taken up with the work on hand to look very curiously around them, and I managed to reach the churchyard-wall unnoticed. Creeping along almost on hands and knees, I got to a place where the stones had fallen away, and from whence—with but slight fear of discovery—I could watch what was going on. In the corner farthest from me four men were digging a grave, and soon a little company of people came up the road from the other side of the mountain, carrying a shrouded corpse upon a plank. Placing the plank on the ground, the bearers started hurriedly onward, doubtless to fetch the coffin which I had seen upon the road.

'How about Tommie?' I asked myself, and could only hope that in the moonlight he would pass as a stray mountain pony. But no such luck! Back came the men with the coffin, and Tommie, led by his halter! The men leading the pony called to those at the grave, who produced a dark-lantern, and were about to unstrap my bag from the saddle, when the women raised the Irish wail as they placed the body in the coffin. This was too much for Tommie's nerves; the men, who did not know his little ways, were holding him carelessly. The injured foot seemed forgotten; he reared and kicked desperately for a minute, then I heard him careering at full gallop onward down the road. There was a chorus of smothered oaths, and then the funeral was proceeded with. The sound of a monotonous Latin prayer showed me that some patriotic priest was present, and when the earth was being shovelled in, a low mournful wail again rose from the women.

Directly the grave was filled in the people dispersed; but I had a shrewd suspicion that some of them would remain in hiding upon the road to see if Tommie's rider would appear, and as I slowly crept onward, keeping as much as possible in shadow, I had an unpleasant expectation that at any minute I might have a bullet whistling by me.

After walking for about a mile, I took out my watch and with some difficulty made out the time. It was one o'clock. I had been longer at the graveyard than I had thought. Things were looking serious. I had a good fifteen miles to do yet. No horse, and only four hours to do it in. I might be delayed again. Casting aside my precaution, I started at a brisk run. Crack! went a gun to my right. The scoundrels were stalking me; but I paid no attention to the shot, beyond, if possible, quickening my pace. After running for some two or three miles, I was forced to pull up for breath. My riding-coat was not exactly a suitable get-up for this sort of thing. Hurriedly I tore off coat and waistcoat and stuffed them into a ditch, and then started on again as fast as I could go. I went on and on without stopping, until the ground seemed to jump up to hit my feet as I pounded on. My head grew dizzy, but I was kept up by the thought that I was going a good pace and was secure of arriving in time.

Suddenly, a voice shouted, 'Halt there!' and I found myself rather roughly collared by a policeman.

Another one, standing a few yards off, held (delightful sight) that rascal Tommie!

'Give an account of yourself,' said my captor.

Easier said than done when one has been running at the top of one's speed for miles. At last, however, I gasped out angrily:

'Hands off! I'm Mr William O'Neil.'

The policeman laughed. 'A likely story; and, pray, where's your honour's waistcoat? Come, talk sense, or hold your tongue. We have found a riderless horse, and it may be a serious business.'

'Don't I tell you, man, I'm Mr William O'Neil! That is my horse.'

'Stop that rubbish; you are a lunatic at any rate, and I arrest you.'

Before I knew what was up I was handcuffed and hauled on to a light cart. I was speechless with rage and exhaustion combined; but, seeing the cart was going my way, I lay back silently, still panting for breath.

The police in Ireland are often moved, to prevent them from being tempted into too intimate friendship with their neighbours. These men were evidently from the north, and it would be difficult to make them realise the situation.

'Take me to Sir Patrick O'Hara's,' I said at last.

'Take you to Sir Patrick's at this time of night! I'll be hanged if I do! You'll go to the Police Barracks; and if you behave yourself you'll be comfortable; and if you don't, you won't.'

I was to go to the Police Barracks, was I? That meant turning off my proper road at the end of another half-mile. I felt desperate. The second policeman was riding Tommie by the side of the cart. Now Tommie, meek as he appeared, had his temper, as I very well knew. On the floor of the cart were one or two little packages. With a sudden inspiration, I turned over one of these with my foot, and after watching for the right moment, kicked it straight at Tommie. Tommie lashed out like a good one, and touched the horse in the cart. Then we had a dance, and the cart landed in the ditch.

When those two policemen were again masters of the situation the lunatic had disappeared into the night.

I was, in fact, tearing across the fields to the O'Haras' house. Souse! splash! Great Scot! if I, an Irishman born, did not go and fall into a bog! Deep in I was, up to my waist, and only saved from worse by my handcuffed hands, which clung to the last firm tuft of rushes. Here was a pretty piece of work! I knew my best chance was not to struggle but to stay still and shout. I feared I was not near enough to the house to be heard there, but there might be a cabin closer at hand.

In intervals of shouting and silence the time passed on. No answer came to my cries. I don't think, honestly, that I dwelt much on my own plight, though it was decidedly dangerous. I was picturing Theresa, fussing over Patrick's early breakfast, and merrily giving that good-bye kiss, which, though she did not know it, might so well be the last.

The birds were just beginning to twitter for the dawn, when far away I heard the sound of wheels and a horse's hoofs. Nearer and nearer it came. It must be Patrick in his dog-cart, going to the fair. As he drew nearer I heard him whistling 'Father O'Flynn' as merrily as a schoolboy. Poor, happy-hearted fellow! Could I but make him hear before he got to the turn down the valley I might save him yet. But I was numb with the cold and wet, and my voice was hoarse and faint.

Still, I shouted, 'Patrick, Patrick.' Though at first he did not seem to hear me, at last, when I had almost given up hope, the horse stopped. I shouted again, and he shouted back.

'You are a respectable sort of a brother-in-law,' observed Patrick as at length, after considerable difficulty, he dragged me on to safe ground. 'What in the world have you been up to? Handcuffed, and without your coat, and all over bog. I will take you back to your sister, and see what she says to you, young man.'

Now I was safe I kept laughing in a foolish, weak way. 'I was running to warn you of an attempt to shoot you, and the police arrested me as a suspicious character,' I said with difficulty.

'Small blame to them, considering your present appearance,' said Patrick, as he tenderly helped me to walk to his trap. Soon we were bowling back to the house; and I, secure that Theresa would not allow her husband out of her sight till we heard more, enjoyed a hot tub and a good breakfast, and then retired to bed very thankful for the rest, as I was aching from head to foot.

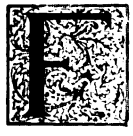
I had great difficulty in persuading Patrick to believe my story; he was firmly impressed with the idea it was a hoax. But after I had had some hours' sleep I woke, and found him sitting by my side.

'Your friends the police have been round,' he said. 'I laughed when I heard their story. Bravo, Tommie! He is eating his head off now in my stable. Looking for you, they chanced on other night-birds who "were wanted;" they were behind a hedge with a gun. Well, we know what that meant, old man. They did not catch them till half-past five; and if I had not been employed elsewhere, there might have been a death in the family.'

So saying, he clapped me on the shoulder and went downstairs whistling 'Father O'Flynn' as merrily as ever.

BLACK-AND-WHITE IN NATURE.

By T. C. Hepworth.



ROM the gorgeously-striped rainbow to the humble floweret, Dame Nature shows what a wonderful colourist she is. Whether we glance at the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom, we can obtain evidence of her prodigality of pigments, and pigments of so wonderful a quality that they defy reproduction by means of the artist's palette. The artist, indeed, is obliged to resort to contrast and other cunning devices in order to represent some of Nature's effects; and then, as he himself will reluctantly admit, he falls very far short of the ideal at which he aims.

The lovely tints which adorn the sky at morn and eve confer by reflection some of their beauty on the land below, which, clothed in its spring or summer dress of brilliant green and divers-hued flowers, already has a coat of many colours. The animal world—and more particularly the birds of tropical climes—seem to embrace in their brilliantly-coloured plumage all the tints of the rainbow. Even in the mineral kingdom the gorgeous colours of the various metallic ores and other stones defy all attempts to imitate them, and the climax is reached when we come to deal with those minerals which are called precious stones.

Now and again, however, Nature takes a sober fit, and shuts up her colour-box, just as an artist will, by way of change, leave his palette and go to black-and-white. The brilliant hues of summer fade to the reds and russets of autumn, to be succeeded by the white-and-black of winter. But it is in the animal world that curious freaks occur—certain animals, which under ordinary circumstances are coloured, become white. As a rule, white is rather a rarity in the animal kingdom, but appears in some species as a protection. Thus seabirds, whose lives are passed so much in the neighbourhood of foaming waters, are usually partially or entirely white; and in snowy lands certain creatures will assume a white covering so soon as the winter approaches. In Norway, for example, is found the variable or mountain hare, the willow-grouse, the

ptarmigan, the stoat or ermine, the arctic fox, &c.—all these are provided with both a summer and winter costume, the former coloured and the latter white. Then there are animals up north which are permanently white, such as the polar bear, the snowy owl, and the Greenland falcon.

Quite apart from these well-established arrangements of Nature, we have many examples of that curious condition known among naturalists as albinism, or the production of an occasional white specimen of an animal which is normally either coloured or black. Colour in animals is due to pigment found in the skin, hair, feathers, &c.; in albinos the pigment is absent, and as a consequence the hair, feathers, &c. are dead white—the eyes being pink for the reason that they are colourless and the blood shows palely through the tissues. It is astonishing what pranks Nature plays with her creatures in this way. A white blackbird seems to be an anachronism, but it is by no means uncommon. A white blackcap and a white jackdaw would seem to be equally out of place; but specimens of all these can be seen any day at the British Museum, where a case of these natural freaks is exhibited. Albinism is seldom perpetuated among wild animals, possibly for the reason that, in the absence of protective pigments, the eyes of such creatures must be extremely sensitive to light. In domesticated animals the condition is more common, and every one knows how white rats and white mice are common objects of barter among schoolboys. True albinos are also found among ferrets and rabbits. It is clear that albinism, except in snowy districts, must be a disadvantageous possession to its owner, making it conspicuous to the creature upon which it preys as well as to its enemies. Among other examples of albinism shown in the exhibits already referred to may be found a hare, a rabbit, a guinea-pig, and other small mammals; a white frog; and, what seems to be more remarkable still, a white crayfish and a white lobster. Among the birds we notice a white skylark and a white robin; while there are numerous examples of partial albinism — birds flecked with white, as if some 'prentice hand had tried to whitewash them and had only partially succeeded in his work. Albinos with white hair and pink eyes are uncommon but not unknown in the human family, and most of us have occasionally seen persons who exhibit this peculiarity.

We have seen, then, that this condition known as albinism is due to absence of pigment in certain individuals, and that examples in the animal world are not uncommon. But it is not generally known that there is an opposite condition to albinism, in which an excess of dark-coloured pigment will turn an individual black, or partially black. This state is known as melanism (from the Greek *melas*, black); and although not so frequent as albinism, specimens are exhibited in our National Museum. An animal may give birth to a litter of cubs; and while most are of the normal colour, perhaps one or two are quite black, and will remain so throughout life. Here, for example, is a leopard which seems to answer the old question with regard to change of spots in the affirmative, for it looks as if it had been dipped in ink. The spots are there, but they are coal-black, on a somewhat lighter ground. As in the case of albinism, melanism is more common among domesticated animals; and this is very probably due to selective breeding, and the desire of the owners of such animals to establish a strain which shall be pure black; this has certainly been the case with cattle, horses, rabbits, fowls, &c. It also seems certain that domestic animals may show signs of melanism if improperly fed; the bullfinch, for example, is said to assume much darker plumage if given too much hempseed.

Among other examples of melanism which are exhibited at the British Museum are specimens of the wild rabbit, the common rat, and the water-vole. There is also a black squirrel, which, however, seems, for some untraced reason, to be confined to Northern Borneo. Among the birds we find a skylark, a woodcock, a snipe, and a yellow-hammer, all in the deepest mourning. The pigment of which the albinos have been deprived has been distributed among creatures already well endowed. It seems as if Nature had parodied the way in which riches are dealt out to the human family—some having none, and others more than they know what to do with.

TO THE BLACKBIRD.

What strains mellifluous, O sweet-voiced thief,
Are thrilling, flute-like, from thy beak of gold,
While palpitates the air with joy untold!
Thy jocund lay wakes hope and mocks at grief,
And seems to say, 'Be happy while you may,
Taste the delights that fill the passing day;
Watch not the skies for sign of coming storm,
Nor shudder still at yesterday's alarm!'
Or—dost thou merely whistle to thy mate,
With iteration sweet, of plum or peach
That, ripe and ruddy, for thy coming wait?
Does thy melodious carolling but teach
Thy nestlings to pursue fresh depredation
With all the ecstasy of stolen pleasure,
To plunge their bills with nice discrimination
Deep in the hearts of my best fruity treasure?

At noon and eve I watched thee fluttering nigh,
The dewy dawn beheld thee sweeping by,
Like some stray satellite of vanished night,
On plunder bent, yet pausing in thy flight
To sing beside my window, cunning bird!
That through the hush of sleep thou mightst be heard,
And, as Æolian harps by winds are stirred,
My heart-strings might respond with answering chords
And echo thy glad strains in happy dreams:—
I seemed to hear the rush of gurgling streams,
And, sweeter far, the music of fond words;
Above me swung the wild rose, pink and fair,
The breath of woodbine filled the summer air;
I clasped kind hands, dear eyes looked into mine,
Such was the magic of that voice of thine!
So—feathered sybarite! Of what thou wilt—partake,
I must forgive thee for thy song's sweet sake.

M. L. Addey.

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BOXING WITH THE GLOVES.

WHAT is described in the slang of its votaries as 'the noble art' is an institution that may be called peculiarly English. The Greeks included boxing amongst the contests at their great athletic festivals; but it was something entirely different from what we understand by the term. It was chiefly a matter of hard hitting with stout gloves of dried ox-hide, and there is nothing in the records of the sport which indicates the clever tactics of attack and defence which English boxers have developed. An Englishman seems to have a natural instinct for the use of his fists; and for at least two centuries it has been an accomplishment by which a certain portion of the community have set great store. There is a list of champions of the English prize-ring since the very early days of last century, and its combats have enjoyed the patronage of numerous members of the aristocracy, in addition to their large and motley following of the lower orders. The better judgment of the nation has for many years past been offended by the brutality of these encounters; but open disapproval has always been qualified by a large element of secret interest in their results. The most historic meeting of the kind was that which took place at Farnborough, just over thirty years ago, between Tom Sayers, an English pugilist of extraordinary pluck and endurance, and an American named Heenan, who was popularly known as 'The Benicia Boy.' Those who remember the circumstances will admit that few events in the world of sport have roused such great or widespread excitement amongst all classes. As an evidence of interest in unexpected quarters, it was pointed out that one of the Church papers, published on the following day, contained a paragraph which, while condemning the whole affair with unstinting displeasure, did, nevertheless, not omit to inform its readers of the result.

Prize-fighting has always been illegal, and so vigilant are the authorities now in carrying out the law that a 'mill' of the old-fashioned sort is rather uncommon. But, although other times bring other manners, pugilism itself is still with us in altered guise. The 'Rules of the London Prize-Ring' still survive as a curiosity in sporting handbooks, but side by side with them will be found the 'Marquis of Queensberry's Rules,' under which boxing contests are still carried out regularly in different parts of the country. These 'glove-fights,' as they are called, are less prolonged and more humane in their conditions than the prize-fights of old; but their real character is often essentially the same. The men fight, not in the open air as formerly, but in some building, such as a club, and the spectators are comparatively select, by reason of the high prices charged for admittance. Five or ten guineas is the usual cost of a ticket for any encounter which is regarded with particular interest, and there are always hundreds willing to see the entertainment upon such terms. Betting and racing men, doctors, lawyers, members of the Stock Exchange, sprigs of nobility, merchants and manufacturers, may all be recognised at the functions held by the National Sporting Club or the Bolingbroke Club in London, or the Olympic Club in Birmingham; while the general public await at the doors, in a more or less unwashed multitude, the earliest tidings of victory. The combatants meet in a fenced ring of fourteen by twenty-four feet square. A few hours previously they have each been weighed, for it is one of the conditions that neither shall exceed a certain figure, and they have spent weeks of training with a view to 'getting off flesh' as well as developing muscle. They are supplied with gloves of four ounces each (considerably lighter than the boxing-gloves found in a gymnasium), and these are the only coverings to be found on the upper part of their bodies. They are required to box a certain number of rounds, and at the close the referee will decide which has gained the majority of points over his opponent. Each round lasts for three minutes, and there is an interval of one

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minute, during which both are rubbed down and fanned and receive other stimulating attentions from their seconds. Very often the contest is brought to an end in summary fashion long before the stipulated number of rounds have been transacted. If either should be knocked down by a blow, he is allowed ten seconds in which to regain his feet and resume the struggle; if he should fail to do so he is 'counted out,' and his opponent is declared the victor. This is what is meant by the often-used expression, 'the knock-out,' and pugilists are always on the alert to effect such a *coup*. There are three special blows which are relied on to disable an opponent in this way, and the man who is taken unawares by any of them can seldom regain his footing. One is delivered under the heart, another just on the midriff, and the third on either side of the chin. The collapse caused by either of the first two can be readily understood; the effects of a heavy blow on the jaw are not so generally known. Each side, however, is the seat of an important collection of nerve-centres, and a shock transmitted to these inevitably leaves the victim in a dazed condition, placing him quite at the mercy of his antagonist.

The position held by the 'knock-out' is alone sufficient to give these affairs a character which must be described as brutality. Yet for people of strong nerves they seem to be not without a keen fascination. The physique of the men is often magnificent, and evokes the highest admiration; their quickness and endurance both testify to perfect training, which also renders the effects of 'punishment' much lighter than they appear on the surface. The skill attainable in boxing is marvellous and beautiful to watch, and the coolness of temper which is a vital requisite is not without a certain moral quality. All the feelings of animal enthusiasm, which is not necessarily vicious, are abundantly called forth in the spectators. But after everything has been said in its favour, 'glove-fighting' is really prize-fighting revived with very slightly modified conditions and less repulsive associations. It is the same in substance, and whatever justifies the suppression of the one applies equally to the other. It may be asked why the law distinguishes between them. While displays of scientific boxing are quite harmless and unaffected by anything in the statute-book, it is clearly recognised that a 'glove-contest' is on the same legal footing as a prize-fight as soon as it develops the same characteristics of excessive violence; yet these contests are held regularly and publicly with practically no hint of interference. The explanation lies in those secret inclinations of the popular mind to which reference has already been made. An attempt was made to prosecute the principals in one notorious case ten years ago; and although the evidence was as clear as possible, the London jury would not agree to a conviction. There is little doubt that the same result would follow other attempts to put the law in force; and, recognising the strong and evident bias of a section of public feeling, the authorities have allowed the question to drop. There is, therefore, in most large towns a considerable number of professional pugilists, who earn their living by such exhibitions as well as by teaching boxing and by giving protection occasionally to persons who think themselves in danger of assault. On most racecourses they are to be found in attendance on betting men who carry large sums of money on their persons, and they are often privately employed by those responsible for entertainments where a rowdy element is to be expected amongst the audience. It is their due to say that they are generally to be found on the side of law and order, and they are for the most part on excellent terms with the police.

Apart from these questions, the justification of boxing both as a useful accomplishment and as a healthful exercise is complete. That a man should be able to defend himself is not only reasonable, but in less civilised conditions would be a matter of constant necessity. The value of a scientific knowledge of fisticuffs is recognised both in the army and in the police service, and there is no walk of life (as may be illustrated from the House of Commons!) in which it may not help at a pinch. Amongst our rougher city populations a good deal of physical violence is still intermingled with daily life, and it has been remarked from the magistrates' bench and other quarters that, if disputes are to be settled by personal combat, a manly and straightforward use of the fists would be far preferable to the employment of boots, belts, missiles, and lethal weapons, to which the denizens of the slums resort with appalling readiness. So forcibly is this consideration felt in some quarters that a High Church clergyman in a mission district in Birmingham has devoted himself with much energy to the instruction of his young roughs and embryo criminals in boxing, and reports encouraging results in the improvement of temper, self-control, sense of fairness, and peaceable disposition generally. As a physical training it stands amongst the very finest of sports. It engages every part of the body, and is the severest test of agility and concentration. It reveals most wonderfully the resources of human physique, and in its true functions well merits a tribute of praise and encouragement.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER IV.—I GO TO THE COLLEGE AT GLASGOW.

BY this time I had grown a great, stalwart lad, little above the middle height, but broad and sinewy. I had made progress in all manly sports, and could fling the hammer almost as far as the Manor blacksmith, while in leaping and running I had few rivals among lads of my age. Also, I was no bad swordsman, but could stand my own against all the wiles of Tam Todd, and once even disarmed him, to his own unspeakable disgust. In my studies, which I pursued as diligently as I could with no teachers and not over-many books, I had made some little advance, having read through most of the Greek tragedians and advanced some distance in the study of Plato; while in the Latin tongue I had become such an adept that I could both read and write it with ease.

When I had reached the mature age of eighteen, who should come up into our parts but my famous relative, Master Gilbert Burnet, the preacher at St Clement's in London, of whom I have already spoken! He was making a journey to Edinburgh, and had turned out of his way to revive an old acquaintance. My father was overjoyed to see him, and treated him to the best the house could produce. He stayed with us two days, and I remember him still as he sat in a great arm-chair opposite my father, with his broad velvet cap, and gray, peaked beard, and weighty brows. Yet when he willed, though for ordinary a silent man, he could talk as gaily and wittily as any town gallant; so much, indeed, that my father, who was somewhat hard to please, declared him the best companion he ever remembered.

Before he left, Master Burnet examined me on my progress in polite learning; and finding me well advanced, he would have it that I should be sent forthwith to Glasgow College. He exacted a promise from my father to see to this, and left behind him when he departed letters of introduction to many of the folk there, for he himself had at one time been professor of divinity in the place. As for myself, I was nothing loth to go and see places beyond Tweeddale and add to my stock of learning; for about this time a great enthusiasm for letters had seized me (which I suppose happens at some time or other to most men), and I conceived my proper vocation in life to be that of the scholar. So it was settled that I should ride to Glasgow and take lodgings in the town for the sake of the college classes.

I set out one November morning, riding Maisie alone; for no student was allowed to have a servant, nor any one below the degree of Master of Arts. The air was keen and frosty, and I rode in high fettle by the towns of Biggar and Lanark to the valley of the Clyde. I lay all night at Crossford in the house of a distant relative. Thence the next day I rode to Hamilton, and in the evening came to the bridge of the Clyde at Glasgow. I took up my abode in the Vicar's Alley, off the High Street, at the house of one Mistress Macmillan, who had come originally from the lowlands of Galloway. Then I presented myself to the Principal and Regents of the college, and was duly admitted, putting on the red gown, the badge of the student class, than which I believe there is no more hideous habiliment.

The college in those days was poor enough, having been well-nigh ruined by the extortions of Lord Middleton and his drunken crew; and it had not yet benefited by the rich donations of the Reverend Zachary Boyd of the Barony Kirk. Still, the standard of learning in the place was extraordinary high, especially in Dialectic and Philosophy—a standard which had been set by the famous Andrew Melville when he was a professor in the place.

Across the High Street were the college gardens and green, pleasant orchards, where the professors were wont to walk and the scholars to have their games. Through the middle ran the clear Molendinar Burn, so called, it was said, by the old Romans, and here I loved to watch the trout and young salmon leaping. There was a severe rule against scholars fishing in the stream, so I was fain to content myself with the sight. For soon a violent fit of home-sickness seized me, and I longed for the rush of Tweed and the pleasant sweep of Manor; so it was one of my greatest consolations to look at this water and fancy myself far away from the town.

No one of us was permitted to carry arms of any kind, so I had to sell my sword on my first coming to the town. This was a great hardship to me, for whereas when I carried a weapon I had some sense of my own importance, now I felt no better than the rest of the unarmed crowd about me. Yet it was a wise precaution, for in other places where scholars are allowed to strut like cavaliers there are fights and duels all the day long, so that the place looks less like an abode of the Muses than a disorderly tavern. Nevertheless there were many manly exercises to be had, for in the greens in the garden we had trials of skill at archery and golf and many other games of the kind. At the first-mentioned I soon became a great master, for I had a keen eye from much living among woods and hills, and soon there was no one who could come near me at the game. As for golf,

I utterly failed to excel; and indeed it seems to me that golf is like the divine art of poetry, the gift for which is implanted in man at his birth or not at all. Be that as it may, I never struck a golf-ball fairly in my life, and I misdoubt I never shall.

As for my studies, for which I came to the place, I think I made great progress. For after my first fit of home-sickness was over I fell in with the ways of the college, and acquired such a vast liking for the pursuit of learning that I felt more convinced than ever that Providence had made me for a scholar. In my classes I won the commendation of both professors; especially in the class of Dialectic, where an analysis of Aristotle's method was highly praised by Master Sandeman, the professor. This fine scholar and accomplished gentleman helped me in many ways, and for nigh two months, when he was sick of the fever, I lectured to his class in his stead.

In the midsummer months I went down to Tweeddale again, where I astonished my father and all in the place with my new learning, and also grieved them. For I had no love for fishing or shooting; I would scarce ride two miles for the pleasure of it; my father's tales, in which I delighted before, had grown tiresome; and I had no liking for anything save bending over books. When I went to Dawyck to see Marjory, she knew not what had come over me, I was so full of whims and fancies. 'Oh John!' she said, 'your face is as white as a woman's, and you have such a horrible cloak. Go and get another at once, you silly boy, and not shame your friends.' Yet even Marjory had little power over me, for I heeded her not, though aforetime I would have ridden post-haste to Peebles and got me a new suit and painted my face if I had thought that thereby I would pleasure her.

When the autumn came again I returned to college more inclined than ever for the life of a scholar. I fell to my studies with renewed zeal, and would doubtless have killed myself with work had I not been nearly killed with the fever, which made me more careful of my health. And now, like the weathercock I was, my beliefs shifted yet again. For, studying the schoolmen, who were the great upholders of Aristotle, I found in them so many contradictions and phantasies which they fathered on their master that, after reading the diatribes of Peter Ramus and others against him, I was almost persuaded that I had been grievously misled. Then at last I saw that the fault lay not in Aristotle but in his followers, who sought to find in him things that were beyond the compass of his thought. So by degrees I came round toward the new philosophy which a party in the college upheld. They swore by the great names of Bacon and Galileo and the other natural philosophers; but I hesitated to follow them, for they seemed to me to disdain all mental philosophy, which, I hold, is the greater study. I was of this way of thinking when I fell in one day with an English book, a translation of a work by a Frenchman, one Renatus Descartes, published in London in the year 1649. It gave an account of the progress in philosophy of this man, who followed no school, but, clearing his mind of all presuppositions, instituted a method for himself. This marked for me the turning-point; for I gave in my allegiance without hesitation to this philosopher, and ever since I have held by his system with some modifications. It is needless for me to enter further into my philosophy, for I have by me a written exposition of the works of this Descartes, with my own additions, which I intend, if God so please, to give soon to the world.

For two years I abode at the college, thinking that I was destined by nature for a studious life, and harbouring thoughts of going to the university of Saumur to complete my studies. I thought that my spirit was chastened to a fit degree; and so no doubt it was, for those who had feared me at first on account of my heavy fist and straightforward ways now openly scoffed at me without fear of punishment. Indeed, one went so far one day as to jostle me off the causeway, and I made no return, but went on as if nothing had happened, deeming it beneath a wise man to be distracted by mundane trifles. Yet, mind you, in all this there was nothing Christian or like unto the meekness of our Master, as I have seen in some men, but rather an absurd attempt to imitate those who would have lived very differently had their lot been cast in our hot and turbid days.

How all this was changed and I veered round of a sudden to the opposite I must hasten to tell. One April day towards the close of my second year I was going up the High Street toward the Cathedral with a great parcel of books beneath my arm, when I heard a shouting and a jingling, and a troop of horse came down the street. I stood back into the shelter of a doorway, for soldiers were wont to bear little love to scholars, and I did not care to risk their rough jests. From this place I watched their progress, and a gallant sight it was. Some twenty men in buff jerkins and steel headpieces rode with a fine clatter of bridles and clank of swords. I marked their fierce, sun-brown faces and their dare-devil eyes as they looked haughtily down on the crowd as on lower beings; and especially I marked their leader. He sat a fine bay horse with ease and grace; his plumed hat set off his high-coloured face and long brown curls worn in the fashion of the day; and as he rode he bowed to the people with large condescension. He was past in a second, but not before I had recognised the face and figure of my cousin Gilbert.

I stood for some minutes staring before me, while the echoes of the horses' hoofs died away down the street. This, I thought, is the destiny

of my cousin, only two years my elder, a soldier, a gentleman, a great man in his place; while I am but a nameless scholar, dreaming away my manhood in the pursuits of a dotard. I was so overwhelmed with confusion that I stood gaping with a legion of thoughts and opposing feelings running through my brain. Then all the old fighting spirit of my house rose within me. By Heaven! I would make an end of this. I would get me home without delay; I would fling my books into the Clyde; I would go to the wars; I would be a great cavalier; and, by the Lord! I would keep up the name of the house. I was astonished myself at the sudden change in my feelings, for in the space of some ten minutes a whole age had passed for me, and I had grown from a boy to some measure of manhood. I came out from the close-mouth with my head in the air and defiance against all the world in my eye.

Before I had gone five paces I met the lad who had jostled me aforetime, a big fellow of a raw-boned Ayrshire house, and before he could speak I had him by the arm and had pulled him across the way into the college gardens. There I found a quiet, green place, and plucking off my cloak, I said, 'Now, Master Dalrymple, you and I have a small account to settle.' With that we fell to with our fists, and in the space of a quarter of an hour I had beaten him so grievously that he was fain to cry for mercy. I let him go, and with much whimpering he slunk away in disgust.

Then I went into the town and bought myself a new blade and a fine suit of clothes—all with the greatest gusto and lightness of heart. I went to the inn where Maisie was stabled, and bade them have her ready for me at the college gate in an hour. Then I bade good-bye to all my friends, but especially to Master Sandeman, from whom I was loth to part. My books I did not fling into the Clyde, as at first I proposed, but left injunctions that they were to be sent by the carrier. So, having paid all my debts—for my father had kept me well appointed with money—I waved a long farewell, and set out for my own country.

THE FATE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT'S MANUSCRIPTS.

PART II.

CADELL'S manuscripts appear to have been removed and placed in the oak cabinet of his mansion at Ratho House, as we learn from a memorandum dated 28th July 1846, three years before his death. Of the fragment of *Waverley*, he mentions that it bore the watermark of 1810, and was evidently part of the MS. now in the Advocates' Library. The portion of *Ivanhoe* was purchased from Mrs Terry; it had been sent during its composition to her husband in order to see how it could be dramatised. It was reported that after Mr Cadell's death these MSS. had been offered for private sale for £2000. Eventually they were sold by Messrs Christie, Manson, & Woods in July 1867, and brought 1255 guineas. The following are the prices and purchasers:

	Price.	Purchaser.
Marmion	191 gs.	Mr Harvey.
Lady of the Lake	264 "	Mr F. Richardson.
Vision of Don Roderick	37 "	Mr F. Richardson.
Rokeby	130 "	Mr Hope Scott.
Lord of the Isles	101 "	Mr Hope Scott.
Introductory Essay on Popular Poetry	54 "	Mr F. Richardson.
Auchindrane	27 "	Messrs Nixon & Rhodes.
Anne of Geierstein	121 "	Mr Hope Scott.
Waverley and Ivanhoe	130 "	Mr Hope Scott.
Tales of a Grandfather.	145 "	Mr F. Richardson.
Castle Dangerous	32 "	Mr F. Richardson.
Count Robert of Paris.	23 "	Mr Massey.
	1255 gs.	

With the exception of the five volumes of correspondence which Mr Cadell had stipulated should not pass out of his family, the remaining volumes were sold at the same place on July 9, 1868:

	Price.	Purchaser.
Quentin Durward	£142	Mr Toovey.
The Abbot	50	Mr John Murray.
Chronicles of the Canongate, 1st and 2d Series	51	Mr Melville.
Woodstock	120	Mr Thorpe.
The Betrothed	77	Mr Lauder.
The Talisman	70	Mr Lauder.
St Ronan's Well	120	Mr Lauder.
Vision of Don Roderick	57	Mr A. W. Elrick.

These, with the sale of proof-sheets of the original editions with Scott's corrections, made £1074. The *Pirate* as has already been mentioned, was retained; also *Redgauntlet* and the five volumes of letters which are now in the possession of Cadell's eldest daughter, the Dowager Lady Liston Foulis. The note on *Redgauntlet* runs: 'This, the original manuscript of *Redgauntlet*, I received as a gift from Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford on 9th April 1831.—ROB. CADELL, 1834.' Sir James T. Gibson-Craig became the owner of the *Fair Maid of Perth* for £105. The above portion of *Tales of a Grandfather* was sold at Sotheby's in 1897 for £106; the *Introductory Essay on Popular Poetry*, &c., for £62 (now in the hands of Mr W. Brown, bookseller), and *Castle Dangerous* for £32. *St Ronan's Well* was in the hands of Mr A. Skene in 1871. At the sale of Scott relics belonging to Mr John A. Ballantyne (son of James Ballantyne) in 1848, the MS. of *The Black Dwarf* was purchased by Mr Stillie, on commission for Sir William Tite, for £28, 17s. 6d.; the author's proof-sheets of the

Life of Napoleon, in nine volumes, by Mr Taylor, for £47, 5s.; the proofs of *Woodstock*, *Nigel*, *Quentin Durward*, *Tales of the Crusaders*, *Ivanhoe*, *Peveril*, and *Pirate* were purchased by Mr Taylor for £43, 1s. Messrs Blackwood purchased the *Letters on Demonology* for £2, 10s.

On 23d July 1896 two further volumes, part of the Cadell trust-estate, were sold at Sotheby's. These were *Don Roderick* and *Mother and Son*.

The memoranda which Scott so kindly sent to Robert Chambers towards a new edition of the *Traditions of Edinburgh* is very regularly written in three folio pages, without an interlineation or a blot. That and several autograph letters are now in the possession of Mr C. E. S. Chambers. Amongst a vast number of other valuable manuscripts left to Edinburgh University by the late David Laing are portions of *Kenilworth* and the *Legend of Montrose*, a packet of holograph letters of Walter Scott, W.S., father of Sir Walter, and W. Laidlaw's narrative of his first meeting with him.

In his general preface to the Waverley Novels, written in 1829, Scott has told the interesting story of the composition of *Waverley*, and how he came to forsake poetry for prose narrative. In the year 1805 he wrote about one-third of the first volume, and it was advertised to be published by John Ballantyne. Having gone as far as the seventh chapter, he showed the work to a critical friend, who gave an unfavourable opinion of it, and this made him unwilling to test public opinion, and perhaps risk the loss of the poetical reputation he had already achieved. The work was thrown aside in the drawers of an old writing-desk, which, on coming to Abbotsford in 1811, was placed in a lumber garret and was forgotten. Now and again his thoughts returned to the unfinished story; and the rising fame of Miss Edgeworth in depicting Irish character worked some emulation in him to do the same for Scotland. By a happy accident, in searching for some fishing-tackle, the long-lost manuscript was discovered and quickly completed. It was published by Constable on 7th July 1814, and within five weeks, although in the dead season, 1000 copies had been sold. A second edition was ready in August, a third and fourth in October and November. A copy of this first edition sometimes fetches £20.

A correspondent of Robert Chambers related that Daniel Lizars had told him how he had accidentally seen the manuscript of *Waverley* some years before it appeared. He was quite aware at the time that it was in Scott's handwriting, so that more people must have shared the secret than is generally supposed. It appears to be the only volume in folio MS.; the rest are all quartos of uniform height.

This manuscript of *Waverley*, purchased in London at the sale of Constable's manuscripts by Mr Wilks for £18, and resold to Mr Hall for £42, was eventually, in 1850, given to the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, and there reposes in a glass case. At first Mr Hall intended to leave it as a legacy, but changed his mind, and handed it over during his lifetime to the Advocates' Library, on condition that it was shown to the public. He had it bound in green leather, in imitation of the other manuscripts, but with blank paper inserted corresponding to the gaps in the volume when compared with the printed work. The total number of leaves is 210. Compared with the print of the first edition (1814), this manuscript contains what corresponds to 579 pages of print, and has lost what nearly corresponds to 515 pages of print. The first, or quarto, portion of the manuscript is watermarked 1805; the folio portion is watermarked 1813. At the end of Part II. of postscript the words 'Our Scottish Addison' are erased, being required in the dedication that followed. The leaves forming the opening chapter were bought by Mr Hope Scott at Cadell's sale in 1867, and were at Abbotsford in 1871. It seems a pity that these should not be added to the manuscript of *Waverley* in the Advocates' Library. We believe that about two years ago the Advocates' Library was offered about six leaves of *Waverley* for £60, but refused to purchase.

On March 12, 1894, there was sold at Sotheby's, London, the original manuscript of Scott's *Napoleon*, the property of the Hon. Mrs Maxwell Scott, Abbotsford. The two thick post-quarto volumes, bound in russia leather, contain about 1000 pages, very minutely written. This prize became the property of an Edinburgh collector, Mr W. Moir Bryce, at the price of 198 guineas. It appears complete except for some leaves in Chapter XIV. and the whole of Chapter XV. There are many corrections and interpolations on the left-hand pages. The same collector has the manuscript of *Count Robert of Paris*, inscribed with the name of its former possessor, 'Robert Cadell, 1834.' Only a portion of this story, written in the decadence of Scott's powers, is in his own handwriting; he had called in the aid of Mr and Mrs William Laidlaw for its completion. The same purchaser has the original manuscript of Scott's review for the *Quarterly* of Kirkton's *History of the Church of Scotland*, with an inscription from 'John Murray to Robert Cooke, with kind regards, Sept. 1888,' as also the review of an essay *On Military Bridges*, by Colonel Sir Howard Douglas—both from the Cooke sale. Two other prizes of great value are possessed by Mr Bryce—the service-book of Holyrood Abbey, bound in oak and leather, for which he paid £250, and the original manuscript of Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, which cost him £104. Honest Allan, as is obvious from the whimsical preface in his own handwriting, had a good opinion of his performance, as appears also from the note at the end giving date and day and hour in the evening when he finished it. This is from the Boswell collection, and has a note in the handwriting of Sir Alexander Boswell relating how it came into his possession.

Scott's *Life of Napoleon* had its origin in a conference with Constable in May 1825. 'The Grand Napoleon of the realms of *print*,' as Scott facetiously dubbed his publisher, whose brain was then seething with new schemes, had struck out the idea of issuing periodically the series of cheap volumes which were afterwards realised in *Constable's Miscellany*. Constable's first notion was to take the field, at Scott's suggestion, with a 'Life of the *other* Napoleon,' in four volumes, the series to be sandwiched with the novels by the author of *Waverley*. Scott had commenced work in June with a short preliminary sketch of the French Revolution, the events of which belonged to his own time. Constable poured in material to 39 Castle Street until Scott's little parlour became 'more like an auctioneer's premises than an author's;' so that he was fain to say:

> How my fancy could prance
> In a dance of romance!
> But my house I must swap
> With some Brobdingnag chap,
> Ere I grapple, God bless me, with Emperor Nap.

The introduction proved so long that Constable soon saw that four volumes would never complete the work. Scott's *Journal* shows how he toiled at this task during the months of 1826. This and the *Chronicles of the Canongate* were in progress together. The commercial crisis and failure of Constable and Ballantyne only caused him to stoop and bear a heavier load, assuming the debt of Ballantyne & Co. He now led a life of toil and seclusion from company, rarely dining out or even receiving a single guest at home, while he seemed to grudge every minute that he was not at his desk. A visit to Paris for information cost him about £200. The damp sheets of a French inn were remembered by severe after-fits of rheumatism, and the growing sluggishness of his blood and increasing lameness became marked, while his handwriting was more cramped and confused. His *Journal* contains such entries as 'Worked hard to-day,' or 'Uninterrupted to-day, and did eight leaves,' which was equal to from four to five of the closely-printed pages of the original edition of his Bonaparte. Another day he equalled twenty-four pages of print. Reluctantly he had to make up his mind to nine thick and closely-printed volumes. The story he thought so interesting in itself 'that there is no fear of the book answering. Superficial it must be, but I do not care for the charge. Better a superficial book which brings well and strikingly together the known and acknowledged facts, than a dull, boring narrative, pausing to see farther into a millstone at every moment than the nature of the millstone admits.' Ballantyne discovered in the proof-sheets a whole passage of the history which had been repeated.

In his *Journal* he wrote: 'But I am "Nap. Bon." again, which is always a change, because it gives a good deal of reading and research, whereas *Woodstock* and such-like, being extempore from my mother-wit, is a sort of spinning of the brains, of which a man tires. After all, I have fagged through six pages, and made poor Wurmser lay down his sword on the glacis of Mantua—and my head aches—my eyes ache—my back aches—so does my breast—and I am sure my heart aches—what can Duty want more?' He told Mr Adolphus that 'he could have done it better if he could have written at more leisure, and with a mind more at ease.' In addition to the commercial ruin in which he had been plunged—for he was but working for his creditors—came the death of his wife. He lived the life of a hermit for the most part, save attending the Court five days in the week. Lockhart believes that this task barely occupied him more than twelve months. The result of this prodigious activity in the midst of 'pain, sorrow, and ruin' was munificent for his creditors, as the first and second editions produced £18,000; *Woodstock* realised £8000. An amanuensis who assisted him for a short time says that on some days he worked from 6 A.M. till 6 P.M., without interruption, save for breakfast and dinner. While he was dictating, his thoughts flowed freely; indeed he carried on two trains of thought at one time, dictating and composing the passage before him while preparing at the same time for what was to come.

Sir William Stirling-Maxwell has said that he never took down a volume of Scott's writings published in or after 1826 without thinking that they, like the water from the well of Bethlehem which David refused to drink, represented 'the heart's blood of a brave man's life.' Could he have handled the Napoleon MS. he might have said this with even greater truthfulness.

THE GURNARD ROCK.

CHAPTER III.

GABRIEL LOWRY soon began to feel the awkwardness of the situation. It was not to his liking to sit thus face to face with the man he was presently to fight; the enforced companionship seemed intolerable. He offered to take one of the oars, so that he might turn his back on his enemy; but Tregenna said, 'Niver mind; us'll catch a breeze when we'm clear o' the Point.' And his voice and manner were suavity itself. Perhaps he, too, realised the absurdity of the position, for there was a good-humoured gleam in his eyes.

Lowry, as he scowled at his adversary, inwardly resented the man's serenity of countenance; he felt that it was outrageously out of place. The occasion demanded some ferocity of aspect, or at least a decent stolidity; and this smiling geniality was an

affront in itself. He stuck his pipe grimly between his teeth, and fumbled vainly in his pockets for tobacco. Tregenna, observing his dilemma, flung his own pouch across and said simply, 'You 'm welcome.' This civility only increased Gabriel's discomfort; he was doubtful whether he could accept the tobacco with grace, or refuse it without churlishness. Finally, he filled his pipe, and returned the pouch with a nod of acknowledgment. He puffed vigorously, as though he would fain blow a veil of smoke between himself and the intolerable smile of his opponent.

It was a great relief when the sail was hoisted and Tregenna changed his position. There was a fair wind, and they made rapid headway, and were soon abreast of Tregulva Head, the great black promontory at whose base the big seas break—and the ships sometimes.

'The last time I was on the Gurnard,' said Tregenna, lighting his own pipe, 'was February. There's serpentine splinters to be picked up on the rock different to what you can find in the cove or on the mainland—greeny stones, wi' veins o' bliddy red. I carr'd some o' they home to my son Jan. My son Jan's 'prenticed to Josiah Creed the serpentine-worker, an' he's getting on famous. Us'll take wan or two o' they greeny stones back with us in the boat; they 'm good for cannel-sticks, an' paper-weights, an' sich trade.'

Lowry did not appreciate the man's conversation any more than he liked his demeanour; he felt it was utterly inappropriate. The circumstances required a stern silence; he could have suffered threats or curses without further wrath; but here was this irritating fellow babbling of greeny stones!

It was a glorious morning, and Tregenna lolled contentedly, and blew his smoke skyward with an air of appreciation and gratitude; but Lowry crouched as he sat, and spat between his knees. They sailed past the romantic little cove of Gullion, with its fantastic rocks and islets glowing in the summer sea like an archipelago in Fairyland.

'My son Jan,' resumed Tregenna, 'hath cut the Longships out o' stone, an' 'tis 'xactly like lighthouse, rocks, an' all. There's to be a serpentine pulpit in Tregartha church to the mimory o' Squire Vivian, an' Parson Trevennick says my son Jan's to cut wan o' the panels.'

Lowry did not vouchsafe a reply to any of these observations, and whenever he spoke regarding the management of the boat, it was in curt monosyllables.

The Gurnard Rock was now in sight; twice a day the tide covers it, and twice a day it emerges an island from the sea. Its remote resemblance to the fish from which it derives its name is only perceptible at very low water and from a southerly point of view. It lies half-a-mile from the land, south-west of the light on Trevasse Point.

As they neared the rock the topmasts of a sunken vessel were descried at the north-eastern extremity of the little island. Six weeks before, the brig *Hirondelle* of Havre was driven in a gale on the Gurnard, and had gone down with all hands. The two slender masts now rose from the placid water like reeds in a pond.

''Tis a wonder that riggin' hathn't broke away yet,' said Tregenna, 'for there's a purty strong current there.'

To which Lowry responded, in the one speech he made during the voyage, 'Iss, 'tis strange. I should ha' thought her'd a-gone to splinters in two tides.'

They lowered their sail when they approached the reef, and Lowry took the oars, while Tregenna drew off his boots and stockings to wade, saying to his companion, 'Niver mind thy boots; I'll beach her.'

So they ran their boat into the pebbles at the only possible landing point, Tregenna wading knee-deep and pulling her in, while Lowry leapt dry-footed ashore. Then together they hauled the boat up the ridge of pebbles.

'There! that's wan of they stones!' cried Tregenna, picking up a fragment of rock that had not yet been worn to pebble smoothness, and dipping it in a pool, displayed its wet colours. ''Tis green mainly, but there's black and gray in it, an' the rid rins with the white; 'tis like jade an' agate an' onyx all in wan, with a strake o' cornelian; 'tis fit for a king's ornament when 'tis polished, an' my son Jan 'll turn a goblet out o' thicky stone that 'll be worth fifteen shillings.'

He deposited his treasure in the bottom of the boat, and together they rambled over the one acre of island, searching for precious pebbles. Lowry against his will found himself drawn into the quest, and it was with something akin to pleasure that he picked up a big stone even more splendid than the first and carried it to the boat.

Round Trevasse Point there hove in sight a huge ironclad, steaming west—an unwonted spectacle so near the shore; and the two men, spell-bound, watched the passing of the great ship.

Then Tregenna, turning suddenly to the other, cried, 'Now for this fight—for time's going, an' the tide's running swift.' And he flung his cap on the ground and rolled up the sleeves of his guernsey.

Lowry, tossing his cap beside the other, said, ''Tis bad footing for naked feet; better put on thy boots.'

'No odds for that!' answered Tregenna.

'Then us'll fight equal,' said Gabriel, drawing off his own boots. Then facing the other, he continued with a frankness that was strange to him, his countenance clearing like a sky after storm: 'There's wan thing to be said to 'ee, John Tregenna; whether I'm best man, or thee, in this yer fight, out o' the fight thee 'rt the best man by a long sight, an' I'm sorry I struck 'ee—cruel sorry.'

What answer Tregenna would have made to this admission cannot be chronicled, for his eyes were fixed on the water, and he cried in sudden consternation, 'The boat!'

And there, a good hundred yards from the rock, buoyant on the inflowing tide, drifted their boat.

A subsidence of the pebbles had brought it to the water's edge, and the tide had crept in and lifted it; and while they stood watching the mighty vessel that betokened the immunity of the realm, their own little ark of safety was bobbing unregarded on the sea.

The empty boat danced upon the sun-smitten waters as they watched her like a thing consciously free of oar and tiller. For a minute there was a significant silence; then Lowry spoke:

'"Tis a terrible judgment on fighting—in half-an-hour the Gurnard 'll be covered. Can 'ee swim, John Tregenna?'

'Iss, a bit; but not far in that current.'

'Ay, 'tis worse than broken water,' said Lowry, 'an' stronger than it looks; 'tis a nasty bit, to be sure!'

'There's no chance of a boat from the shore,' said Tregenna, 'for there's no fishing hereabouts, an' 'tis too far to signal the Channel shipping.'

'Iss, too far; they'd niver heed our motions—'twid be like the antics o' emmits.'

Minute by minute the area of the reef diminished; every wave altered the geography of the little island; isthmus, promontory, bay, appeared and disappeared, and the one acre of dry rock had shrunk to half.

Then a strange thing happened to the boat. It had been carried in the direction of the sunken brig, and after gyrating in the cross-currents, was now drifting straight on to the emergent topmasts. Its bow struck the protruding yard of the mizzen, and, slowly veering round, it was caught in a triangle of mast and spar and rope.

'"Tis surely catched in the riggin',' cried Tregenna; for both were watching the truant boat.

'Surely 'tis!' answered Lowry; and when the boat showed no sign of resuming its abandoned career, he continued slowly: '"Tis a brave swim, but I 'll try it. The distance is nought, but I know that ugly watter—it rins swift, an' there's a draggin' weight in it; an' there's a whirl that swayeth 'ee round an' round. Did 'ee see how the boat spinned? I'm longer in the limbs than thee, John Tregenna, an' I reckon I'm spryer in the watter. You bide here, an' I 'll swim for the boat.'

While Lowry stripped, Tregenna said, 'If 'tis to be that us drown, I'd ha' wished that us washed in together; not thee wan place an' me another, for folks to interprit evil, but strapped an' buckled wan to another for a sign an' token that there was peace betwixt us at the finish.'

To which Lowry replied phlegmatically, 'Keep yer eye on they clothes o' mine, an' doan't 'ee let the tide float 'em.'

Gabriel walked in stalwart nakedness to the edge of the rock, and took the deep water with a plunge. He swam warily, with a steady breast-stroke, not making direct for the boat, but seeking by a detour to avoid the whirl. He made good progress at first; but when he neared the troubled water, Tregenna, who watched every stroke, saw that he laboured painfully, and there were several minutes when his head appeared stationary, and man and current seemed equally matched. However, he struggled through the dangerous eddies and reached the placid water beyond, and had covered about two-thirds of the distance, when, to the dismay of swimmer and watcher, the tide lifted the boat clear of the impeding rigging, and it drifted away past all possibility of recapture.

Lowry swam on towards the rigging of the brig—he could do no other. He reached one of the masts, and after a few moments of gasping exhaustion he clambered to the yard. The Gurnard Rock had now diminished to a triangular patch that a cutter's mainsail might have covered, and Tregenna stood thereon waving his hand in greeting. It was evident that the rock would be completely submerged in a few minutes. The two men were within easy hail of each other, and Lowry shouted:

'You must swim for your life!'

'Ay, ay, I'm coming!' responded the other as he made ready.

'You must strip!' cried Lowry; 'strip! Every rag 'll be a drag on 'ee.'

But Tregenna did not strip. He had little hope of reaching the refuge of the rigging. He was not the swimmer the other was, and he knew it. If drowning was to be his fate, he would rather not be cast ashore naked and unseemly, but clothed and decent, wearing the garments of his wife's knitting.

He swam steadily, and it was Lowry's turn to watch. It was soon evident that he would never cope with the current, and Lowry, with a shout of succour, dropped into the water and made towards him.

Then Gabriel Lowry did a mighty piece of swimming; the other had already gone under twice, and was floundering aimlessly when Lowry clutched him at the neck. Tregenna was helpless; his limp body swayed in the current at a right angle from his rescuer. The sunken rocks, with their jags and hollows barely covered by the water, tore the tide into a dozen conflicting courses, and once caught in this turmoil, swimming was all but impossible; all Lowry could do was to keep himself and his burden afloat, for the under-tow dragged at his legs, and its suction was like a palpable clutch. A tooth of black rock, rising a foot from the water, gave him a minute's respite; seizing the slippery projection, he rested, while Tregenna gasped, 'Let me go, and save yourself!' and tried to tear the other's hand from his throat. But Lowry kept his grip, and away they were borne on the cross-currents in a zigzag course. Then Lowry could see the edge of the 'race,' the clearly defined limit of the turbulent water—a straight white line of froth; beyond that line was comparative safety. Inch by inch he fought the current; his strength was almost spent, his stroke grew feeble and spasmodic, when he was suddenly conscious of a slackening of the pressure that bore in upon him, a feeling

of relief as if a weight had been loosened from his limbs, and floating in tranquil green water, he relaxed his clutch of Tregenna's throat, and drawing a deep breath, he turned to the Porthillian man with a smile of triumph.

To gain the rigging was now a comparatively easy matter; and when they had climbed from the water, Tregenna, wringing his yellow beard said, 'You've succoured me this day, Gabriel Lowry.' To which Lowry replied, 'Nay, I've only got 'ee into a purty pickle, for yer us be nayther afloat nor ashore, but hangin' betwixt the say an' the firmyment.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE case of the two men was still desperate enough. It was a precarious perch, this yard of the sunken *Hirondelle*, for the mast trembled with their weight, as though it might break away at any moment. The Gurnard Rock had disappeared, and there was nothing but water to the seaward. They could see the top of the lighthouse on Trevasse Point, two miles distant, the lantern showing over the brow of the headland. The immediate coast was precipitous, sheer walls of rock that offered no foothold at high-water; and the only place where a swimmer could land was Bubbly Cove, whose narrow entry a man might make or miss. Far up on the cliff there was one outlying cottage of the little parish of Pengooney, and cattle grazing, but no other sign of life or habitation.

All the sullenness had disappeared from Lowry; it was as though the perilous water had in some sacramental way washed the ill-humour out of the man, and there was a gleam of geniality in his dark face. As for Tregenna, he soon recovered his serenity, and was as jovial as a man may be whose stomach is half-filled with sea-water. He wrung his garments and hung them up to dry, and at times the two men waved them with much shouting towards the shore; but there was no sign of help.

A clasp-knife, a tobacco-pouch and pipe, and a box of matches were the contents of Tregenna's pockets. The match-box was of metal, and fitted as closely as a watch-case; they dried the damp matches in the sun, but the saturated tobacco defied ignition. Lowry, an abandoned smoker, cut an inch of pendent rope and charged the pipe with the tow, but found no solace in the experiment.

'Here us must bide till nightfall, I reckon,' said Tregenna, 'when your friends 'll surely come a-searchin' for 'ee.'

'Iss, maybe,' answered Lowry; 'or p'raps the Porthillian chaps 'll come for thee.'

'Nay,' said the other, smiling, 'my mates knaw nort o' this fightin' expedition; ye see, I 'm reckoned a stiddy, harmless man, an' no fighter.'

Once, when they shifted their position on the yard and there was an unusual tremor of the mast, something bobbed up on the surface of the water and drifted away beneath them—something that the vibration had liberated from the entanglement of the submerged rigging. It looked at first glance like black seaweed, but was long dark hair, and with it there were gray garments floating.

Lowry turned pale beneath his sun-brown, and Tregenna said solemnly, 'Cap'n's wife, I reckon—poor sawl!'

So the long hours of the afternoon wore on, and the summer day died as it had lived, gloriously. The sun dipped into the Atlantic, and light clouds blew up from the sea and dappled the sky with crimson. The western cliffs were aflame, and the great headland of Trevasse, bright gold from base to summit, gleamed across the waters like a promontory of Eldorado.

Cold, cramped, famished, the two men clung to the mast, and valiantly kept up their courage. They shared the half-dried garments, and attempted to find some humour in the allotment.

Then the night came on, moonless, but marvellously clear and fine. The sky was alive with stars and the sea with phosphorus. The swirl of water around the mast gleamed like liquid fire, and every ripple was a touch of white radiance. Once again the Gurnard Island rose from the sea, and the eddies circled the emergent rocks with a luminous fringe.

''Tis a brave night!' cried Tregenna, but his teeth chattered; and he essayed a snatch of song:

> 'Did 'ee ever hear tell o' St Ives,
> Where the men be afeard o' their wives,
> An' the wimmen'——

'Sing something seemlier,' interrupted Lowry, 'for the judgment 's still awver us.' And Tregenna ventured on a Methodist hymn, in a voice husky with much vain shouting.

The revolving light on Trevasse Point sent a shaft of brilliancy across the water at quarter-minute intervals, and they watched it till the recurring gleam distressed them with its persistent regularity. Inland, they could see the lights in the windows of the cottage at Pengooney; and above Pengooney hung the pole-star.

Then a thought came to John Tregenna. He cut a length of rope from the rigging, and, unravelling the strands, improvised a torch. The tarry hemp burnt with a blaze, and as he waved the flaring brand above his head he cried to his companion, 'If there 's a coastguard or anybody ashore looking sayward, they 'll surely see this signal.'

. . . . . .

Young Dick Mundy of Pengooney was fetching turfs for the hearth-fire, when from the eminence of the turf-rick he saw a strange light upon the sea, and called into the house, 'Father, father! there 's curious lights upon the watter!'

'Whereabouts, my son?' asked old Isaac Mundy. 'My aged eyes be gettin' dimmer 'n iver.'

'Nigh the Gurnard, where the French brig foundered.'

'What soort o' lights be 'em? Stiddy lights like a boat's light?'

'No; dancin', flickerin' lights. They'm all of a quiver.'

'Poor sawls!' cried the old man in an awed voice; 'poor foreign sawls!'

'Why, father! what do 'ee think they be?'

'The Lord knaws! But they'm no lawful lights to be dancin' awver drownded folks!'

'I'm afeard 'tis some signal o' distress, father; us had better ask Uncle Peter.'

So they descended the hill, and sought Uncle Peter where he was always to be found—in the corner of the settle at the 'Blue Anchor,' with half-a-dozen convivial cronies.

'There's lights upon the watter, Uncle Peter—coorious lights that flicker here and flicker there; do 'ee think 'tis a sign o' distress, or something evil in the darkness?'

'Signals, surely!' cried Uncle Peter, a shrewd-faced, corpulent little man. 'We must have the boat out; and you must go, Isaac Mundy, for you'm the wan man that can get a boat out o' Bubbly Cove in the dark.'

But old Isaac drew back. 'If 'tis mortal man in mortal danger I'll go,' said he; 'but if 'tis some sperritual adventure'——

'Come, Isaac!' said Uncle Peter briskly, 'we never reckoned 'ee a coward.'

'Coward!' roared Isaac, seizing unreasonably on the word; ''tis purty late in the day to call me a coward, an' me fourteen year cox'n o' the Lantrissy lifeboat, an' niver missed but wan launch, when 'twas dru a poultice so's I couldn't sit fitty.'

'Come, come! we're wasting precious time,' said Uncle Peter, reaching for his stick. 'I'd go myself if 'twasn't that I'm eaten dru with rheumatics.'

So the group of men descended the narrow combe that leads to Bubbly Cove, Uncle Peter hobbling on two sticks, and one of the younger men carrying a stable-lantern. Half-way down they caught sight of a flickering light on the sea, that flared and circled for half-a-minute and was lost.

''Tis this side o' the Gurnard!' cried Uncle Peter; 'though what 'tis I can't for the life o' me make out.'

Old Isaac Mundy had quarrelled all the way down. 'Coward, be I? Aw, well! if a man lives long enough he'll surely hear news!'

'No, no, Isaac! you'm a proper hero, an' us all knaw it.' But Isaac had a grievance, and was not to be easily appeased.

'Iss, I'm a coward! Dick, my son, you'd better rin home to your mother, an' tell her to tear up the Portygese letter that's folded in the big Bible—thicky letter from the Portygese consul, wi' the coat-of-arms o' the King of Portygal hisself in the corner. 'Twas writ when the *San Josy* went scat on the Pinnacles, an' us brought off the crew o' twenty-dree. There's the word "dooty" in that letter, an' "hundaunted," an' "hintrepidity," an' other lies consarnin' old Isaac Mundy, an' 'tis time thicky letter was a-teared up.' So, with the old fellow grumbling all the way, they reached the beach, and carried the boat (there is only one at Bubbly Cove) down to the water.

Old Isaac and Dick entered the boat, each taking an oar and rowing warily between the rocks, which Isaac knew as a man knows his fingers; and they were soon out of the narrow entry of the cove into the open Channel. Each stroke smote the phosphorescent water into fire, and the wake of the boat was a long streak of quivering radiance. The tide was with them, and they made rapid headway.

'Can 'ee see aught, Dick?' asked Isaac in a sort of whisper. To tell the truth, the superstitious old man had been rowing for some minutes with his eyes shut.

At this moment Dick, looking over his shoulder, saw a sight to appal a hero; he suddenly stopped rowing, arrested by the vision that frightened while it fascinated him.

The glare of a swaying torch fell with fantastic effect upon two half-naked figures, poised above the water as by magic, without boat or sign of floating thing beneath them, and in the fitful yellow gleam the forms looked grotesque—demoniac. Then the flame flickered down into the sea, and the apparitions vanished.

''Tis a strange, fearsome sight, father!' gasped Dick. But Isaac did not look; with closed eyes and chattering teeth, he gripped his oar in terror.

Then out of the darkness came a shout: 'Boat ahoy!'

'Ahoy!' echoed Dick as manfully as he could.

'Boat ahoy! Help! help! help!' There were now two voices calling.

'Where be 'ee?' cried Dick.

'Here, in the riggin' o' the French brig!'

'Lord ha' mercy upon us!' gasped the old man, 'they'm sperrits, Dick—French sperrits, six weeks departed!'

But Dick had more logic. 'They'm no foreigners, father, for they spake good Cornish English.' And to banish what remained of his fears, he sang at the top of his voice:

> 'Is there baalm in Gilead, brother,
> Baalm for me?'

And across the water, John Tregenna's husky tenor flung back the answer:

> 'There is baalm in Gilead, brother,
> Baalm for thee—ee!'

Taking the oar from his trembling parent, Dick rowed sturdily toward the voice, and in a few minutes the two combatants of the Gurnard Rock, numbed and exhausted, were lying in the boat, speeding shoreward.

WEIGHTED SILK.

By T. L. PHIPSON, Ph.D.

THE silk industry is at present in a rather critical condition, occasioned by excesses committed in the practice of 'weighting' the fabrics made of this material. The subject is worthy of particular attention on the part of all connected with the silk-trade, the future of which appears to depend upon it. Naturalists have long been aware that when the silkworm spins its cocoon every thread is covered over by a kind of gummy matter which can be washed away by boiling water. This gummy covering is very similar (but not absolutely identical) in its chemical nature or composition to silk itself; but it is soluble in water, which silk is not. On the fibre as produced by the silkworm there is about 25 per cent., or a quarter of its weight, of this peculiar covering.

Now, before the material is submitted to dyeing, this soluble gummy matter, or 'sericine,' as it is sometimes called, should be all washed out; for it is well known that silk is never seen in its natural beauty and lustre until this substance has been completely removed by boiling with soap and water, or by means of steam.

A textile fabric, as every one knows, consists of two parts, the *warp* and the *weft*. The latter, being generally concealed between the warp threads, or so woven as to be seen only on the back of the fabric, need not have this gummy matter removed—that is, it need not be lustrous. This was the first step in the 'weighting' of silk: the gummy matter was left on the threads forming the weft of the fabric.

This practice appears to have arisen a long time ago in Europe, whilst in the East—in China, Japan, India, and Persia—the tissue was always bright on both sides, the gummy covering of the fibre having invariably been removed from the threads forming both the warp and weft. Gradually the French dyers began to increase the weight of their silk in other ways, in order to compete with the brocade-weavers of Italy. From the time of Louis XIV. to that of the First Empire in France, both the warp and the weft threads were usually boiled and cleansed of the 'sericine.' But in the time of Napoleon I. a notable decline set in, and in a comparatively short time it developed into a truly fraudulent practice. It was discovered that by plunging the raw silk, whether washed or not, into certain astringent decoctions containing tannin, the latter adhered to the fibre or combined with it. In this manner it was found easy to bring the silk that had lost its gum by washing up to its original weight, and to increase its bulk considerably at the same time.

Such practices were well known in England as early as the time of King Charles I., for about 1630 this unfortunate monarch issued a proclamation forbidding the 'deceptions in the dyeing of silk,' consisting in the addition to the dyeing mixture of injurious substances calculated to increase the weight of the material. A few years later, however, he withdrew this prohibition to some extent, 'having become better acquainted with the subject,' as his Majesty candidly observes.

At the present day the practice of weighting silks by means of astringent extracts, salts of tin, silicate and phosphate of soda, and a variety of other substances, all more or less injurious to the wear of the fibre, has reached such a height that it is seriously affecting the trade. This is especially the case as regards black silk; but fabrics of other colours suffer in the same manner.

It used to be remarked that a silk dress or a silk handkerchief would last a lifetime; and this is almost true for absolutely pure silk. But in much of the fabric sold at the present day there is not more than 10 or 12 per cent. of real silk, all the rest being extraneous matter applied to the fibre in the deceptive process of 'weighting.'

Pure silk when burnt leaves a quantity of ash which is always considerably less than 1 per cent.; but the ash left by some weighted silks has been found to amount to as much as 48 per cent. of the weight of the fabric.

The extraneous substances to which we have alluded are caused to adhere to the fibre by passing the skeins through hot baths of tannin extracts, tin salts, salts of iron, antimony, potash, &c.; and it has been found that when a silk much charged with such substances is heated it will not burn with flame, but will only smoulder away, leaving a very large amount of ash behind.

But these weighted silks are, however, of so combustible a nature that some have been known to take fire spontaneously, a result due to the gradual decomposition of the substances used for weighting, and disastrous fires have been traced to this cause. Spontaneous combustion is liable to break out more especially in black silks that are stored in warm, dry places.

Look at it how we will, the weighting of silks is a nefarious practice which should be forbidden by law. It causes a black silk dress to become more or less shabby in a single twelvemonth. Skeins of German-dyed silk have been often found to be thus increased to the extent of 400 per cent. of their original weight. Such silk has, of course, no lustre; but that is of no consequence, because when woven it will be covered by a warp that has lustre. This excessive weighting, besides increasing the combustibility, swells up the tissue and pads the fabric like stuffing a cushion, giving it 'a fictitious feel, appearance, and substance.'

This unfortunate state of things has arisen,

says a competent authority, 'from the insatiable pressure of the silk-merchant's buyer for cheapness, and the degenerate spirit of commercial competition among the manufacturers themselves.' Under such severe trade pressure artificial means are resorted to for cheapening the fibre as much as possible; and to such an extent is this now practised at each of three great silk centres on the Continent that the very existence of their staple industry is most seriously threatened.

We have hinted above that the prime cause for the 'weighting' was a desire to make up the original weight of the raw silk, a loss being occasioned by the boiling off of the natural gummy matter which amounts to about 25 per cent. By this treatment a pound of sixteen ounces is reduced by boiling to about twelve ounces. But as long ago as 1875 the weighting of silk was carried on by 'improved methods' to the extent of 100, 200, and even 300 per cent. Nowadays these numbers are left far behind, and recent chemical analyses of certain silk fabrics show that 900, and even 1000, per cent. has been reached, until, in fact, the material is no longer silk, but a mere conglomeration of mineral matters and dyes, with perhaps some 10 or 12 per cent. only of real silk.

Black silks which have been weighted to the extent of 300 or 400 per cent. have been known to take fire of their own accord—that is, without the contact of a substance in ignition. Not many years ago a fire broke out in the warehouse of a large silk-mercer in Paris, and was traced to this cause. It was found to have originated inside a large parcel of black silk, which had been delivered only twenty-four hours previously from the dyers. In 1871 a fire traced to a similar cause occurred in a silk-dyeing establishment in the United States. It is now considered unsafe to pack such weighted silks in deep boxes.

As regards the general public, the weighting of silks should be done away with entirely. No silk fabric should be allowed to be offered for sale that does not contain at least 80 per cent. of pure silk. In fact, the time has arrived when this material, like so many others, should be 'sold on analysis,' and paid for according to its composition. That would soon have the effect of bringing about a much healthier state of things in the silk industry.

IN CARE OF THE CAPTAIN.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY, Author of *Steve Brown's Bunyip; In the Great Deep*, &c.

AMONGST the saloon passengers of the *Illimani*, ere she was a fortnight out, little Miss Agnew had become quite a pet. 'She was *such* a dear—so natural, so really *chic!*' said the ladies; whilst the men enjoyed to the full her utter, or assumed, lack of conventionality. She was a fresh-coloured girl of about eighteen, handsome enough after a robust, dairy-maid fashion, with full red lips, white teeth, and black eyes, under a shock of curly hair, that shrank from no man's gaze.

Miss Agnew had come on board at the very last moment, with an uncle and an aunt to see her off; also a note from the owners commending her to the captain's care. Popularly it was known that she was a rich squatter's daughter returning home after a long visit to England. Her sole occupation of one of the best berths in the ship, as well as the possession of plenty of spare cash, gave some reason to the rumour of wealth. It was also whispered that she had been expelled from more than one fashionable school. But nobody seemed to think much the worse of her for that.

This trip the *Illimani* happened to have a rather aristocratic passenger-list for Australia. Besides poor young Badegge, who was nobody's enemy but his own, there were an incoming governor and his countess; another couple of stray peers and peeresses; a rich baronet and his wife; and several gentlemen, middle-aged and elderly, making the round voyage for their health's sake—that is, the sake of a long and uninterrupted steady drinking. And with these, at times, nothing loth, 'Dolly,' as she was called *tout court*, would smoke a cigarette and toss off a glass of champagne; looked upon with a lenient eye by her female friends, not only on the plea of her being an 'Australian tomboy,' but for the sake of the little scandalous tit-bits she was able to retail to them afterwards in the privacy of their cabins.

At Naples, amongst others, there came on board for the second saloon a young Frenchman, apparently pretty ill with asthma; so much so, indeed, that he seemed able to do nothing else but lie in his deck-chair all day long covered up with rugs. Quite a curiosity, too, was this deck-chair, massive but light, folding up into a compact compass, curiously carved, and made of neither cane nor canvas, but of stout olive wood, with big bulging arms and a thick curved back. And Monsieur Deschamps seemed to set great store by it, for, always when the day was over and he walked feebly to his berth, the quarter-master carefully folded up the chair and carried it to its owner. At first people laughed. But 'cranks' and 'eccentrics' are so plentiful on such ships as the *Illimani* that far more *outré* things ceased to attract attention, and Deschamps and his chair soon became part and parcel of the daily and weekly monotony.

Curiously enough amongst all the passengers there was no one with a sufficient knowledge of French to interpret between the sick passenger

and the *Illimani's* doctor, or the stewards, or anybody. And this was awkward; for Monsieur Deschamps was unable to speak a word of any language but his own. This matter presently coming to Dolly's ears, she volunteered to 'have a go.' 'I was,' she said, 'a couple of years at school at Rouen; and if I can't patter their lingo, I reckon I'm due for the leatheriest medal on board this canoe.' So, tripping across the bridge that separated the two classes, Dolly went up to the invalid and began—much to everybody's admiration—to discourse with eloquent volubility and gesture. Listening a minute, the Frenchman, appearing to recognise the real thing at last, sat up and waved his hands and shrugged his shoulders, and smiled with a delight and gratification beautiful to witness. And after this, nearly every day, Dolly went along and cheered the poor fellow up, interpreting his symptoms to the doctor and his wants to the stewards.

In most ocean liners there is posted up somewhere a notice advising passengers to deposit their valuables with the purser for safety during the voyage, a small percentage being charged for the accommodation. Many people object to pay this; others are too lazy to go to any trouble; others too careless. So that, very often, until something is missing, the caution is a dead letter. It was so on the *Illimani*. But one morning Dolly, returning from her usual visit to her French friend, found the saloon a scene of the utmost confusion—ladies running about with empty jewel-cases, stewards protesting, purser threatening, and the chief stewardess in hysterics. The Countess of Trebizond had lost a diamond necklace and a set of priceless pearls; Lady Trotter de Globe was minus her family jewels, sapphires, opals, and diamonds valued at £3000; the Honourable Mrs Monopole's diamond earrings (they were fashionable then), tiara, and necklet were gone. In fact, it appeared that nearly everything worth having was gone. There were a lot of paste and Palais Royal imitations—beautifully done—but all such had been rejected with the nice appreciation of an expert, or at least an intimate. And, to complicate matters, nothing was forced—every lock intact and the keys in their owners' pockets. The excitement and commotion was intense. The captain alone kept calm; and when the male relatives of the victims talked about suing the company, he suavely drew their attention to the notice afore-mentioned. Dolly was demurely sad, and condoled, even wept, with her aristocratic friends. Her own things, a set of pearls and a few diamond ornaments, she explained, had been in the purser's big safe from the commencement of the voyage. Her uncle had insisted on it.

But who was the thief?

Public opinion pointed to some one amongst the stewards. And the first thing done was to ransack the 'glory-hole,' as their quarters were called. Nothing was found. Then 'search law' was proclaimed throughout the ship, much to the indignation of the second and third classes. It took some considerable time to overhaul the effects of nearly four hundred people. Nor was it a pleasant matter, as the purser, the chief steward, and their assistants discovered. Not a trace of the lost jewellery was to be found. But the captain grew anxious. He had been quite certain that the things would be found. Although he was not liable, the ship's reputation would be ruined so far as carrying passengers was concerned. And this was a serious consideration. Still, what more could he do? Then suddenly he remembered that Watson was waiting at Colombo to go on with him to Melbourne. If anybody could help it was Watson! Wherefore those who troubled about the daily runs noticed that the *Illimani* was being driven at almost top-speed across the Arabian Sea. In these days she was a decidedly uncomfortable ship within—suspicion writ large on every face of all her great company, each one doubtful of his neighbour, and all secretly watching, and, so it seemed, thinking about the reward offered by the victims and the executive of the *Illimani*—£500—contributed to by captain and ship's boy alike, and very willingly. Dolly Agnew gave £10 to the fund; and her friend, Monsieur Deschamps, when made aware of what was going on, insisted on putting down his name for £5. But nothing came of it.

At Colombo—reached after a record run—there was indignation when it was found that the captain had stopped all shore-going, and also barred the usual crowd of dealers, jugglers, &c. from coming near the ship.

Only one passenger came on board at Colombo—an old, gray-haired, gray-bearded man who walked with a stoop, and peered dimly at people through tinted spectacles. He was accepted as a tea-planter, an old friend of the captain's, going to Australia on business. Speaking little himself, Mr Johnson was, nevertheless, a perfect godsend to the ship at large; and into his ears was dinned by the passengers again and again the story of their losses and wrongs.

'Well,' asked the skipper a few days later as Mr Johnson strolled into the former's state-room, 'any news yet?'

'Not much,' was the reply; 'only that you've got at least one artist on board—one of the most skilful cracksmen in London—which is saying a good deal.'

'Which is he?' asked the captain. 'Some fellow in the steerage, I suppose.'

'Not much,' replied the other, laughing. 'The only wonder is that he is not in the saloon here. It's the fellow in the second who gammons sick, and sits in the big chair all day.'

'Ha, ha!' laughed the captain; 'you're out of it this time, old man. That poor chap's a Frenchman—can't speak a word of anything else!'

'Is that so?' replied the other calmly. 'Well, in any case, he's the man who can tell you where the stolen stuff is.'

'Nonsense,' said the captain. 'He's never been for'ard the whole passage. Why, if it hadn't been

for Miss Agnew talking to him he'd have had to stay dumb altogether!'

'Fine-looking, fresh-complexioned, rather Jewessy, curly-haired girl—lots of side and sauce—No. 27, port side?'

'Right,' replied the skipper. 'Australian native. She's in my charge. Knows her way about, though, too well to want any looking after.'

'H'm!' grunted his companion, lighting a fresh cigar. 'You told me, I think, that you had searched the ship?'

'Every corner and every soul on board,' replied the captain proudly.

'Tchk, tchk!' said the other between tongue and teeth. 'What a pity! Tony Jenkins is a genius, though! A commoner would have chucked the things overboard. Not Tony; he's too much of an artist to stand any waste of that sort. Yes, I should say there was a chance. When you first broached the matter I thought it was only a bit of amateur aristocratic kleptomania. I see now that it's thorough business—business sweet and hot; a well-considered, long thought-out, cleverly put up job. Thank your stars, my boy, that I happened to be where I was, or you'd have lost your billet to a certainty!'

'Well, Watson—yes, of course, Johnson,' said the captain, changing colour as he thought of the fix he was in and saw no way out of, 'there's the reward, you know. And'——

'Don't want a penny,' replied the detective. 'This is purely a little private affair between ourselves. I'm on official business, and shouldn't have meddled but for old acquaintance' sake. You did me a good turn once. I'll return it now—if I can.'

Next morning Mr Johnson managed, casually, to have a talk with Dolly, who came up to where he sat in the sun, looking very old and feeble, to ask his opinion on the quality of the saloon tea, which, she averred, 'wasn't fit for pigs to drink.' Later, she confided to her friends that he wasn't a bad old josser, and that she rather thought he'd been a gay sort of a chappie in his day; whilst, on his part, Mr Johnson, removing the powerful magnifying-glasses he had worn throughout the interview, smiled in his beard and muttered, 'The scar's there all right, but fainter than when I saw it last. Clever! Clever's no name for it! No use looking through their berths, I suppose. However, I may as well have a try. I'll bet the stuff's neither there nor on their persons! If not, where then? A sum in induction *à la* Sherlock Holmes!' And 'Mr Johnson,' generally supposed to be the cleverest and keenest of all Scotland Yard, puckered his brows over the problem. During dinner he managed to slip into, and with practised hands ransack, Dolly's berth. But he found nothing at all incriminating in the single cabin trunk, unless a bottle of hair depilatory and another of dye could be deemed so. The clothing was all of good make and quality, and as the intruder noted the carefully worked initials 'D. A.' on everything, he shook his head doubtfully. Under the circumstances a mistake was a very serious matter. And the *Illimani* was rapidly nearing the Australian coast. If he was to make a *coup* he had no time to lose. Monsieur Deschamps occupied a deck-chair aft; and whilst its occupant was at lunch in the second saloon on the following day, Mr Johnson made as free with his belongings as he had done with Dolly's. And with a little more success. In the pockets of a pair of old trousers he found a tiny key with only one ward, at sight of which his eyes glistened. 'M-m,' he muttered as he stepped out on to the empty deck; 'the rest of the bunch are overboard, I suppose. Overlooked this one, evidently. Didn't think Tony was so careless. But what's he done with the stuff? Sent it after the keys? No, I can't believe that, after going to so much trouble.'

One morning, listlessly observing the little procession emerging from the invalid Frenchman's cabin as usual—first, Monsieur Deschamps, walking very slowly and holding on tight to things in his path; then the quartermaster, laden with chair and rugs, mounting up to the second promenade deck—an idea flashed across the watching detective's brain, and ere night he managed to have a chat with the quartermaster.

'Yessir,' said the latter, in answer to a question. 'Poor chap, 'e thinks a lot o' that cheer. I've got to put it in 'is berth every night so keerful as if it were med o' glass. You see, it ain't no common cheer, that one.'

'Well, I'm ready,' said Johnson to the captain shortly after this. 'You've been very good, and haven't bothered me much. Now I want your help. You must get the doctor to send for the Frenchman to the dispensary on some pretence or other. Then Miss Agnew must be called to interpret. Presently we two will drop in; and then, well, if I'm right, you'll see some fun. If I'm not, there'll be wigs on the green. But I can't put it off any longer, although not as sure as I'd like to be. Once we get to Albany, the fat's in the fire; for I cannot wait to shadow people; nor can you very well prevent the Westralian passengers from landing.'

As the captain and Mr Johnson strolled into the dispensary that evening Monsieur Deschamps was speaking. '*Mais oui, Monsieur le docteur,*' said he, '*je crois bien que, depuis que j'ai pris votre dernière mixture, je me fais plus de santé.*'

'He says,' translated Dolly, 'that since he took that last medicine he feels much better.'

'Hello, Tony, old man!' suddenly exclaimed the detective, who had been standing in one corner of the rather dim room. 'I'm sorry to hear of your—your being so ill. How do you like the sea?'

'Jim Watson!' shouted the sham Frenchman, as he stared from the clean-shaved, hawk-eyed, massive-jawed man before him to the gray wig, beard, and spectacles on the deck.

'And how's my little friend the Kid?' continued Watson, stepping to the door, and noting, with a breath of relief, the colour fade out of Dolly's cheeks, and the familiar, hunted look he knew so well steal over both their faces. 'No, you don't!' he continued, suddenly whipping out a revolver and presenting it at Tony, whose hand was quietly stealing round to his hip-pocket. The other laughed carelessly, and taking a cigar out of his case, lit it; whilst Watson, turning to the astonished skipper and doctor, said: 'Allow me, gentlemen, to present to you Mr Anthony Green, *alias* Jenkins, *alias* Deschamps, and a dozen others; and Master William Dawson, better known as The Kid, The Dinah, Young Dutch, &c.—the former gentleman the leading artist of his profession; the latter the best female impersonator of the day. Now, Tony, where's the swag?'

'Curse you, Watson!' replied the elder of the pair calmly, but with an ugly look in his shifty gray eyes. 'Find it, if you can! I won't help you!'

'Same here!' exclaimed the *ci-devant* Dolly, with a laugh. 'And if any of those old cats in the saloon make a row, Tony, I'll tell some funny little stories I've picked up amongst 'em that will make 'em glad to leave Australia by the next boat.'

'Good boy,' said Tony approvingly. 'Kept eyes and ears open, eh?'

'You bet!' replied the lad, defiantly sitting back, crossing his legs, and puffing away at a cigarette; regarded by the poor captain with a fascinated stare of amazement.

'Well, Jenkins, come now—the swag!' exclaimed Watson impatiently.

'Find it,' replied the other laconically.

'All right,' said Watson, playing his doubtful trump. 'Captain, will you kindly have Monsieur Deschamps' chair brought in here.'

'The devil!' shouted Jenkins. 'Never mind troubling. How did you find it out? All right; I pass. Watson, you've spoiled one of the best things of the century! Well, I suppose we can go now. I don't fancy anybody will bother either of us, from what the Kid's told me off and on.' And he chuckled. 'I suppose,' he went on, 'that we may as well keep up the fiction till we get to Albany, eh, Watson? But think of all my time and trouble and ingenuity wasted. Think of that lovely chair and its secret hiding-places. Hang it! I could almost cry over the thing, Watson.'

'Or shoot me,' replied the latter, laughing grimly as he replaced his disguise.

'Well, yes, at the moment,' admitted the other. 'But it's all over now. I never bother about spilt milk. You know that, Watson. All the sparklers shall be back before eight bells to-night, *parole d'honneur*. Doctor, I feel so much better that I don't think I'll require any more medicine. Miss Agnew, I know I can trust you to smooth matters over with our aristocratic friends *là bas*. Have you finished with us, Watson?'

'Provisionally,' replied the detective. 'I don't suppose the captain here wants more fuss made over the matter than can be helped. And the doctor will keep silent for the ship's sake. I'm of Miss Agnew's opinion, that the ladies for'ard will be only too pleased to get their jewellery again. Of course, if we had long to wait it would be different. But we shall be at Albany to-morrow; and that young scamp's presence amongst them won't matter much for one night more.'

'Look here, Watson,' put in 'the Kid,' 'if you're not civil I'll tell tales before I go yet.'

'But,' stammered the captain, speaking for the first time, 'I say, Watson, where's our guarantee? Of course you may trust Mr—um—Jenkins—er—Green, there, and—this er—young man, or girl, or whatever it is, and take their words. But I'd like something'——

'That's all right,' interrupted Watson cheerfully. 'I know my mark. I'd trust Tony up to any sum, once he's given his word. Believe me, it will be all serene. And neither of them will blab. They've been fairly beaten for once at least.'

'Thank you, Mr Watson, for your good opinion of me,' said Tony, pausing at the door and bowing politely. 'You will see, I hope, that it is deserved. *Au revoir!*'

And, sure enough, some time and somehow, before next morning, each of the despoiled ones found her property returned intact. Explanations, of course, were demanded; but all at once the thirst for them dropped; and 'Dolly' laughed mockingly at the glances of fear and abhorrence darted at her by whilom friends and confidantes. On all sides it was agreed 'that for the sake of the ship and the captain' the affair should be hushed up. It was difficult; but Watson, with the aid of a stowaway, who was working his passage as deputy-assistant fourteenth steward, and for a consideration acted as scapegrace, managed it.

'Keep the chair, Watson,' said Monsieur Deschamps as he went over the side at Albany. 'It will remind you of the prettiest bit of work you ever did.'

PICTURES IN THE FIRE.

We watch together; but in shade and shine
You see the golden future of your ways,
And I the light that shone on vanished days;—
No; though together eyes and hearts combine
I cannot see your pictures, nor you mine.
Yet as the fire burns low, and sinks the blaze,
From the cold hearth I turn,—a moment gaze,—
And read our union in those looks of thine.

When on the hearth of Life the fire burns low
Wherein our lonely dreams and visions shone,—
When the last picture sinks with all the rest,—
Dear, may we turn as trustfully as now,
May we as gladly quit the cold hearthstone,
And know that Love's Reality is best.

E. Blair Oliphant.

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AT THE MAKING OF CANADA.

By Isabella Fyvie Mayo.

IT is interesting to remember that one of the most flourishing districts of Canada — the tract lying between Lakes Ontario and Huron—was first settled (about seventy years ago) mainly by a little group of Scotchmen of the 'literary period' of Edinburgh. John Galt, the famous Scottish novelist, was also the founder and acting right-hand of the 'Canada Company.' The scheme had many of the defects of all such schemes.

But the Canada Company was an immense improvement on what had gone before.

Bell, the historian of Canada, tells us that British governmental favouritism had appropriated to itself 'whatever of Canada had been hitherto explored.' He says: 'Between the years 1793 and 1811 more than three million acres of this territory had been shared among a couple of hundreds of lucky grantees. . . . None of the monopolists of all this soil had the slightest intention of turning it to account by proper cultivation. As it cost them nothing, or something the nearest to nothing, the acquirers concluded to let it lie as it had lain for countless ages, till minor acquisitionists should clear their small soils (or spoils), open up roads, &c., and then the huge expanses of corruptly-appropriated wilderness would of course become "worth money" to parties hitherto unseen, who would then boldly come forward and peremptorily claim "their own."

The powers of the Canada Company were not all of this mere capitalist order. The Edinburgh literary men come out well in the matter. First and foremost, John Galt himself lived some time in Canada and put his whole heart into his work, whatever may have been his errors or mistakes. Partly, as it seems, on the very score of his literary gifts, he was somewhat mistrusted and hampered by certain of his company's directors. It seems hard for the average man, with no single 'talent' of his own, to conceive that some favoured individuals may actually have more talents than one!

The log-hut which Galt erected for himself in Guelph, Ontario, in 1827, still stands, the building being now, we believe, in some way utilised by the Pacific Railway. In his pioneering days Galt is described as 'a fresh-coloured, splendid-looking man, almost six feet four, with a frame in proportion. Not a talkative man; but, when questioned, clear and courteous in his replies.' There is probably a graphic portrait of him in his own little boy's remark: 'Papa is the biggest boy I ever knew.' A lifelong friend wrote to him: 'Were we words instead of men, you would be a verb active, with a strong, optative mood.'

Another literary Scotchman, whose strenuous influence on the Canada Company was exerted till his day of death, was 'Tiger' Dunlop, a medical man who had earned this sobriquet by his prowess in freeing an island of the Ganges from tigers. As John Galt, so William Dunlop, was a West of Scotland man and an Edinburgh littérateur. They were both 'sons of Anak'—Galt with 'a stoop in the shoulders,' Dunlop with a shoulder-measurement of two feet eight. Dr Dunlop, with his brother the captain, settled in Canada, and both of them lived and died there.

John Galt calls Dunlop 'a large, fat, facetious fellow of infinite jest and eccentricity.' They 'dived into the woods together.' Dunlop wrote to his sister in 1827: 'We have had a most laborious journey seventy-two miles through the woods, but have been rewarded by coming into the most beautiful country in Canada.' This was the district between Lakes Ontario and Huron. It was filled with wolves then; they did not begin to disappear till the steam-mills were started. As late as 1859 a young wolf was killed within fifty yards of a farm door. In 1890 we spent a pleasant afternoon with a fine old dame who had lived through those early days and knew what it was to shut herself and her little ones into the shanty and sit listening to the howling of wolves between the little family group and the returning husband and father. Another mother stood listening to a fierce wolf-fight, knowing that her children were on their way from school. She blew the big

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horn to scare the beasts, and the children got home safely. It was found that the wolves had been struggling over a dead deer. It is said that the children went to school next day.

About Stratford and Guelph, now beautiful and prosperous towns in smiling agricultural districts, the woods were then so dense that in summer the sun was hardly visible, and the persistent gloom surrounding the little clearings was terrible to bear, and was sometimes not borne without pitiful results. The house whose clearing was large enough to afford sight of the widest space of blue sky was, we are told, the most popular house to visit.

Early settlers expect hard times, and the Canadian settlers got them. It was a time of much emigration from disaffected Ireland and from the Highlands of Scotland, over which deer-forests and sheep-farms were beginning to sweep. There was also quite another type among the settlers—retired officers and those on whom the great pressure in the middle-classes was beginning to tell, and families with small capital which they hoped might lay the foundation of fortune in a new country. Perhaps it was safest to go out poor. A wealthy old settler who went out as a boy in service, and saw his master and his master's friends disappear, their means wasted and their lives futile, has pertinently said: 'Sure they all had money, but few of them had any sense, and none of them knew how to work.' That knowledge was by far the best of capital.

Some of those who had been most homesick in Canada lived to be homesick for Canada. As years passed by many of them fulfilled what they had felt to be the desire of their hearts and returned to their native land. One old Scotchman who went back to Scotland declared he could see nothing there but smoke! No efforts of kind relatives could give revisited scenes the charm which they had had in memory. He soon decided 'that he would rather starve in Canada than live in Scotland in affluence.' An old Scotchwoman also sought her early home. Her report was: 'She didna juist like it. Auld friends were dead.' The homeland had now become the land of exile. Her health visibly and rapidly failed. She went back to Canada and survived, happy and stirring, for years afterwards.

'The whisky-bottle, the society of those they regarded as inferiors, but who were destined to become their superiors, disappointment, loneliness, and despair, turned many into poverty-stricken drunkards. Whisky and wet feet destroyed more promising young men than ague and *fever*.' Such is the summing-up of one who has listened to many old settlers' tales.

In view of such awful possibilities, one wonders how anybody could make himself responsible for saying 'Come,' save in the strictly veracious, well-weighed words of one correspondent of this period, who wrote: 'Do not leave your country unless obliged. If you be so, come to Canada. Persevere, and you will attain a comfortable mediocrity.'

We know the history of one German family who settled in this district in those days. Scarcely had they reached their destination when the father and children developed smallpox, which they had contracted on their outward journey. They lay in an outhouse. The sole ministration devolved on the poor wife—food being supplied by other settlers. After the illness had passed away (without fatal results), a log-hut was built, but it was, during the absence of the master, accidentally burned to the ground—the fire consuming their big chest, brought from 'the Fatherland,' containing sets of carefully-prepared clothing provided against many coming years. Yet in the end they prospered. It was one of this family, or one of their first neighbours, who immediately on his arrival planted a privet-hedge around his hut, and lived to see it such as would do credit to a British manor-house—a most dignified feature in the well-planned garden which now surrounds the pretty homestead with which his descendants have replaced the shanty.

Middle-aged Canadians of to-day, who were the little ones of the pioneer families, are often heard to say, 'Father lost heart, but mother kept us together.' It is said that the refined and educated women seemed the best able to accept the roughness and loneliness of their new homes. Possibly, neighbourly gossip meant less to them, and they may have had more resources in the way of home-made house-decoration and floriculture. Or they may have better known how to keep silence. They rocked their children 'in a long, bath-shaped affair, the head of it being a flat seat where the mother sat, so placed that the child rocked with her, and as she rocked she sewed.' Where the villages were springing up they made neighbourly festivals of washing-days or baking-days. They did miss their tea when that commodity failed them. But withal they called themselves happy 'if they could but have kept the babies'—a plaintive cry constantly heard, especially after 1832—'the cholera year.'

There must have been many sad histories among those brave, patient women. Few could be sadder than that of Mrs Kippen, by birth a Highland Grant. She was a widow, and she started out to Canada with her four boys. She soon found that the conditions of the country would not fulfil her hopes for the lads. On her appealing to influential friends at home, other openings were found for the boys—in Africa, Afghanistan, and India. Even the youngest, who remained in Canada, died far away from her. She lived on alone in that strange land, earning her own living as housekeeper to Galt's son. It is said that she never murmured. But once she was found with streaming eyes, an open book lying before her. It was Mrs Hemans's poems, open at 'The Graves of a Household.'

Owing to the class of immigrants who came—and to their ignorance of the conditions to which they came—strange things were sometimes found in wilderness dwellings. Old blue china, beautiful damask, and family silver were to be seen upon the

table of a home by whose fireside lay a sick calf, and not far off an ash barrel full of half-made soap! A setting hen would find safe refuge under a piano, upon which two other hens would roost for the night. In the fields, clad in short bedgown and petticoat, the mistress had spent her morning wielding the pitchfork, but after dinner she would take her harp and accompany her daughter on the piano and two German neighbours on their violins! This girl-daughter, armed with an axe, had slain a wolf which attacked the house-dog. 'She played the piano beautifully.'

One who knows Canada well says that it owes much to the cultivated people who were among its early settlers: even to those who, being unable to adapt themselves in their new circumstances as did those we have just described, must be regarded as failures. For in a country where schools were sparse, where there were few books and unceasing manual labour for young and old alike, it was no small good fortune to have inhabitants with refined manners and wider horizons of experience and memory. Such kept up a stock of traditions, which were restored to living form as soon as circumstances would permit.

The two Dunlops—the doctor and his brother the captain—appear to have had all the common faults of the period—were heavy drinkers, and indulged in rude and even cruel practical jokes. Yet their coarseness of nature was evidently pervaded by finer fibres. Nay, possibly these were wholly fine natures fallen on rough days and ways. Nothing looks more melancholy than a rose drabbled in a gutter. Yet it remains a rose.

We can discern something of Dr Dunlop by the epithets bestowed on him. With those who heard him lecture he was 'this very able and gifted man.' We have noticed how Galt himself once described him. Elsewhere Galt remarked that he had heard him called 'a compound of a gentleman and a bear;' adding, 'I did not know that bears were so good-natured.' He seems to have had a soft and kindly heart towards any form of suffering which came within his ken and which his nature could appreciate. There was, doubtless, much want of imagination at bottom of the thoughtless mendacity by which he lured others into sufferings incomprehensible to himself, who could sleep anywhere, and who could eat anything, even raw pork. To his friends he was staunch and faithful. He had the true pioneer's fellowship with animals: owning a fawn which would follow him about the house and leap at his bidding, and also a trained gander; he would not part from the kittens on his hearthrug; and an inn could be recommended to him as 'a cosy place where there was plenty of dogs and tomcats.' He had a clear perception of the sort of people who should go to a new country—and choked off some misplaced philanthropy by writing plainly, 'I have no occasion for a fine young thief of twenty-two or thereabouts, and if I needed such an accommodation I have no need to import it.'

Both the doctor and the captain seem to have been humorists of the first water. They put up a doorplate on their wilderness homestead of Gairbraid, round which they vainly desired a village to grow. They had a manservant, in white jacket and with table-napkin in hand. And it was by way of the kitchen door that romance entered the Canadian part of their lives.

The doctor had had his own love-story, ending in some misunderstanding which, it is believed, started him off to Canada. Then a certain Highland dairymaid—one Louisa MacColl—was sent out from his Scotch relatives to serve him and his brother in their exile. She proved so invaluable, and they were so afraid of losing her, that, according to the doctor, he gravely proposed that one of them must marry her, and that the toss of a coin must decide to whose lot she should fall. The doctor had the manipulation of the coin, and it decreed that the captain should be the bridegroom. The lady's version was different—but scarcely contradictory; indeed almost a confirmation. She said she had received an offer of marriage from somebody else, and that the captain, coming up behind her as she was milking 'Blossom,' whispered to her, 'Lou, if you leave us we may as well shut up shop,' and proposed to her there and then. She proved a good wife, and a good friend to the pair, whom to the end she always called 'her deare gentlemen.' She liked her new dignities and indulged in costly apparel, but persisted in every form of domestic and dairy labour. She could not read, but she was in the habit of keeping a book open before her on Sabbath afternoons. She tried, perhaps out of mere thrift, to restrain the convivial habits of 'her deare gentlemen,' and took care of their snuff-bedabbled linen. She was of a persistently active, 'doing' nature; when she went for a walk with the captain he would botanise, but she would tuck up her smart skirts and set fire to stumps. After she came into authority she kept the purse and paid for everything. A neighbour said 'she was pretty near all her life at war with somebody,' and it was chiefly in the interests of 'the deare gentlemen.' She was as true to them in death as in life, taking any amount of trouble and cost that the two brothers might sleep, as they had wished, in one grave. She survived them many years, for she lived far beyond threescore and ten, while they both died in their early fifties—their magnificent constitutions probably broken up by their potations.

These drinking habits made the majority of the first settlers but dangerous friends to the native Indians, with whom, apart from this, their relations seem to have been neighbourly and honourable; though the Indians humorously remarked that 'White man was less willing to give Indian share of his beef than the Indian was to give the white man a share of his venison or other game.' Nobody was more esteemed among the early settlers than John Brandt, son of the famous chief of that name, and himself a member of the legis-

lature. He was an educated man, conversant with British literature. When he visited England he enforced on the poet Campbell a public retractation of the error in those lines of his 'Gertrude of Wyoming:'

> Scorning to wield the hatchet for his bribe,
> 'Gainst Brandt himself I went to battle forth:
> Accursed Brandt! he left of all my tribe
> Nor man nor child nor thing of living birth—

the young 'warrior' conclusively proving that his father had had nothing whatever to do with the circumstance referred to.

This demoralisation of the Indians was not carried on in any cynical spirit desirous of their destruction, and ready openly to declare that 'the right way to approach a savage is with brandy and guns.' It was but the inevitable result of the white men's own habits and of his ruinous conception of neighbourliness—the Highlanders being especially accused of giving freely to the Indians 'that which they appreciated highly themselves.' We are told that on a certain occasion one old warrior was seen to kneel down in his canoe, praying to the great Manitou for an abundance of meat and game, and making offering of that which, being manifestly most precious to the white man, seemed to him most likely to be acceptable to the white man's God—that is, rum and tobacco!

Out of these scenes of general drunkenness, bickerings would occasionally rise, but rarely or never seem to have culminated in bloodshed. The Indians were ready with succour when provisions ran short. The young Galts romped with young Indians. Other adventurous lads went off with them in their canoes, were royally entertained and safely restored to their homes. A little daughter of one of the most valuable settlers, a man who stood steadily for temperance, was intrusted to two 'braves' who escorted her from town to her father's homestead. The little lady said they were very careful of her, and when she wanted a drink they made her wait till she came to a spring. Their permanent camp was not far from her home, and it was the young folks' greatest treat to go to see their dances and inspect their stores of maple-sugar, baskets, and mocassins. The squaws wrought the bead and bark knicknacks which have since grown familiar in this country as 'keepsakes from Niagara.' It may interest some to hear how they did their work. They traced their patterns upon bark with their teeth, first folding it many times with fancy angles: the corners, once bitten, when opened formed a regular design. Like the ancient Highlanders, they did not go far for their dyes: hemlock supplied red; root of the white ash, yellow; indigo, blue, or mixed with yellow for green. They could work in the dark as well as in daylight, a fact readily credible to those who have seen the fairy-like meshes which are wrought in gloomy Shetland hovels.

Anybody now taking his stand on some gentle rise in this favoured corner of Canada Felix, 'where no man need be hungry, where no child remains untaught,' and surveying the tall spires and many cupolas, the orchard-embowered homesteads, the clustered roofs, the bosky bits of town and country, may well wonder if these fruitful lands can indeed be the tangle of rotting log, swale, and noonday nights through which the first dwellers broke their way.

Dunlop once asked what it was which so increased the value of the land, and right wisely he answered his own question:

'Nothing but the work and the worth of the men who tilled it.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER V.—COUSINLY AFFECTION.

IT was near midday before I started, so that night I got no farther than the town of Hamilton, but lay at the inn there. The next morning I left betimes, thinking to reach Barns in the afternoon. As I rode along the greensward by the side of the Clyde the larks were singing in the sky and the trout were plashing in the waters, and all the world was gay. The apple-orchards sent their blossom across the road, and my hat brushed it down in showers on my horse and myself, so that soon we rode in a mail of pink and white. I plucked a little branch and set it in my hat, and sang all the songs I knew as I cantered along. I cried good-day to every man, and flung money to the little children who shouted as I passed, so that I believe if there had been many more boys on the road I would have reached Tweeddale a beggar. At Crossford, where the Nethan meets the Clyde, I met a man who had been to the salmon-fishing and had caught a big salmon-trout; and, as I looked, my old love for the sport awoke within me, and I longed to feel a rod in my hand. It was good to be alive, to taste the fresh air, to feel the sun and wind, and I cried, 'A plague on all close lecture-rooms and musty books.'

At Lanark I had a rare dinner at the hostel there. The gray old inn had excellent fare, as I knew of old, so I rode up to the door and demanded its best. It was blessed to see a man obey your words after for many months being a servant of others. I had a dish of well-fed trout and a piece of prime mutton, and as good claret,

I think, as I have ever tasted. Then I rode over Lanark Moor to Hyndford, and through the moor of Carmichael, and under the great shadow of Tinto Hill. Here the smell of burning heather came to my nostrils, and so dear and home-like it seemed that I could have wept for very pleasure. The whaups and snipe were making a fine to-do on the bent, and the blackfaced sheep grazed in peace. At the top of the knowe above Symington I halted, for there before my eyes were the blue hills of Tweeddale. There was Trehenna and the hills above Broughton, and Drummelzier Law and Glenstivon Dod, and, nearer, the great Caerdon; and beyond all a long, blue back, which I knew could be none other than the hill of Scrape which shadowed Dawyck and my lady.

I came to Barns at three o'clock in the afternoon, somewhat stiff from my ride, but elated with my home-coming. It was with strange feelings that I rode up the long avenue of beeches, every one of which I could have told blindfold. The cattle looked over the palings at me as if glad to see me return. Maisie cocked up her ears at the hares in the grass, and sniffed the hill air as if she had been in a prison for many days. And when I came to the bend of the road and saw the old weatherbeaten tower my heart gave a great leap within me, for we Tweeddale men dearly love our own countryside, doubtless by reason of its exceeding beauty.

As I rode up, Tam Todd came out from the back, and seeing me, let fall the water which he was carrying and ran to my side.

'Eh, Maister John,' said he, 'I'm blithe to see ye back sae braw and genty-like. My airm's fair like timmer wi' stiffness for want o' the back-sword play, and the troots in Tweed are turned as thick as peas for want o' you to haul them oot; and twae mornin's last week there were deer keekin' in at the front door as tame as kittlins. There's muckle need o' ye at hame.'

He would have gone on in this strain for an hour had I not cut him short by asking for my father.

'Middlin', just middlin'. He misses ye sair. He'll scarce gang out-doors noo; but he'll be a' richt gin he sees ye again. Oh, and I've something mair to tell ye. That wanchancy cousin o' yours, Maister Gilbert, cam' yestreen, and he'll be bidin' till the deil kens whan. I'se warrant he's at meat wi' the auld maister the noo, for he cam' in frae the hills geyan hungry.'

Now at this intelligence I was not over-pleased. My cousin was a great man and a gentleman, but never at any time over friendly to me; and I knew that to my father he was like salt in the mouth. I blamed the ill-luck which had sent him to Barns on the very day of my home-coming. I needs must be on my dignity in his company, for he was quick to find matter for laughter; and it was hard that he should come at the time when I longed so eagerly for the free ways of the house. However, there was no help for it, I reflected, and went in.

In the passage I met Jean Morran, my old nurse, who had heard the sound of voices and come out to see who the new-comer might be.

'Maister John, Maister John, and is't yoursel'? It's a glad day for the house o' Barns when you come back;' and when I gave her the shawl-pin I had brought her from Glasgow she had scarce any words to thank me with. So, knowing that my father would be in the dining-hall with his guest, I opened the door and walked in unbidden.

My father sat at the head of the long, oak table, which had been scoured to a light brown and shone like polished stone. Claret, his favourite drink, was in a tankard by his elbow, and many wines decked the board. Lower down sat my cousin, gallantly dressed in the fashion of the times, with a coat of fine Spanish leather, and small-clothes of some rich, dark stuff. His plumed hat and riding-cloak of purple velvet lay on the settle at his side. His hair fell over his collar and shoulders, and well set off his strong, brown face. He sat, after the fashion of a soldier, on the side of his chair, half-turned away from the table, and every now and then he would cast a piece of meat to Pierce, my old hound, who lay stretched by the fireplace.

My father turned round as I entered, and when he saw me his face glowed with pleasure. Had we been alone we should have met otherwise; but it is not meet to show one's feelings before a stranger, even though that stranger be one of our own family. He contented himself with looking eagerly upon me and bidding me welcome in a shaking voice. I marked with grief that his eye did not seem so keen and brave as before, and that he was scarce able to rise from his chair. My cousin half-arose and made me a grand bow in his courtly fashion.

'Welcome, my dear cousin,' said he. 'I am glad to see that your studies have had little effect on your face.' (I was flushed with hard riding.) 'You look as if you had just come from a campaign. But fall to. Here are prime fish, which I can commend; and venison, also good, though I have had better. Here, too, is wine, and I drink to your success, my learned cousin;' and he filled his glass and drank it at a gulp. He spoke in a half-bantering tone, though his words were kindly. I answered him briskly.

'I had little thought to find you here, Gilbert, but I am right glad to see you. You are prospering mightily, I hear, and will soon be forgetting your poor cousin of Barns;' and after a few more words I set myself to give my father a history of my doings at Glasgow College. Again, had we been alone, I should have told him my causes for leaving and my wishes for my after-life; but since my cousin was present, who had ever a sharp tongue, I judged it better to say nothing.

(To be continued.)

WATER: THE MODERN RIVAL OF COAL.

By J. B. C. KERSHAW.

HITHERTO man, when he has wished to produce energy in large quantities for the various requirements of his industries, has known but one source from which to obtain it—namely, coal. Coal, as every one knows, represents the locked-up energy of the sunshine of former days. Man had been upon this earth many thousands of years before he discovered the value of this black, hard substance as a source of heat; and it was only within the present century that he learned how to most effectually tap these latent stores of force, and how to obtain not only heat, but mechanical or electrical energy, at will from the coal-beds of the earth.

The industrial developments of the present century are largely if not chiefly due to the improvements of the steam-engine and to the power thus put into man's hand of developing large amounts of mechanical energy from coal.

So important has this use of coal become that the question of what is to happen to our industries when our coal-beds are exhausted has for long been a subject of serious speculative thought. It may therefore be of interest to our readers to learn that man has during the last ten years learned how to tap and utilise at will an almost limitless store of energy, a store that, unlike the locked-up sunshine of coal, can never be exhausted so long as rain falls upon the hills or snow upon the mountains of the earth. Man has in fact advanced one step farther in his command of the forces of the earth. He has learned how to harness the rivers and streams to the car of industry, and how to extract from water the service that he has hitherto obtained from coal. It is in this aspect, as a source of power, that water will be the future substitute for coal, and that it has already, in certain industries, become its rival.

The power of falling water has of course been known to man for many centuries; and since water-wheels are some of the oldest of mechanical contrivances for producing power it may be urged that this new step forward is in reality a step backwards along the path trodden by our forefathers. But the progress made by the men of an earlier day along this path was soon barred by their inability to construct water-wheels suited to any but the most moderate powers; and during the second and third quarters of the present century there was no advance made in this method of generating force for use in the industries of our country. As these extended and passed from the local stage of their existence to that of supplying not only the whole country, but all the countries of the world, with their products, the amount of mechanical energy required to drive the machinery of even a single mill or workshop rose from 50 up to 500 or 1000 horse-power; and the steam-engine was found to be far more convenient for producing these large amounts of mechanical force than the water-wheel and mill-stream of former days.

Why then is it that after a half-century of progress in the use of steam-power, during which steam-engines have undergone great improvements in efficiency, a return should now be not only thought of, but actually in progress, towards the methods of generating power that were in use at the commencement of the century?

The explanation lies in the fact that the engineers of the present time have at their command two machines which were unknown to, or little understood by, their predecessors. The first of these, the 'turbine,' was invented about 1801, but did not come into actual use on an extensive scale until late in the century; the second, the 'dynamo,' is an invention of the middle years of the century, and has received its greatest improvements during the last fifteen years. The former machine has enabled the modern hydraulic engineer to make use of any waterfall, however high, for the generation of power; and the latter has made it possible to transport the energy developed by the turbine to distances up to thirty-five miles, where it may be delivered to the factory or mill as simply and conveniently as water is delivered by pipes from a distant reservoir in the hills.

It is thus seen that it is chiefly due to the progress of electrical science that this new step forward in the utilisation of water-power has been made possible; and the development of the modern methods for tapping the almost limitless water-powers of the earth is therefore another triumph for the electrical engineer.

The turbine — the mechanical contrivance by which the energy of falling water is converted into mechanical energy—may be either a 'reaction turbine' or an 'impact turbine.'

The former is the more usual type, and is represented fairly adequately by the paper wheels mounted upon sticks which seem to have displaced toy balloons in the fancy of the rising generation.

These toys are really 'air-turbines;' and the turbines by means of which great water-powers are now being utilised differ from these only in their size and material of construction. In place of a gentle current of air, one has a fierce and mad rush of water with which to deal; and paper is therefore replaced by thick castings of steel or bronze. The principle is however the same in both; for in the one case a gentle current of air, in the other case a wild rush of water, is the immediate cause of the revolution of the specially-designed wheel or turbine.

The turbines are always placed at the bottom of large and massively-constructed masonry chambers,

called 'wheel-pits.' The water is conducted to the turbines by enormously strong pipes known as the 'penstocks.' These pipes are generally vertical, and the strength at the turbine-end has to be much increased, to enable them to withstand the enormous pressure created by the weight of water which they contain. The water is carried away from the wheel-pits by 'tail-races.' These are open channels when the ground formation permits of this; but in some cases underground drains have to be made.

There are a very large number of water-power stations now in operation in Switzerland, Italy, France, Norway, and the United States, in which the 'reaction turbines' are being used to utilise heads, or volumes, of water that could not have been dealt with adequately by the older form of over- or under-shot water-wheel. Of these the most important are undoubtedly the two power-stations at Niagara; and some details of these may not be out of place here. The 'wheel-pit' of the 'Niagara Falls Power Co.' at Niagara is an enormous hole in the ground situated one-third of a mile from the upper river. The water is carried to the mouth of the wheel-pit by an artificial canal 250 feet wide by 12 feet deep. The 'wheel-pit' is 140 feet long by 18 feet wide by 178 feet deep, and is entirely cased with masonry. The vertical 'penstocks' which carry the water from the canal to the turbines at the bottom of the wheel-pit are constructed of steel-plates riveted together, and are 140 feet in height by 7½ feet in diameter. The total pressure at the bottom of these pipes when they are filled with water is estimated to be between 40 and 50 tons. The turbines are massively-constructed wheels of bronze 5 feet in diameter; each wheel produces 5000 horse-power energy, or an amount equal to that produced by ten of the best and strongest locomotive engines ever built.

The wheel-pit at Niagara just described is planned to hold ten of these turbines; so that when all are in position 50,000 horse-power will be produced at this one power-station. The 'tail-race' by which the water from these ten turbines is to be carried away has been constructed through the solid rock, and is a tunnel 1½ mile in length, which opens on the lower reach of the Niagara River. This tunnel is 19 feet in width and 21 feet in height, and is therefore nearly equal in size to many railway tunnels. It is certainly a very noteworthy 'drain;' probably the largest in the world.

Turning now to the other form of turbine, the 'impact-turbine' or 'Pelton wheel,' we find that this is principally used in the mining districts of the United States, where very great heads of water have to be dealt with. It is also being used with steam-power; and the torpedo-catcher *Turbinia* which excited great attention, on account of its unequalled speed, at the recent Naval Review, was driven by one of these 'impact-turbines.' Let the reader imagine a wheel constructed of twelve tea-spoons, with all their handles fixed radially around a common centre, all the bowls facing in one direction, and the whole firmly held together by a mass of metal extending halfway to the circumference. It is evident that if this be fixed at its centre so that it can revolve, and a jet of water or steam be allowed to play into one of the bowls at its circumference, revolution of the wheel will occur. An 'impact-turbine' is such a wheel, much magnified. The most notable of this class of turbines in existence are those used at Fresno in California, for developing 1000 horse-power from a 1400 feet head of water! The wheels used here are 5 feet in diameter, and the water used to drive them issues from a 1⅛-in. nozzle with a velocity of 1000 feet per minute. This jet of water near the nozzle acts like a solid, and offers as great a resistance to any attempts to deflect it as a steel-bar of the same diameter. If this jet of water were directed against a man at any distance within 100 feet it would most certainly kill him by the mere force of its impact.

Having described the two forms of turbine by which the energy of moving water is converted into the mechanical energy of a rotating wheel, it is necessary now to describe the modern method for transporting this energy from the bottom of a penstock at Niagara, or from some inaccessible valley in California, to a locality or district more suited to the successful conduct of industrial operations. It is here that the dynamo comes to the aid of the hydraulic engineer.

A dynamo fixed on the shaft that is carrying one of these turbines of course revolves with it; and, as it revolves, currents of electricity are produced in the coils of wire of which it is largely composed. No explanation can be given here of the principles upon which the method of conversion of mechanical into electrical energy by the dynamo is based. It must suffice for the reader to know that it can be effected; and that ninety-five per cent. of the energy represented by the whirling wheel of the turbine can be obtained by means of the dynamo as electrical energy. This electrical energy may now be transmitted by 'air lines,' which are only telegraph wires on a much larger scale than that usually seen, as regards thickness of wire and strength of supports, to the factory or mill where it is to be used. If the locality where the water-power is situated is convenient and suitable for industrial operations this may be only a few hundred yards from the wheel-pit and power-house containing the dynamos; but in many cases this air-line extends to miles, and the transmission of electrical energy equal to many thousands of horse-power to distances of from five up to thirty-five miles is now an accomplished fact. There is a certain loss incurred in this transmission of energy, which increases with the distance; and it is still most economical to utilise the energy near the point where it is generated. Nevertheless energy

transmitted distances of from eighteen to twenty-five miles is being used in Rome, in Milan, and in Salt Lake City, because it costs less in these cities than energy generated by steam-power.

This is an enormous gain to industry; for the utilisation of the power can thus occur within a very wide radius of the spot where it is generated; and in selecting the site for a mill or factory it is possible to take into consideration the question of proximity to the markets for the raw or finished materials of the manufacture.

The uses for which the electrical energy developed from water-power is being employed are exceedingly diverse, and illustrate well the remarkable adaptability of this form of energy.

In many cases it is used for lighting purposes. Geneva, Rome, and Milan in Europe are lighted by electricity generated in this way; while in the United States, Salt Lake City, Concord, Portland, St Paul, and Minneapolis are the most important examples of cities already lighted, or shortly to be lighted, by electricity derived from near or distant falls of water. Many examples of this method of utilisation on a smaller scale are to be met with in the mining-towns of the Western States of America; and in Europe small lighting installations of a similar kind exist in many of the smaller towns and villages of Switzerland. The electricity may also be used to work tramway systems, and examples of this application of water-power are now to be seen at Buffalo and Salt Lake City, and at Montreux in Switzerland. Lyons will shortly have a similar system at work, with energy derived from the Rhone some miles above the city.

The electricity generated by means of water-power may also be used for carrying out electro-chemical or electro-metallurgical operations on an industrial scale, and this is the use to which the greater proportion is now being applied. Aluminium is produced by two works at Niagara, two works in France, one in Switzerland, and one in Scotland, the aggregate horse-power consumed by these six works being at present about 15,000.

Chlorate of potash, the manufacture of which was until recently almost wholly in the hands of the South Lancashire chemical manufacturers, is now made by an electro-chemical process at one factory in Switzerland, one in Sweden, one in France, and one in the United States. Those who are qualified to judge believe that in another ten years the electro-chemical method will have quite supplanted the older chemical method of manufacture.

Calcium carbide and silicium carbide are two other compounds which are being manufactured on a fairly large scale by means of electricity derived from water-power. In the case of these the electrical energy is converted into heat in the electric furnace; and the manufacture is impossible in any ordinary furnace, because the heat required to produce these compounds is so intense. In Canada, in Norway, and in Austria, wood-pulp for use in paper-mills is being produced by the aid of electricity derived from water-power. In this manufacture the electrical energy is used both for driving the machinery by which the wood is reduced to pulp, and also for bleaching the pulp in the final stages of production. The former demands mechanical energy, the latter chemical energy; electricity supplies both with the minimum of trouble, dirt, or expense.

The use of electricity for driving machinery has up to the present not extended much beyond an experimental stage in Europe; but in many of the mining-districts of the Western States of America the machinery is being driven in this way by electricity generated from centrally situated water-power stations; and there is no doubt that in course of time the machinery in use for many of the smaller industries in the cities of Europe will be operated by means of electric motors and electrical energy from some distant water-power stations. Geneva and Lyons are the two cities at present taking the lead in this application of water-power.

The two schemes now being worked out on a practical basis at Niagara provide for the development of 100,000 horse-power. The machinery of many of our largest mills and factories does not require more than 500 horse-power to drive it. A busy manufacturing district will therefore, in course of time, be formed round Niagara. Since these works and factories will in but few cases require to burn any coal, one of the objectionable features of a manufacturing district of the present date—the heavy cloud of black smoke and sulphurous vapour—will be conspicuous by its absence. This is a gain only to be truly appreciated by those who have lived in a Manchester or Sheffield for long years of their life. But big as the Niagara scheme is, work has just commenced upon a still larger scheme of water-power development near Massena, on the St Lawrence River, U.S.A. It is intended to develop here 150,000 horse-power, by taking advantage of the difference in level between the St Lawrence River and the Grass River, flowing nearly parallel to it at a distance of 3½ miles. A big canal is to be cut across the intervening plateau, and a fall of water fifty feet in height thus obtained on the bank of the Grass River. The latter river will itself form the 'tail-race' of the power station. This scheme dwarfs the Niagara one, since not only do the plans provide for a greater amount of power, but man is going to do what nature has done for him at Niagara—namely, provide the waterfall. The necessary capital for carrying out this scheme has been provided, work has been commenced, and it is hoped that some of the turbines and dynamos will be working by December 1898. If no unforeseen difficulties occur, and if this scheme be completed by the date named, it will certainly form

one of the most remarkable achievements of the century.

The significance of these facts relative to the utilisation of water-power for industrial purposes is chiefly an economic one. Water-power is in nearly every case cheaper than steam-power; and when the natural formation of the fall favours its exploitation for industrial purposes, water-power is greatly the cheaper of the two. Even at Niagara, where the initial cost has been extremely heavy, the electrical energy is being sold at a lower rate than it would cost to generate it on the spot, even with the best of modern steam-engines and cheap fuel. Now it is a curious fact that in Europe those countries rich in the possession of extensive coal-beds—namely, England, Germany, and Belgium—are extremely poor in their possession of natural water-powers; whilst Switzerland, France, Norway, and Sweden—countries which have hitherto been of little importance in the industrial struggle on account of their lack of coal—have been highly favoured by nature in the number and magnitude of their water-powers.

This brief review of the principal applications of electrical energy derived from falling water shows that the modern methods for the utilisation of water-power have passed beyond their experimental stage; and that, great as the advance during the past six years has been, it may reasonably be expected to be surpassed by the developments that will occur during the remaining years of the century.

THE GURNARD ROCK.

CHAPTER V.

IN the summer evening Captain Johns paced the pier at St Budoc, and frequently swept the sea with his binoculars.

'Any sign o' they valiant fighters?' asked Caleb Hocken the sailmaker.

'Nought in sight yet,' said the captain.

'Folks be takin' a brave notice o' this yer shindy; looks 'ee to 'em—there's swarms on the pier; 'tis jest like a regatta-day.'

'Well, 'tisn't an ordinary common sort o' fight; 'tis most onusual, an' in a manner o' spaking 'tis unique!' The captain gave pompous emphasis to this last word, and his audience vaguely felt the appropriateness of the adjective.

'They ought to ha' been back hours ago,' he continued somewhat anxiously, 'for the tide's running out. 'Tis a hugly business from the start, an' us ought to ha' prevented it.'

The sun went down behind Trevasse Point, and the great headland loomed in purple shadow against the western sky. A long gleam of light lay upon the water to the south of the point, and in that streak of radiance was a black dot. For some minutes the captain kept his glass upon the dot, and he looked puzzled.

''Tis surely the boat; but 'tis beyond me why they don't put up a sail, for the wind's made for 'em—an' they two fules went to the battle without vittles.'

'Can 'ee spy the boat?' cried a chorus of eager voices.

'Iss—but I can't spy the men.' Then, after a prolonged scrutiny, he exclaimed, 'Bless my sawl an' body! the boat's drifting!'

'Then where be the chaps?' cried Jacob Trewarne.

'In the bottom o' the boat, I reckon,' suggested Nick Maddern; 'both of 'em dead-beat.'

'Get a boat out!' roared Captain Johns; 'quick, boys! Better take the *Thyrza*; her's fastest.' And as the young men hurried down to the beach he muttered, 'That durned launch o' Lloyds 'd be useful, but the fire's out, an' emergencies don't give 'ee wan hour's notice.'

Within five minutes half-a-dozen tawny-sailed fishing craft were bearing towards the drifting boat, the swift *Thyrza* easily leading, the others following more from excited curiosity than any hope of assisting.

'Cap'n Jan, will 'ee let me peep through your glass?' said a low, wistful voice at the captain's elbow; and there stood Miriam Roskree, pale and troubled. Her fingers trembled as she took the binoculars, and she looked long in the direction of the boats.

'Wan o' your sweethearts, isn't 'a?' asked the old man drily.

'Iss, I believe he's my sweetheart,' she answered simply.

The girl came of a turbulent race; her family counted its generations of old-time smugglers; her own father, Richard Roskree, was seriously concerned in a fishing riot, and only evaded the assizes by a prolonged voyage abroad. Hereditary law-breaking and violence may have influenced her character. She was passionate, and there was in her nature that Celtic clannish instinct that cleaves to its own, right or wrong. She was as proud of her birthplace, this little picturesque, evil-smelling Cornish fishing town, as if she were lady paramount of its blue waters and narrow streets. She was jealous of the honour of St Budoc. Once, when the lifeboat crew were gravely considering the possibility of a rescue in a sea that was white with fury, a girl's voice interrupted their deliberations: 'Be 'ee waiting for Porthillian?' And it was the taunt that launched the boat.

The tearing of the net by the Porthillian fishermen had stirred her like a personal wrong; and like a personal shame she felt the seeming pusillanimity of St Budoc in inadequately resenting the outrage. Yet she now bitterly repented her wild words that had instigated the outbreak of Gabriel Lowry. The attack on the Porthillian man was nothing but rude, unreasonable violence, and its sequel at the best but a vulgar fight—and she had provoked it.

Miriam had many wooers, for her beauty was uncommon. Gabriel had been a strange suitor; he was devoid of compliments, and had none of the flattering pleasantries that are dear to a girl's heart. There was an uncouth, jealous earnestness in his wooing that was not always acceptable. Miriam had never realised how much she loved the man till now—now, when her eyes were fixed on the darkening waters which bore that drifting boat betokening catastrophe.

It was quite dark when the little flotilla returned, the *Thyrza* with the captured boat astern. When they were within hail there was a chorus of shouting: 'What luck? Any sign o' the men?'

And the answer came: 'No sign!'

The *Thyrza* was run into the sandy beach, and a dozen men waded in to drag the empty boat ashore.

'Anything in the boat?' asked Captain Johns.

'Nought but the oars and two great stones,' cried Jacob Trewarne.

'Two great stones!' the words were taken up with a shriek in the voice of old Malachi Praze. ''Tis a merracle! 'tis a judgment! Two men went forth in their pride and wickedness, an' what cometh back? Two stones! 'Tis verily the Lord's doing!'

The frenzied old man spoke with such appalling earnestness that for the moment his wild words carried conviction to the more credulous of his hearers, and the group of men and women shrank back from the boat they were peering and groping into.

'Two dead stones! 'Tis a sign o' judgment; 'tis a terrable warning!' continued Malachi, standing by the boat bareheaded, and looking like a dishevelled prophet in the shifting lantern-light; but his rhapsody was interrupted by the cynical Nick Maddern with the blunt query, 'How about the pair o' boots?'

'They 'm my poor son's boots!' cried Mrs Lowry, a tall, stout woman, stepping forward and clutching them eagerly. Then, as she moved away sobbing, she caught sight of Miriam Roskree; and standing before the girl, pathetic but somewhat ludicrous—for she held a huge boot in either hand (the boots being indeed Tregenna's)—she asked, 'Where's my son?'

And Miriam, proud as she was, cowered before the grief of the mother's face and voice.

That was a bitter night for Miriam Roskree. Five boats set out towards the Gurnard, in a hopeless quest for the missing men, and the girl vainly begged to go in one of the boats. She returned to her home on the hill-slope; she patiently carried the supper to her querulous bed-ridden aunt; and sitting in darkness in the little parlour, she looked through the window out upon the water for the lights of the returning boats. The cloth was still upon the table that she had laid hours ago, and all her dainty preparations for the tea to which Gabriel Lowry was to have been invited. There were roses in a vase, and in the oven there was a neglected squab-pie, as cindery now as her own hopes; and the scent of the roses mingled with the burnt odour of the forgotten pie. So the long hours passed—the retributive hours, that chastened the soul of Miriam Roskree, and taught her the lesson of years in the space of one tragic night.

. . . . . .

In the early morning, when many were astir to ask the one question that came first to the lip of every waking soul in St Budoc, Gabriel Lowry came into the town by the north road from Pengooney, in the horse-doctor's trap, whole and hearty, but ridiculous enough in borrowed garments all too brief for his long limbs.

Mrs Lowry was hysterically overjoyed when Gabriel opened her door; and the news of his return flashed through the town like magic. Mrs Lowry's kitchen was filled with inquirers, and those that could not get into the house made a semicircle around the door, and stared at Gabriel eating his breakfast, flinging a hundred questions at him.

'How about the fight?' asked Nick Maddern from the road.

'John Tregenna o' Porthillian is the best man,' answered Lowry; 'he's the best man by a brave sight.' But when pressed for details he became incommunicative, and his interrogators prudently forbore.

When Lowry went down to the beach to claim Tregenna's boat, Miriam Roskree, glad beyond words, stood at her door and waited his passing; but Gabriel strode straight on, as though he saw her not. She had sent him to fight, and there had been no fight; therefore he had no greeting for her. But Mrs Lowry saw the spasm of pain that swept across the girl's face, and, turning to her son, said, 'Gabe, I think you'd better turn back and spake to the maid.' And Gabriel Lowry turned back and spoke.

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Next Sunday morning a strange scene of penance was enacted outside the Methodist chapel. It weighed upon the simple soul of Gabriel Lowry that there had been no requital for the blow he had given John Tregenna. He would have accepted defeat in the fight as a natural and proper quittance; but the blow remained a thing unexpiated. Wherefore he consulted Polreggan, who devised a solemn act of contrition.

There was a full meeting, for a rumour was abroad that Gabriel Lowry had mended his ways and was going to testify. When the congregation

issued after the service Lowry was standing at the top of the steps, and he cried, 'Mr Polreggan, I call'ee to witness!' Polreggan came solemnly forward. 'Last Sunday morning, at this chapel-door, I struck John Tregenna o' Porthillian, with no good cause or reason, for which devilry I'm as sorry as a man can be that hath wronged another.' So far Gabriel had kept fairly to the prearranged formula of contrition, and Polreggan nodded benign approval; but the remainder of his speech was a departure from the programme, and the worthy old man had grave doubts of the seemliness of the whole matter. 'An' if any man hath aught 'gainst John Tregenna, anything o' ripping nets, or foul fishing, or lies o' that sort, I'm ready to testify for John Tregenna in my own way, man to man, anywheres, any day 'cept Sunday!'

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In the following January, when the beneficent south wind blew a phenomenal spring day into the heart of the winter, Gabriel Lowry married Miriam Roskree. Some folks shook their heads, as folks will; and old Mrs Chegwith said, 'Aw, well! they'm well mated—vire an' brimstone.'

And blithest of the guests was John Tregenna of Porthillian, all in his Sunday best, and looking, as was observed, 'as brave as a duke'—which may be taken as a high compliment to ducal comeliness. He did not come empty-handed, but brought tribute in a handkerchief, which, being proudly unknotted and removed, disclosed a shapely vase of polished serpentine, superb in colour—dark green, with blotches of black and veins of gray and white and red.

While the company encircled the table admiring the gift, Tregenna turned to Lowry, and said, 'My son Jan carved 'en out o' wan o' they stones us picked up on the Gurnard.'

THE SALONES OF THE MERGUI ARCHIPELAGO.

FOR the facts in the following article (which have been supplemented by a government paper) Mr T. C. Loveridge, engaged in the pearl-fishing in the Mergui Archipelago, Burma, is mainly responsible. He describes a curious and little-known people, the Salones, of whom there seems to be between one and two thousand, living in jungles and boats mainly, in the Mergui Islands. They are very low in the social scale; and, as if they were not already low enough, we find a superior, or at least a stronger and more cunning, people coming in and depriving them of the fruits of their industry. Strong drink and opium are the baits. Mr Loveridge says in his letter accompanying his communication, that it 'puts shame into my own face as I think how completely the Chinese and Malays, the Chinese especially, have carried on a game to enrich themselves at the hands of these poor individuals, robbing the government at the same time.' The suggestion towards writing the article (which was done while waiting on his fishing-nets) came in this way. A brother fisherman had died of typhoid fever, and left him heir to some odd numbers of *Chambers's Journal*. These he perused in his boat, when the idea occurred to him of letting the outside world know through its pages something about his surroundings, and the hopeless degradation into which the Salones seem to have fallen.

The Mergui Archipelago forms part of the lower or Tenasserim division of Burma, which since 1826, by the treaty of the King of Ava with the British East India Company, has been under our government. The archipelago has been described as 'a cluster of islands and islets, with bays and coves, headlands and highlands, capes and promontories, high bluffs and low shores, rocks and sands, fountains, streams, and cascades, mountain, plain, and precipice, unsurpassed for their wild and picturesque beauty.' The caoutchouc tree abounds, and the wild animals include the tiger, rhinoceros, and deer. The Salones dive for mother-of-pearl shells, spear fish, hunt the wild pig with their dogs, and eat yams, rice (which they get by barter), and a wild potato. They move from place to place, do not even cultivate a handful of rice, and although a stray missionary was amongst them in 1838, and again in 1846, every attempt to improve them seems to have been in vain. One visitor has said: 'The regeneration of this race will probably never be effected; but the Salones open a fine field to a truly philanthropic missionary.' Their boats of about twenty feet long are their homes; to his boat the islander 'entrusts his life and property; in it he wanders during his lifetime from island to island; a true ichthyophagist, for whom the earth has no charm—the earth-mother whom he neglects so much that he does not entrust to her a single grain of rice.' The children have a bad time of it; and, probably from their eating indigestible food, the mortality amongst them is great up till six years of age. The Salones know of no medicine; the mortally sick are often left to nature, and they depend for recovery on a kind of 'devil dance' round the sufferer, who is meanwhile dosed with drink, for the bad spirit within him is a thirsty devil, and needs copious supplies. The spirit is drawn out through the arm of the patient.

When a white man or a stranger appears, their first impulse is to decamp and hide in the jungle. At least the women and children invariably do so; while the food, such as sea-

slugs and rice, is hastily buried. Dr Heifer, after a visit in 1857, thus describes a group of these people: 'There were about seventy men, women, and children altogether. They had encamped on the sandy sea-beach; each family had erected a little raised shed covered with palm-leaves, where all the members huddled together for the night. There they sat, a dirty, miserable-looking congregation, the women occupied in making mats of a peculiar description from sea-weed; the children screaming, apparently out of fear at the strange apparition; dogs, cats, and cocks all joining to make the full chorus. . . . Some of these sheds appeared like butchers' stalls. Large pieces of turtle, rendering the atmosphere pestilential, were everywhere drying in the sun; it is their main food. . . . On the beach lay twenty or thirty boats, well built and light, like nut-shells swimming on the surface, the bottom built of a solid trunk, the sides consisting of the slender trunks of the palm strongly united and caulked with palm hemp.'

In what follows we avail ourselves mainly of the notes by Mr Loveridge:

Since 1892 I have been constantly living amongst these people. One day, when I left the pearling-grounds to lay the boat up to clean, I found myself among a number of other boats high and dry on the sandy beach, and small huts were visible in the flat jungle of Tenasserim Island. Although only a brief time elapsed between my rounding the corner of the bay and landing amongst them, more than half of the natives had already decamped. The only female left was an old woman nursing an old man. On putting a few questions to him I found that they had no method of worship, although there was slight evidence that some missionary had seen and talked to them. Their general answer is, 'We are a poor people who know nothing.' Gradually heads emerged from the jungle, and I was soon surrounded by inquisitive faces watching the effect of a dose of quinine administered to the old man.

My visit was successful as far as making friends was concerned, which was all the more remarkable as usually it was as much as their lives were worth to be visited by a mixed crew such as I had in my own boat. They gave me as many fish as were found sufficient for three meals, and returned to their camp. Next morning they surrounded my boat and asked that I should give the old man some more medicine. I met him coming off to me, looking much better. He had a family with him in his boat—sons, daughters, and sons-in-law—and several dogs. I gave a diving exhibition; and the sight of my men in the water, with heavy leads, boots, helmet, and dress, brought out the women even from the camp. The young women are lithe and handsome apparently up till twenty-five, when they age rapidly. At the least fright on their part they would jump overboard, swim ashore, and hide in the jungle. After the diving exhibition we all went ashore and became friends; but of the women folks only those who were mothers were to be seen. It was explained that the young women were away making mats in the jungle. I was introduced to a company making mats. The men gather a kind of pine-apple plant, which they split into ends from one to one and a half yard long and a quarter of an inch wide. These are dried in the sun, and the colour becomes a light pea-green. The lengths are then flattened out by being pressed between boards. When sufficiently flattened they cut them all at even lengths and begin plaiting, their fingers moving as quickly as women's fingers at home in knitting. The mats are in size from three feet by six and upwards. In barter they get about two ounces of rice for a mat three feet by six. Mats are their money; sixty purchase a boat and four a fishing-spear.

There are no means of knowing whence this strange people came. My own opinion is that they are a mixture of Malays and Siamese. They do not tattoo, like the Burmans, and their features are nearer the Malay than the Burmese; and their language has nothing of Malay about it.

In personal appearance these people are a fine and well-built race, strong in limb, and with fairly good features. The men are muscular and capable of hard work even in the full heat of the sun. They appear to live to a good old age; and the population seems on the increase. The young people are growing up as their fathers have done, without any training, education, or Christian influence.

Their marriage ceremony is simple enough. In presence of the elders a piece of white cloth is presented to the bride by the intended bride-groom, and the couple are man and wife. If he does not own a boat they go to that of the parents of the bride.

Although the waters of this archipelago abound, and have abounded, with mother-of-pearl shells, green-snail shells, bêche-de-mer, and other marine produce, but little effort has been made under British control to ascertain the quantities found by the natives or the value of the beds if properly developed. The flat or mother-of-pearl shells are the largest and heaviest to be found in the London market, and are much sought after by Sheffield cutlers for knife-handles.

The dress of the Salones is certainly Malay, and is mainly a savong or loin-cloth. Vice, other than brutal intoxication, is actually unknown to them; and stealing, were they given to it, would mean stealing from their own flesh and blood. They are perfectly simple and harmless in every way. When any of their number dies, they take the remains, tie a lot of split bamboos together, and roll him up in that; and, generally speaking, make two triangles with sticks fastened together, driving the one end into the ground and placing the corpse on the top. They then put a grass

or leaf covering over the place. The knife, spear, box (if he has one), cloth, and all his earthly possessions are placed underneath the corpse. On leaving, a stick is always tied to a tree, with a small piece of white rag, showing to all that some one has been laid to rest there.

These people are able to dive in waters up to eleven fathoms, and at that depth they will swim along the bottom some yards until they secure a shell. When the shell or shells are secured they come up hands above head with the shells in them, get into the boat, and after a rest of two or three minutes repeat the operation. The men, women, and children all dive; the women in some cases turn out better divers than the men. I remember five years ago of a woman diving in ten fathoms of water between two islands where the tide runs very strong. About 10 A.M. she made another descent; and as she did not come up again, a number of the natives dived down at once to see the cause, but could not see anything of her. They reported that a shark must have carried her off; but my opinion is that a strong tide had borne her away. Nothing will tempt them to dive again in a place where a death like this has occurred. The children dive even better than their parents. Diving is only resorted to for the mother-of-pearl shell. This diving for shells is different from that practised at Ceylon. The green-snail shell is easily found; the snails weigh from half a pound to two pounds in weight, and are poked out of their holes with a small bamboo. Bêche-de-mer is always collected at low-water. The value of the mother-of-pearl shell is about £120 per ton, and it takes about 550 cleaned to make a ton. Bêche-de-mer and pearl-shell have been in much demand in China, as also the fish, which has sold as high as sixty dollars per pound. The need of protection is evident, for the islanders are little the better of their good fortune, Chinese and Malay pirates plundering them without mercy. The usual method of these Chinese pirates was to drug the fishermen with spirits or opium and then plunder them of all they had, threatening that the victims' wives and children would be taken away unless they remained quiet and gave up everything. Besides opium, a liquor made from rice and the cocoa-nut palm, both strong intoxicants, has also been introduced, much to the hurt of the natives. For sixty-five years, or down to 1891, these rascally pirates have been able to hoodwink the authorities as to the value of the produce gathered from the wretched natives.

My first knowledge of the state of affairs was obtained once, when, emerging from the jungle, I saw a number of Chinese busy chopping wood and keeping a big fire going, while others were engaged in looking after some huge iron pans that were boiling over the fires. They were busy making toddy, which was in course of fermentation at the time. Many of the natives were already lying helpless on the beach, quite intoxicated, having actually taken the liquor hot from the pans.

Mergui is the centre of a very large fishing industry, and has a regular weekly mail service by steamers of the British East India Company. Chinese steamers have been calling for the past twenty years. An engineer, noticing the constant shipments of bags of shells to Penang as cargo, watched, and saw that a brisk trade was being done in them for London. This engineer embarked in the business himself, landing on Pawey Island, the most productive of the whole group. Afterwards he applied to the authorities at Maulmein for permission to fish for mother-of-pearl shells for one year, and had a small vessel fitted out from Singapore, with suitable diving apparatus. The district commissioner, however, who seems to have been overlooked in the first application for permission, caused trouble. Eventually the matter was arranged by the fishing rights in the district being put up for auction.

This was the means of opening the eyes of the government to the tons of produce which had been previously filched from the natives. Within a brief period of five years about one thousand tons of mother-of-pearl shells have been shipped to London, and about 300,000 green-snail shells annually.

It is to be hoped that something may speedily be done to ameliorate the condition of these interesting people.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PICTURES FOR POSTERITY.

THE National Photographic Record Association has recently been formed, under the presidency of Sir Benjamin Stone, to carry out a most useful and unselfish work. The main idea is to collect photographs of everything of national interest, and to deposit them in the British Museum, so that the future historian will have a copious pictorial library for purposes of reference. With this view the association has issued an appeal to those interested in the subject to assist in the work, which they can do by becoming members, by contributing photographs, or by acting as local agents or collectors. The large army of amateur photographers must now form a complete network over the country; and they, as well as professional workers, are asked to contribute anything of interest which may

come under their notice. The pictures should be of a certain size, and must be printed by one of the permanent processes. Such particulars are set forth in the bylaws, a copy of which can be obtained from Mr George Seamell, the hon. sec., at 12 Hanover Square, London.

A PORTABLE SEARCHLIGHT.

At the last French army manœuvres a new form of portable searchlight was submitted to experimental trial, the object of the invention being to afford a means of discovering wounded men on the battlefield after dark. The lamp can be fixed on a stand or carried by a soldier, and will throw a beam of light in any direction required of such intensity that an object can be plainly seen on the darkest night at a distance of 250 yards. The French military authorities have not published any particulars regarding the lamp, but it appears to be a high-pressure jet, by which oil is ignited in the form of spray—a modification of the powerful lamps constantly used on constructive works in our own country.

JAPANESE MUSHROOMS.

Among the industries of Japan one of the most important is that of mushroom culture; but it differs so much from our own methods of growing this esteemed fungus that a brief account of the system may be of interest. The principal species of edible mushroom cultivated is known as the *shiitake*, and probably the peculiar system employed would answer with no other kind. Oak-trees from twenty-five to thirty-three years old are felled in the autumn, and scored with incisions by an axe at intervals of from three to four inches. The trees are subsequently cut into short lengths, and left in secluded parts of the forest. After a period of three years mushrooms begin to make their appearance in the incisions, and they afford a yield all the year round, but the autumn crop is the most valuable. In 1895, the last year for which returns are available, the export of mushrooms from Japan totalled up to nearly two million pounds' weight. An account of the culture has recently been made public by Mr R. P. Porter, who has been studying the industries of Japan.

THE TELESCRIPTOR.

A new telegraphic instrument is favourably reported upon as having been tested with great success in Berlin. It is called the 'Telescriptor,' by which we may at once assume that it delivers a written message, instead of one which must be translated from the signals of a moving needle, as in the commonly-used form of telegraphic apparatus. It seems, indeed, to take the form of an electric typewriter, with a keyboard upon which the message is fingered out by the sender, and a receiving instrument where it appears in type. The circumstance that Messrs Siemens and Halske have obtained the sole rights of manufacture in Germany is a testimonal in favour of the new invention; but it must be remembered that several forms of writing and printing telegraphic messages have from time to time been brought forward, some of them most ingenious in design and effective in operation. They are, however, only known to students of telegraphy as machines which promised much but did not displace existing arrangements.

THE HANDMAID OF EXPLORATION.

Professor Flinders Petrie, the well-known Egyptologist, has made good use of the photographic camera in the course of his work, and lately, at the Camera Club, London, delivered a lecture under the title, 'Photography the Handmaid of Exploration.' He explained that it was particularly desirable to secure trustworthy records of all his Egyptian 'finds,' because the government exercised the very reasonable right of retaining for their own museum at Gizeh the pick of the objects discovered. His photographic work was accomplished under great difficulties, for he had a small army of men to govern, books to keep, and often had to do his own cooking, besides taking an active part in the actual labour of excavating. This left him little time for photography, and the pictures when taken had to be developed with a minimum allowance of water, that necessary being exceedingly scarce. In spite of these obstacles Professor Petrie was able to exhibit a fine collection of pictures, some of them representing objects which were at least five thousand five hundred years old. The wonderful state of preservation existing in things which we generally regard as perishable is due to the peculiar property of the dry sand in which they have been buried for so long. Thus, a workman's basket, with the original cords attached, was in as good a condition as when used fifty centuries ago; and the same may be said of specimens of papyrus of the same age, which are totally unchanged. Professor Petrie spoke well of his Egyptian workpeople, who would labour hard and willingly with encouragement and kindness.

ARCTIC EXPLORATION.

The good ship *Fram*, which carried Nansen on his memorable voyage to the polar seas, is to sail northward once more in June 1898, under command of Captain Sverdrup. This new polar expedition is organised under the auspices of the Norwegian government, who, besides lending the *Fram*, contribute liberally to the enterprise. The ship is now being overhauled and altered by Colin Archer, the Scotsman who built her, this being necessary in consequence of the larger number of both men and dogs which will accompany the expedition. Captain Sverdrup has far more applications from volunteers wishing to embark with him than he can listen to, and

among the number are many Norwegians of scientific attainments. The *Fram* will proceed through Smith's Sound, and will then sail along the north-western coast of Greenland until stopped by ice. Here she will take up her winter quarters, and expeditions in sledges will be sent to explore Northern Greenland and to ascertain the extent of the ice-floes. It is hoped that the voyage will not extend over two years; but food for double that period will be carried, in case of unforeseen need.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL: A NEW DEPARTURE.

For years it has been maintained that the sewage of London could be converted into a valuable fertiliser, and many systems have been experimented upon in this direction. But in the result it has been found better to take the 'sludge' fifty miles out to sea and there 'drown' it. The London County Council maintains a fleet of six vessels for this service; they carry on each journey a load of nearly one thousand tons of sludge, and made last year more than two thousand trips at a cost of upwards of £30,000. Now a new plan altogether is to be tried, and works are being pushed forward at Rotherhithe, where the method is to be tested. This new system aims at the conversion of the sludge into good-burning furnace-fuel, so that what is now so costly to throw away may be converted into a valuable commodity. The method is known as the 'Henry process,' and consists in drying the sludge—which contains ninety per cent. of moisture—on the surface of huge revolving hot-air cylinders, scraping off the dry film formed, and pressing the residue into cakes ready for burning. It is also intended to grind some of the residue to a fine powder, and to sell it for fertilising purposes. The experiment is an interesting one, and its results will be looked forward to anxiously not only by the London County Council, but by the representatives of all our larger towns and cities.

THE LARGEST TELESCOPE.

It seems to be only in the natural course of events that America should wish to have, and should secure, the largest telescope ever constructed; and for some years this has been the proud boast of the famous Lick Observatory. But there seems to be no finality in these things, and the Lick telescope is now altogether eclipsed by that which stands in the recently-opened Yerkes Observatory, which is situated seventy-five miles from Chicago, at Lake Geneva, and one thousand two hundred feet above sea-level. The objective lens of this huge instrument, which is forty inches in diameter and which weighs in its mount no less than five hundred pounds, presents the usual combination of crown and flint glasses, and has been made by the celebrated firm of Alvan Clark & Sons, of Boston. The steel tube in which it fits, which forms the body of the instrument, is sixty feet long and weighs six tons. The entire instrument weighs twenty tons, and this mass has to be kept in motion by the action of clockwork, so as to keep pace with the rotation of the earth. The other necessary movements are secured by electric motors, so that the observer can point the huge instrument at any celestial object by the pressure of a button.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST EARTHQUAKE SHOCK.

In the year 1857 there occurred a terrible earthquake in Italy, which destroyed several villages and killed ten thousand human beings. A full account of this disaster may be found in a book by Robert Mallet, who went from place to place and fully studied the phenomena exhibited. He writes of the catastrophe as 'an appalling mass of human misery, almost the whole of which was preventable by the exercise of proper care in choice of methods of house-construction in the earthquake region, and future repetitions of which might thus be completely avoided.' It is curious to note that Professor Milne, the leading earthquake-authority to-day, is saying exactly the same thing with regard to the recent earthquake in Assam, by which fifteen hundred lives were lost and an enormous amount of property destroyed. He points out that Japan has suffered from far more severe earthquakes; but that, profiting by experience and guided by experiment, the engineers there, with their European colleagues, have gradually departed from the stereotyped system of building-construction in vogue in other countries. The result is that new buildings resist earthquake shock, while the old ones are gradually disappearing. The wise Japanese spend a large sum annually to assist a committee in investigating earthquake phenomena, a professor is employed at their university to lecture upon the best methods of building-construction in earthquake districts, and they have sent a special commissioner to Assam to report upon the recent earthquake there. Professor Milne urges the government of India to take a lesson from Japan.

THE CHINESE OIL-TREE.

In a recent report of the U.S. consul-general at Shanghai there is an interesting description of the Tung, or Chinese oil-tree. This useful tree grows to a height of about fifteen feet, and is of beautiful appearance, its leaves being vivid green and its flowers a pink-white. The seeds are poisonous, and it is from them that the oil is extracted in the most primitive fashion by wooden presses worked with wedges. The oil thus obtained is largely used all over the country in the manufacture of paint and varnish, for waterproofing paper and umbrellas, and in some districts for illuminating purposes. But its chief use is for caulking boats. On the submerged parts of vessels it is applied hot, but on other parts it is

painted on in thin coats quite cold. All Chinese boats are thus oiled twice a month, and so are made to assume a glossy appearance, while the wood is greatly preserved. Like most other commodities, this tree-oil is often adulterated before it is sold by retailers—chiefly with cotton-seed oil.

A WEST INDIAN FRUIT.

There is every reason to suppose that before long a most delicious fruit, new to Britain, will be obtainable in our markets. This is the mangosteen, a native of the Moluccas, and cultivated in Java and Ceylon. It has now been successfully grown in the West Indies, in proof whereof an experimental case of the fruit from there has recently arrived in excellent condition in London. The mangosteen is spherical in form and about the size of a small orange. When the rind has been removed a juicy pulp—as white and soluble as snow—is revealed, and this has a most delicious flavour, reminding one of the finest nectarine, with a dash of the strawberry and pine-apple combined. It is interesting to note that this present from the West Indies is but a return for benefits received, for the original plants which are now bearing fruit were sent thither from our own Kew Gardens.

PIERCING IRON WITH CLAY.

We have all heard of the old experiment of firing a tallow-candle from a gun through the panel of a door, and can easily imagine the feasibility of the feat, for door-panels are usually very thin and of soft wood. It is far more difficult to believe in the possibility of using a lump of clay as a projectile to penetrate an inch-thick iron target; but this has recently been done at Woolwich Arsenal in the course of some experiments for the purpose of ascertaining the condition under which gas is fired in mines. A special form of gun was employed to represent a bore-hole, and cylinders of clay were used to imitate the tamping. Shots were fired in various explosive mixtures of gas and air, coal-dust, &c.; and, at a distance of twenty-five feet from the gun, an inch-thick iron target was placed at an angle, so that the clay could be broken up into dust and scattered upwards. After the first three or four shots it was found that the clay had gone right through the metal, and the hole was gradually enlarged by subsequent impacts.

A NEW TYPE-COMPOSING MACHINE.

An enormous amount of ingenuity has been expended upon type-composing machines—much of which has, unfortunately, brought no return for the labour and thought involved in the work. After years of competition the Linotype machine—which casts type line by line—seemed to represent the survival of the fittest. But it is now threatened by a serious rival in the Monotype, a recent American invention, which is being taken up in this country. The Monotype really comprises two machines—one of the typewriter form which punches holes in a ribbon of paper, and the other the casting-machine, which is operated by the slip so perforated. An expert operator can perforate, it is said, about fifty words a minute, and the type-casting machine—which is purely automatic—will turn out from 7000 to 10,000 letters an hour. It is claimed for this machine that, the types being separate, corrections can be as easily made as in the case of hand-set copy, and that one mechanic can look after eight or ten machines.

[The Editor regrets having printed in the number for October 9 a mutilated copy of Adelaide A. Proctor's *A Woman's Answer*, which was sent in, accepted, and paid for as an original contribution. When an explanation was demanded, the sender of the verses could only give the unsatisfactory reply that the poem had been bequeathed to him, with other papers, by a friend now deceased.]

TO A GIRTON GIRL.

(A RONDEAU.)

I LOVED you once, two years ago;
Then you were seventeen. I know
Your blue eyes matched the summer sky,
Your voice was like a melody.
You smiled, sweet, when I told you so.

But now no glances you bestow
Upon me when I whisper low.
I can't forget, although I try,
I loved you once.

Your head is full of Cicero,
As leisurely to class you go.
Since you've learnt Greek you pass me by,
You are a Girton girl, and I
Am but a frail, weak man. But, oh!
I loved you once.

SISSIE HUNTER.

'THE BULLY OF HAIPHONG,'

BY GUY BOOTHBY,

unavoidably held over from this Part, will appear in next issue.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

THE BULLY OF HAIPHONG.

By GUY BOOTHBY,
Author of 'The Fascination of the King,' 'Doctor Nikola,' &c.

IN THREE PARTS—PART I.

SOME one has put it on record, and with a greater amount of truth than is usually to be found in such assertions, that wherever the Frenchman goes he carries France with him. If this is the case anywhere it may be said to be particularly so in French Indo-China. One might walk down the streets of Hanoi, Haiphong, Saigon — and, if we may go as far, shall we say Turane?—and, having put aside the native element and allowed for the difference in the temperature, and with a little stretch of the imagination, believe one's self in some small French country town. The *magasins*, the cafés, and the soldiery are all there; the slang is perhaps that of Paris of the year before last; there is a certain air of limp staleness about the gaieties that is not usually associated with the French character; but it is France for all that. And when one considers the reason it could scarcely be otherwise. The Englishman invades a new country, hoists his flag, and sets to work to build up history after his own fashion. Before he has been twelve months domiciled in it he has come to regard it as his permanent home, and has in a great measure adapted himself to and adopted what is best in the native way of living. The Frenchman, however, cannot do this. In the first place, he is in most instances Parisian to the marrow of his bones, and he carries indestructible prejudices with him. For, however long a time he may be settled in his new abode, he feels that he is not called upon to attempt in any way to promote its welfare beyond making it as much like the city of his adoration in its worst sense as it is possible for it to be. In this, though at first glance it would not appear so, there is a distinction with a decided difference, and in consequence the visitor is often hard put to it to get at the real meaning of things, and in nine cases out of ten leaves the place with an entirely wrong impression on his mind.

In Haiphong, for instance, with which my story is entirely concerned, this failing is even more pronounced than in the other places I have mentioned. The effect of the great French capital is to be felt from the moment one's vessel passes the house which the ambitious Paul Bert built for himself, until the low-lying coast-line has dropped astern again and French Indo-China has disappeared with it.

On the evening I am about to describe to you, the Café de France, the principal meeting-place of the port and the centre of such life as is to be found in Haiphong, was crowded to its utmost holding capacity. Every one who was any one was there. For the Messageries Maritimes steamer had arrived from Europe that afternoon, and she brought important news from home with her. It was a time of great political excitement in France; and the ripples of the commotion, like those made upon a mill-pond by a stone, reached across all those thousands of miles, and even agitated the inhabitants of that quiet colony of Tonking. So far the colonists had only had the barest outline by telegram; now there was a chance of hearing full particulars. Party feeling ran high, and when the mail-boat landed its cargo of correspondence the excitement was almost at boilingpitch. It was plain to the least observant that only the tiniest of sparks was needed to cause an explosion, and many of those present in the café that evening felt as though they were smoking their cigars in a powder-magazine. Amongst them were several passengers from the mail-boat, and these with but one exception formed the centres of attentive groups. The exception, however, sat apart, smoking his cigarette and sipping his coffee with a preoccupied air.

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He was a tall young fellow, with a frank, attractive face, who might have been anything from twenty to five-and-twenty years of age. He was neatly but by no means fashionably dressed; indeed an intelligent observer would probably have noticed that he had not the appearance of being the possessor of much wealth. As a matter of fact he had been a second-class passenger on the steamer that had brought him to Haiphong, and even then had been compelled, by lack of means, to refrain from taking part in any of the little amusements which entailed even the smallest expenditure of money. But it must not be inferred from this that he was ashamed of his poverty. Far from it. On the other hand he bore himself with singular frankness and a modesty that had made him highly popular with those who had been able to cultivate his acquaintance. He was thinking now, in the midst of this gesticulating and vociferating babel, of the circumstances which had caused him to leave the small Normandy town, where only a year before he had embarked on the profession of a notary, to make the long voyage to such an out-of-the-world place as Tonking. As he followed this train of thought along it became evident that it was a pleasant one, for his eyes brightened and his fingers played merrily upon the table. He was without doubt a young fellow who, if the chance were vouchsafed him, would do his best to give a good account of himself in the world.

By the time he had smoked his cigarette and had finished his cup of coffee the excitement in the room had reached its climax. At first, having little or no party feeling, he had been amused; but, tiring of the noise and heat, at last he was about to rise and retire to his own hotel when an elderly man entered the room from the veranda at the farther end and approached the table at which he was seated. There was something about the appearance of this individual which interested the youth, and he also noticed that the other's presence had a sobering effect upon the majority of those present. And indeed he was a picturesque figure of a man, one who would be likely to attract attention in whatever company he might find himself. His height was considerably above the average, his frame spare but sinewy. His face was haughty to the borders of insolence, an effect which was increased by his bristling white moustache and imperial, upon which, it was plain, he was accustomed to bestow no small amount of attention. His hair was of the same venerable colour; and, as if to strengthen the impression already produced, he wore it rather longer than is usual save by poets or actors. As far as his dress went he was the pink of perfection, though it was plain to the least observant that his raiment had seen a considerable amount of wear. Hot as was the evening, he wore gloves, and when he reached the end of the room, and turned to survey those present, he held a gold-rimmed eyeglass to his eye. After a close and searching scrutiny, under the influence of which many of those near him quailed visibly, he seated himself at a small table to the right of that at which the youth was sitting, and called a servant. Then in a stern voice he ordered a glass of absinth, and, as soon as the materials were brought, drew off his gloves and proceeded to mix it, frowning prodigiously meanwhile. This delicate operation having been completed to his satisfaction, he placed his hat on a chair beside him, and rose to his feet. Then raising his glass and speaking in a voice that penetrated to every corner of the room, he said very distinctly, so that there might be no pretence on the part of the company present that they had not caught his meaning, 'I drink to France and to the restoration of the Monarchy.' Having done so, he replaced his glass upon the table, and glanced round the room in the hope of finding somebody boasting sufficient audacity to take up the challenge he had thrown down. No one, however, seemed desirous of gratifying him in this respect, so he resumed his seat and continued to sip the decoction he had mixed for himself, smiling scornfully as he noticed the sudden hush that had descended upon the room. He knew his power and was never tired of exercising it. Fate, however, was going to furnish him with a victim before the night was out.

He had well-nigh finished his drink, and was beginning to think of leaving the place, when a small, stout man of the true French *functionary* type came up the central avenue between the tables, and, without looking at the man who was already seated there, sat down and called a *garçon*. Having given his instructions, he turned himself about and realised for the first time who his companion was. His astonishment and dismay were boundless; his mouth and eyes opened beyond their natural extent, and for a moment he gasped for breath. In all probability he would have got up and moved away, but that he was afraid by so doing he would give offence to the very man he most wished to conciliate. The other noticed the effect he had produced, and, from the cruel smile that made its appearance upon his face, it was evident he found some satisfaction in it.

'*Bon soir*,' he said, with a graceful inclination of his head. 'It is sometime since I last had the pleasure of seeing monsieur. Now, however, we meet on an occasion of considerable importance. You have heard the news of course?'

This question was exactly what his companion had dreaded. The young man at the other table watched his face and noticed that it had grown even paler than before.

'I have heard something,' he replied, in what was intended to be a conciliatory tone, 'but, *ma foi*, if one is to believe all one hears we shall have enough to do in this world.'

The man with the gray moustache and the cruel eyes leant a little forward and tapped with his

fingers softly upon the marble top of the table. As he did so he frowned ominously.

'Monsieur, I trust, will forgive my saying so,' he began, 'but that very lack of interest has brought our glorious France to its present low ebb. How can we hope to win back our self-respect when the greater portion of our countrymen refrain from showing any active interest in the management of its affairs? Had I my way I would deal summarily with such people. You, yourself, monsieur, who have so much at stake, and who'——

'I beg your pardon a thousand times, Monsieur Desrolles,' interrupted his wretched companion, 'but I fear you do not quite comprehend my meaning.'

'In that case monsieur must pardon my stupidity,' returned the other with elaborate sarcasm, the frown meanwhile increasing upon his forehead. 'I regret you should not consider me capable of discussing the present somewhat complicated political situation with you. Whatever may be said of me behind my back, it is the first time I have been told to my face that I am losing the keenness of my faculties. Perhaps you will be good enough to say so in as many words, in order that there may be no further misunderstanding between us. I shall then know how to deal with you. One does not like to think one is in one's dotage. Nevertheless, I agree with you that old men are better out of the way.'

By this time large beads of perspiration were standing upon the other's forehead, and more than once he moistened his dried lips with his tongue. But Desrolles would not give him an opportunity of speaking. He was playing with him as a cat does with a mouse. Once he dropped his right hand beside his chair, and as he did so he gave a peculiar twist to his wrist, as if he were practising a somewhat intricate thrust with a foil. This action, you may be sure, was not lost upon his companion, who, in the hope of turning the torrent of his speech, hastened to change the conversation by inviting him to join him in another glass of absinth. Desrolles, however, received the invitation with less alacrity than the other had hoped he would show.

'Monsieur is kindness itself,' he said; 'but if my brain be as clouded as you were just now good enough to suggest, it would be most unadvisable that I should render it more so by exceeding my usual allowance.'

'I beg that you will not believe that I meant such a thing,' burst in the other, with a vehemence and obsequiousness that at any other time would have been ludicrous. 'The sharpness of Monsieur Desrolles's intellect is far too well known in Tonking ever to have such an insinuation made against him. What I did mean to suggest was that beyond reading in the paper the first vague rumours of what had taken place in Paris, I knew nothing. That I take an absorbing interest in it I must beg you will not doubt. Indeed it was with the intention of learning the latest details that I came here to-night.'

Desrolles was graciously pleased to accept the explanation and to recover his equanimity. The change in the other was instantaneous; but having got safely out of the fire he had not the wit to take advantage of his opportunity and withdraw altogether from the scene. On the contrary, he seemed so emboldened by his good fortune that, under the influence of a momentary self-conceit, which he had occasion almost instantly to regret, he ventured an opinion on the topic which was just then absorbing the attention of the room. He was 'out of the frying-pan into the fire' with a vengeance now. In the innocence of his heart he praised the sagacity and foresight of the party then in power. Desrolles heard him out with a sarcastic smile upon his face.

'It is evident,' he said, when the other had finished, 'that you know nothing at all of what you are saying, and it is also quite plain to me that you forget in whose presence you give vent to such utterly unfounded assertions. The men you call statesmen—bah! I will not defile my mouth with the mere mention of their names. What are they? Who was it got us into difficulties over that precious business in '67? Why, the man you are now lauding to the skies, Berritaut. Who made us the laughing-stock of Europe in '79? Why, the man you call a born statesman! Who would have sold us to the Germans in the '80's had he been permitted an opportunity, but De Saldenhac? Sapristi! Monsieur, it seems to me that the disgrace of'——

He paused for a moment, interrupted by a sound which came from the table at which the young man who had landed from the mail-boat that afternoon was seated. The latter had risen from his seat, and, with a face white as the marble top of the table before him, was approaching the man who had just made himself so conspicuous by his denunciation of the ministry.

Seeing that something was about to happen, and that there was every probability of trouble, there was a general stir in the room, and those present drew nearer in order that they might witness what promised to be an exciting scene. Reaching the table, the young man paused for a moment while he attempted to recover his self-possession. Under the influence, however, of Desrolles's cruel eyes he found that such an attempt was useless.

'You seem to have something on your mind, *mon ami*,' said the latter as he gave a twirl to his fierce moustache and looked him up and down. 'Perhaps the heat of the room is too much for you, and you would be better on the veranda. You must be careful how you excite yourself in this climate.'

'It is not that, it is not that,' cried the young man. 'You have insulted one for whom I have the greatest esteem, and I demand from you an instant apology.'

The crowd about them stared at each other in

blank amazement. It was plain to all of them that this stranger youth, whoever he might be, had not the least notion of the reputation of the man he had taken upon himself to beard. They glanced first at him and then at Desrolles, who was still leaning back in his chair twirling his moustache with exaggerated insolence, at the same time affecting to be deeply concerned at the scene he had occasioned.

'Monsieur must pardon me,' he said, in the clear cutting tone that the rest of the room knew so well, 'if I do not quite realise the situation. Monsieur has taxed me with insulting his friend. Perhaps it would be as well if he would state which of those I named has the honour to consider him his champion.'

'You stated that Monsieur de Saldenhac would have sold us to the Germans in the '80's had he found an opportunity. I say that Monsieur de Saldenhac is my friend, and that when you bring such an accusation against him you lie, and I repeat I demand from you an instant apology.'

Desrolles laid himself back in his chair, and once more looked the young man over. The points of his moustache by this time reached almost to his eyes.

'This is really very interesting,' he said; 'and pray who may you be who with such assurance set yourself up as the friend of the Minister for Foreign Affairs? I cannot remember ever having had the honour of seeing your face before.'

'It does not matter in the least who I am,' replied the young man; 'but when you bring such accusations against an honourable man you lie and must be punished for it. I insist upon your withdrawing the assertion you made just now, and at once.'

'*Pardieu!* young as you are, you crow very loud, my friend,' said Desrolles. 'It seems to me you are a bantam whose comb would be none the worse for a little cutting. When you are older, if you ever grow older, you will learn that it is not wise for youths to talk in this fashion to those of maturer years. Instead of your hurting me be thankful that I do not punish you as you deserve.'

'You have not done as I told you,' cried the young man, who was now almost beside himself with passion. 'Since you speak untruths of a man who is not here to defend himself, it is evident that you are a coward as well as a liar, and thus I show my contempt for you.' So saying, he drew back his arm, and, before any of those about him could prevent it, had struck the other a violent blow on the cheek. The look on Desrolles's face changed as if by magic. He seemed to grow a foot taller; and his expression, from being merely contemptuous, became absolutely fiendish.

'That is enough, young man,' he cried, springing to his feet like a wounded lion; 'with that blow you signed your death-warrant. I have put up with your insolence too long. To-morrow morning I will kill you with as little compunction as I would a pigeon.'

The young man, however, was still too much under the influence of his anger to have very much care for the dangerous position into which he had got himself. He glared at his enemy with flashing eyes and heaving chest.

'As you will, sir,' he said, with an attempt at calmness. 'I am prepared to abide by what I have done. I am a stranger; but if there is any one present who will act for me, the necessary preliminaries can be arranged without further loss of time.'

A young officer of the line who had witnessed the whole *fracas*, and who was conversant with Desrolles's character, immediately stepped from the crowd and approached the youth.

'If monsieur will accept my services,' he said, 'I will place myself at his disposal with the greatest pleasure. My name is Gustave Thielbert, lieutenant of the 283d Regiment.'

'I am sincerely indebted to you,' said the other, and a moment later they had left the café together.

REVELATIONS OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN CATTLE-TRADE.



EW persons outside the comparatively narrow circle of those acquainted with the transit of live-stock from South America to England have any idea of the unspeakable horrors enacted on board the vessels engaged in this trade. Were these fearful scenes of death and slaughter among the live-stock more universally known, public opinion would long ago have insisted upon the enactment of preventive regulations like those which have had such salutary effect in the North Atlantic cattle-trade. The vessels engaged in this department of over-sea commerce mainly make their homeward voyage from the River Plate to Liverpool, and bring large consignments of cattle and sheep from Monte Video and Buenos Ayres to meet the deficit in our home meat-supply. Some of the steamships engaged in the Plate trade are specially built for the purpose, and duly fitted with the machinery necessary to carry large consignments of live-stock on the homeward trips. Unfortunately, however, many of the vessels so engaged are of the 'tramp' order—that is, they trade here, there, or anywhere, wherever in fact a cargo is forthcoming; and it is upon these vessels that the shameful scenes of death and slaughter occur.

A glance at the map shows that the voyage from

the River Plate is necessarily a long one. The distance is close upon seven thousand miles, and the time occupied averages about thirty days. But it is not the distance alone which is detrimental to the sea-transit of live-stock. It is the vicissitudes of climate which are experienced *en route*. The vessel may leave the River Plate during the southern summer, have a stifling journey through the tropics, and then as she approaches British waters encounter the full rigours of the northern winter. The North Atlantic trade is conducted along the same latitude, and roughly there is no climatic difference between the place of origin, sea-route followed, and final port of destination. But in the Plate trade all is different. Cattle and sheep raised on the subtropical plains of the Argentine Republic are hurried on shipboard, transported through the hottest part of the Atlantic Ocean, to face the cold winds of the English winter. But to realise aright the miseries to which these innocent ministers to human necessity are subjected some knowledge of the conditions under which they are shipped is requisite.

The Argentine government has a code of regulations which is supposed to impose a check upon overcrowding or other conditions of carriage calculated to militate against the safety of ship or live-stock. Unfortunately, however, the officials entrusted with the enforcement of these rules are hardly noted for their probity. Their interpretation of the regulations is in many cases entirely dependent upon the 'backsheesh' they receive from the shippers. There is a reprehensible custom, too, followed by many owners of tramp boats of letting the whole deck-space of their vessels for a lump sum. This is perhaps the most regrettable feature of the whole trade, for the exporters, in accordance with the terms of their agreement, simply crowd cattle in every nook and corner of the vessel's decks, while on a wooden platform over and above all are carried the unfortunate sheep.

Now, it is obvious that there are places on a vessel's deck upon which cattle should *not* be carried if their safety and the proper working of the ship are to be considered. Cattle, however, are carried over hatches and even over winches. The captain of such a ship is quite powerless to prevent this overcrowding, although he well knows that the crew are endangered by the enhanced difficulty of working the ship. On such a boat the officer on the bridge looks forward on to a flock of sheep exposed to all the winds that blow and the seas which may come aboard the vessel; aft his range of vision lies over the same floating farm-yard; while below him are the cattle-pens with their bellowing, uneasy inmates.

For a time all may go well; the cattle get accustomed to their new surroundings and begin 'to pick up a bit.' Frequently, however, bad weather comes on, and then a few short hours suffice to convert the vessel's decks into a veritable shambles. Often the fittings are of the flimsiest character, and as the ship rolls and pitches they carry away; and the now unprotected inmates of the pens are thrown hither and thither as the vessel rolls to port or starboard. To add to the confusion, a heavy sea may come aboard, and after sweeping dozens of unfortunate sheep away, complete the hideous scene taking place on the cattle-deck. The picture as sketched to the writer by an officer who had witnessed it, not once nor twice but many times, is horrible in the extreme. Imagine a score or two of helpless cattle dashed from one side of the ship to the other as the vessel rolls from port to starboard and starboard to port, amid a ruin of smashed pens, with limbs broken from contact with hatchway combings or winches, dehorned, gored, and some of them smashed to mere bleeding masses of hide-covered flesh; add to this the shriek of the tempest, the impossibility of the crew getting from one part of the ship to the other, and the frenzied moanings of the wounded beasts, and the reader will have some faint idea of the fearful scenes of danger and carnage occurring on these floating farm-yards.

A few months ago a cattle-laden steamer homeward bound from the River Plate lost half her cattle and nearly all her sheep in one short three-quarters of an hour, and that when she was well off the English coast. A strong gale sprang up, accompanied by a heavy sea, and the captain, after running before it as long as he thought it safe, deemed it advisable to bring the vessel round so as to meet the heavy seas bow-on. It was while performing this manœuvre that the vessel was swept and the mischief done. That such a nautical tragedy is of no unusual occurrence the following particulars of recent losses will show.

The figures quoted refer to Liverpool-bound ships with consignments of South American cattle and sheep on board. In each case the loss referred to is of recent occurrence, the voyage having been made during last year. The *Sola* lost 21 cattle out of 110 carried; *Cranford*, 31 out of 150 shipped; *Hydarnes*, 66 out of 289; and *Brookside*, 103 out of 140. This same vessel is credited with having shipped 758 sheep, of which number she brought into the Mersey no more than 78! The *Alfalfa* lost 59 cattle out of 109 and 396 sheep out of 599. The *Highland Chief* lost 43 cattle out of 150 placed on board, and the *Hippomanes* the same number out of 280. From the *Magdala* 98 cattle were lost; while the *Oceania* discharged 118 less than she took on board; the *Port Melbourne*, 39; the *Austrian*, 105; the *Ribston*, 71; the *Nyanza*, 198; the *Endeavour*, 94; the *Julia Park*, 189; and the *Atlantic*, 87; while the *Quantock*, which left the River Plate with 395 cattle and 1200 sheep on board, brought into the Mersey 69 cattle and 394 sheep less than the number shipped.

Such are some of the losses incurred by Liverpool-bound steamers during last year, from which it will be seen that the annual waste from these cattle-carriers must attain enormous dimensions.

Such losses are by no means an inevitable necessity of this trade, as some regular liners engaged can carry cattle year in year out and incur an average loss of under three per cent. Their fittings, however, are of a stable character, and the vessels are built with a special view to the work they will be expected to perform. In England there are two forces at work aiming at the reform of this trade. The officials of the Board of Agriculture examine the fittings of each cattle-boat and see that they comply with the regulations as to strength and material used, number of animals carried in each pen, &c. But so long as a large section of the trade is conducted by occasional or tramp boats, whose cattle-fittings are intended for use on a single voyage only, it is obvious that there is a great inducement to practise economy.

In many cases, too, the fittings are provided by the shipper, and the unfortunate captain, though he knows that the law is being contravened and that he will be prosecuted on arrival in England, has no voice in the matter. The other factor which aims at the betterment of the South American cattle-trade is the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Its officers board the cattle-boats as they arrive, and invariably prosecute whenever they find a maimed or otherwise wounded beast on board.

It must not be thought that all the losses quoted are due to bad weather. Many of the cattle die not through the violence of the weather. They are simply suffocated through being packed in the ill-ventilated and confined 'tween decks. If anything, the scenes enacted in these regions of the vessel, especially on the occasional boats, are even more horrible than those in which wind and sea are the principal actors. When a beast carried in the 'tween decks, especially in the more inaccessible sections, dies, it is a work of great difficulty to remove the carcass from the pen along the narrow, and it may be intricate, passage to where it can be thrown overboard. It often happens—more frequently than not—that the cattlemen refuse to touch the carcass. They have been engaged to look after live cattle, not to haul out dead ones, &c. The sailors refuse point-blank to interfere, pleading that they are not paid to do cattlemen's work, but to navigate the ship. Thus the work devolves in many cases upon the officers, who cannot refuse, as they have situations to lose; and terribly repulsive work it is. The stench in this fetid atmosphere is described as 'horrible;' the dead beasts, advanced perhaps in decomposition before death ended their sufferings, are often removed literally in pieces, so cribbed and cabined is the space in which they are carried. And when it is remembered that the mortality in the 'tween decks is greatest while the vessel is steaming through the tropics, the reader's imagination can easily fill in the horrible details of the scenes enacted in the 'tween decks of a South American cattle-boat.

Sharks are, according to the older nautical writers, credited with some occult means of knowing when a corpse was carried on shipboard. Small wonder, then, that these cattle-laden vessels should be accompanied through the tropics by these terrors of the sea. One shipmaster, a bit of a wag, avers that on each voyage homeward he looks to picking up a family of sharks with as much regularity as he would pick up a pilot. He never likes to disappoint them, and assures us that by some means or other they must be acquainted with his firm's sailing-bill, so punctual is their appearance at the *same* spot. They accompany the vessel for six or seven days, and then, gorged and sated, return to their usual haunts until next they wish to vary their fish-diet with a little beef or mutton.

The marine insurance companies are now realising by bitter experience the risks of the South American cattle-trade, and are determined to discountenance the practice of carrying cattle in the 'tween decks, twenty-five per cent. being the premium required to insure this section of a consignment. It is, however, the government authorities who must move if the shameful barbarities of the trade are to be checked. It is not possible to insist that large vessels of the North Atlantic cargo lines type should be employed in the trade; but it should be possible for the legislature to insure that the steamships engaged should be so far adapted for the live-cattle trade as to carry cattle and sheep without subjecting them to the fearful cruelties which are, to say the least of them, a disgrace to our boasted civilisation. Should legislature persist in refusing to interfere, there are not wanting signs that an outraged British public will take the matter into its own hands and insist that British owners should no longer connive at such cruelties or British vessels reek with 'the uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER V.—*continued.*

I TOLD my father all that I could think of, and then asked how he had fared in my absence—for I had had but few letters—and what of note had happened at Barns.

'Ay, John,' he said, 'I 'm an old man. I fear that my life here will be short. I scarce can get outside without Tam Todd to lean on, and I have little sleep o' nights. And John, I could wish that you would bide at home now, for I like to see you beside me; and you 'll have learned all the folk of Glasgow have to teach you. I once wished you a soldier, but I am glad now that I let the thing blow by, for I would have cared little to have you coming here but once in the six months for a flying visit.'

'Nay, uncle,' said my cousin, 'you do not put the matter fairly. For myself, I believe there is none busier in Scotland than I; but, gad, I have always time to slip home to Eaglesham for a day or two. But my father would care little though he never saw me but once in the year, for each time I go back I get a long sermon on my conduct, with my expenses for the year as a text, till I am fairly driven out of the house for peace.'

At this my father laughed. 'Ay, ay,' said he, 'that 's like my brother Gilbert. He was always a hard man at the siller. Man, I mind when we were both the terrors o' the place; but all the while not a thing would he do if it meant the loss of a bodle. Pity but I had taken after him in that, and John would have been better supplied to-day.'

'Oh,' I answered, 'I have all I need, and more.'

Hereupon my cousin spoke with a sneer in his voice. 'A groat is enough for a scholar, but the soldier must have a crown. Your scholar, as doubtless John can tell, is content if he have a sad-coloured suit, some musty books, and a stoup of bad wine; but your fine gentleman must have his horses and servants, and dress himself like his quality for all the maids to stare at, and have plenty of loose silver to fling to the gaping crowd; and he is a poor fellow indeed if he do not eat and drink the best that each tavern can give. As for me I would as soon be a clown in the fields as a scholar, with apologies to my cousin;' and he made me another of his mocking bows.

I answered as gently as I could that gentrice did not consist in daintiness of eating and drinking or boisterous display, and that in my opinion nothing gave so fine a flavour to gentility as a tincture of letters; but my father changed the conversation by asking Gilbert what he had been after that day.

''Faith, it would be hard to say,' said he. 'I got a gun from that long-legged, sour-faced groom, and went up the big hill above the trees to have a shot at something. I killed a couple of hares and sprung an old muirfowl; but the day grew warm, and I thought that the wood would make a pleasant shade, so I e'en turned my steps there and went to sleep below a great oak, and dreamed that I ran a man through the breast for challenging my courage. It was an ill-omened dream, and I expected to meet with some mishap to account for it ere I got back, but I saw nothing except a lovely girl plucking primroses by the water-side. Zounds, Jack, what a fool you must be never to have found out this beauty! She had hair like gold and eyes like sapphires. I've seen many a good-looking wench, but never one like her.'

'And what did you do?' I asked with my heart beating wildly.

'Do?' he laughed. 'Your scholar would have passed in silence, and written odes to her as Venus or Helen for months; whereas I took off my bonnet and made haste to enter into polite conversation. But this girl would have none of me; she's a rose I warrant with a pretty setting of thorns. She tripped away; and when I made to follow her became Madame Fine-airs at once, and declared that her servants were within easy reach, so I had better have a care of my conduct.'

My father shot a sharp glance at me, and addressed my cousin: 'The maid would be Marjory Veitch, old Sir John's daughter, at Dawyck. He, poor man, has gone to his account, and her brother is abroad, so the poor girl is lonely enough in that great house. John and she have been friends from the time they were children. She has come here too, and a pretty, modest lass she is, though she favours her mother rather than her father's folk.'

At this intelligence my cousin whistled long and low. 'So, so,' said he, 'my scholar has an eye in his head, has he? And Dawyck is not far off, and—well, no wonder you do not care for the military profession. Though, let me tell you, it is as well for the course of true love that there are few cavaliers in this countryside, else Mistress Marjory might have higher notions.'

I answered nothing, for though I loved Marjory well and thought that she loved me, I had never spoken to her on the matter; for from childhood we had been comrades and friends. So I did not care to reply on a matter which I regarded as so delicate and uncertain.

My cousin was a man who was sorely vexed by receiving no answer from the object of his

witticisms; and perhaps on this account he went further than he meant in his irritation. 'Nay, John,' he went on, 'you're but a sorry fellow at the best with your tags from the Latin and your poor spirit. I am one of the meanest of His Majesty's soldiers, but I can outride you, I can beat you at sword-play, at mark-shooting, at all manly sports. I can hold my head before the highest in the land; I can make the vulgar bow before me to the ground. There are no parts of a gentleman's equipment in which I am not your better.'

Now, had we been alone I should not have scrupled to fling the lie in his teeth, and offer to settle the matter on the spot. But I did not wish to excite my father in his feeble health, so I made no reply beyond saying that events would show the better man. My father, however, took it upon himself to defend me. 'Peace, Gilbert,' he said. 'I will not have my son spoken thus of in my own house. He has as much spirit as you, I'll warrant, though he is less fond of blowing his own trumpet.' I saw with annoyance that my father plainly thought my conduct cowardly, and would have been better pleased had I struck my cousin then and there; but I knew how cruelly excited he would be by the matter, and in his weakness I feared the result. Also the man was our guest and my cousin.

When we rose from supper I assisted my father in walking to his chair by the fire; for, though the weather was mild and spring-like, his blood was so impoverished that he felt the cold keenly. Then my cousin and myself strolled out of doors to the green lawn, below which Tweed ran low and silvery clear. I felt anger against him, yet not so much as I would have felt towards another man had he used the same words; for I knew Gilbert to be of an absurd, boasting nature, which made him do more evil than he had in his heart. Still my honour or self-love (call it what you please) was wounded, and I cast about me for some way to heal it.

'Gilbert,' I said, 'we have both done much work to-day, so we are both about equally wearied.'

'Maybe,' said he.

'But your horse is fresh and a good one, as I know; and you are a good horseman as you say yourself. You had much to say about my poor horsemanship at supper. Will you try a race with me?'

He looked at me scornfully for a minute. 'Nay, there is little honour to be got from that. You know the ground, and your horse, for all I know, may be swifter than mine. It was not of horses I spoke, but of the riders.'

'In the race which I offer you,' I answered, 'we will both start fair. Do you see yon rift in the hill beyond Scrape. It is the Red Syke, a long dark hole in the side of the hill. I have never ridden there, for the ground is rough and boggy, and I have never heard of a horseman there since Montrose's rising. Will you dare to ride with me to yonder place and back?'

At this my cousin's face changed a little, for he had no liking for breaking his neck on the wild hills. And now, when I look back on the proposal, it seems a mad, foolhardy one in very truth. But then we were both young and spirited and reckless of our lives.

'Mount and ride,' said he. 'I'll be there and back before you are half-road, unless, indeed, I have to carry you home.'

Together we went round to the stables, and I saddled a black horse of my father's, for Maisie had already travelled far that day—the Weasel we called him, for he was long and thin in the flanks, with a small head and a pointed muzzle. He was viciously ill-tempered, and would allow no groom to saddle him; but before I had gone to Glasgow I had mounted and ridden him bare-back up and down the channel of the Tweed till he was dead-beat and I half-drowned and shaken almost to pieces. Ever since this escapade he had allowed me to do what I liked with him; and though I did not find him as pleasant to ride as the incomparable Maisie, yet I knew his great strength and fleetness. My cousin's horse was a good cavalry charger; strong, but as I thought somewhat too heavy in the legs for great endurance.

We mounted and rode together out among the trees to the fields which bordered on the hills. I was sore in the back when I started, but after the first half-mile my sprightliness returned, and I felt fit to ride over Broad Law. My cousin was in an ill mood, for the sport was not to his taste, though he felt bound in honour to justify his words.

The spur of Scrape which we came to was called by the country people the Deid Wife, for there an Irishwoman, the wife of one of Montrose's camp-followers, had been killed by the folk of the place after the rout at Philiphaugh. We had much ado to keep our horses from slipping back, for the loose stones which covered the face of the hill gave a feeble foothold. The Weasel took the brae like a deer; but my cousin's heavy horse laboured and panted sorely before it reached the top. Before us stretched the long upland moors, boggy and cleft with deep ravines, with Scrape on the right, and straight in front, six miles beyond, the great broad crest of Dollar Law. Here we separated, my cousin riding forward, while I thought the road to the left would be the surer. Clear before us lay the Red Syke, an ugly gash into which the setting sun was beginning to cast his beams.

And now I found myself in a most perilous position. The Weasel's feet were light and sensitive, and he stumbled among the stones and tall heather till I had sore work to keep my seat. My cousin's horse was of a heavier make, and I could see it galloping gallantly over the

broken ground. I cheered my steed with words and patted his neck, and kept a tight hand on the rein. Sometimes we slipped among the shingle, and sometimes stumbled over rocks half-hid in brackens. Then we passed into a surer place among short burned heather. The dry twigs gave forth a strange creaking sound as the horse's feet trod on them, and puffs of gray dust and ashes, the sign of the burning, rose at every step. Then beyond this we went to a long stretch of crisp mountain grass, pleasant for both horse and rider. We splashed through little tumbling burns, and waded through pools left by the spring rains. But of a sudden the ground grew softer, and even the Weasel's light weight could not pass in safety. At one time indeed I reined him back just on the brink of a treacherous well-eye, from which neither of us would have returned. I cast a glance at my cousin, who was still ahead; his heavy charger was floundering wearily, and he lashed it as if his life were at stake. Then we passed the green bog and came to a great peat-moss, full of hags where the shepherds had been casting peats. Here the riding was more difficult, for the holes whence the peats had come were often some five feet deep, and it was no easy matter to get a horse out of that treacherous black mud. The Weasel did gallantly, and only once did I dismount, when his hind-feet were too deeply sunk to permit him to leap. Beyond me I saw my cousin riding swiftly, for the middle of the moss as it chanced was the firmest and evenest place. We were now scarce a hundred yards from the ravine of the Red Syke, and even as I looked I saw him reach it, rest a second to give his horse breathing-space, and then turn on his homeward way.

I came to the place a minute after, and having compassion on my brave horse, I dismounted and eased him of my weight for a little. Then I got on his back again and set off. Gilbert I saw before me riding, as I thought, in the worst part, and with a fury that must tell sooner or later on his heavy steed. I had scarce been a moment in the saddle when, so strange are the ways of horses, the Weasel became aware for the first time of the other horse in front. Before it had been a toil for him, now it became a pleasure, a race which it lay with his honour to win. He cocked up his wicked black ears, put down his head, and I felt the long legs gathering beneath me. I cried aloud with delight, for now I knew that no horse in Tweeddale could hope to match him when the mood was on him. He flew over the hags as if he had been in a paddock; he leaped among the hard parts of the green bog, from tussock to tussock, as skilfully as if he had known nothing but mosses all his days. We came up with Gilbert at the edge of the rough ground, lashing on his horse, with his face flushed and his teeth set. We passed him like the wind, and were galloping among the rocks and brackens while he was painfully picking his steps. A merciful providence must have watched over the Weasel's path that day, for never horse ran so recklessly. Among slippery boulders and cruel jagged rocks and treacherous shingle he ran like a hare. I grew exultant, laughed and patted his neck. The sun was setting behind us, and we rode in a broad patch of yellow light. In a trice we were on the brow of the Deid Wife. Down we went, slipping yards at a time, now doubling along the side; sometimes I was almost over the horse's head, sometimes all but off at the tail; there was never since the two daft lairds rode down Horsehope Craig such a madcap ride. I scarce know how I reached the foot in safety; but reach it I did, and rode merrily among the trees till I came to the green meadowlands about the house of Barns. Here I dismounted and waited for my cousin, for I did not care to have the serving-men laughing at him riding in after me.

I waited a good half-hour before he appeared. A sorry sight he presented. His breeches and jerkin had more than one rent in them; his hat was gone; and his face was flushed almost crimson with effort. His horse had bleeding knees and her shoulders shook pitifully.

'Pardon me, Gilbert,' I said in a fit of repentance; 'it was a foolish thing in me to lead you such a senseless road. I might have known that your horse was too heavy for the work. It was no fault of yours that you did not come home before me. I trust that we may forget our quarrels and live in friendship as kinsmen should.'

'A truce to your friendship!' he cried in a mighty rage.

THE HOMELY TUBER.

MOST of us probably derived our earliest information concerning the 'apple of the earth,' as it is called in some Continental languages, from some such book as *The Child's Guide to Knowledge*, where, among other things, we learned that for a long time after its importation by Sir Francis Drake towards the close of the sixteenth century, it was grown only by men of fortune, and in the time of Charles I. was a luxury provided for the queen's table at the price of two shillings a pound. How different from to-day, when at least half-a-million human beings in Ireland alone stand, with every failure of the potato-crop, in jeopardy of starvation! The potato became a staple crop in

Ireland in the sixteenth century, was a common field crop in England before the middle of the eighteenth century, but was twenty or thirty years later in establishing itself in Scotland, Germany, or France. In 1853 a monument to Sir Francis Drake was erected at Offenburg in Baden in token of gratitude for his having introduced potato-culture into Europe.

Mr W. P. O'Brien, in his book on *The Great Famine* (1896), gives an account of the years of distress and panic which followed such a calamity during the years 1845–47, throwing a dark shadow over the earlier years of the present reign, and taxing to the utmost the resources of the administrations of Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell. The fungus causing the potato-disease, so destructive and difficult to deal with, is known wherever the potato is cultivated, as well as in Chili where it is native; but it has been especially severe in Ireland, where the people came to trust to it too exclusively.

On the other hand, the potato has been one of the great agents in preventing famines in European countries. As an article of diet the potato is invaluable, its solid part consisting principally of starch to the amount of some twenty per cent., which is easily digested; though the potato, or any starchy food, is, taken by itself, very inferior in nutritiousness to wheat or oat meal. The other constituents are sugar, fat, nitrogenous matters, saline matters, and water to the amount of seventy-five per cent. Solanin, a poisonous alkaloid, is also found in the potato-plant, most in the potato-apples, least in the tubers; and boiling removes it. Potato-ash contains nearly sixty per cent. of potash, and nearly twenty of phosphoric acid; but the constituents vary a good deal in their proportions. The superstition of carrying a raw potato in the pocket as a cure for rheumatism may have its origin in the fact of its containing potash.

Starch is largely extracted from potatoes for use in textile factories and in the laundry. *Farina* or potato-starch is made into dextrine or British gum, a substance of great commercial value.

Among other of its numerous uses may be mentioned the preparation of certain varieties of brandy and whisky, distilled from fermented potatoes. In Russia syrup and sugar are prepared from potato-starch. In Germany much potato meal or flour is made, and is used for provisioning ships, barracks, &c.

In some parts of America potatoes are said to be so numerous that they have been used as fuel, being cheaper than coal. A few slices of the peel placed in tobacco that has become unpleasantly dry to smoke soon restores to it its lost moisture without imparting any unpleasant flavour. The potato is akin to tobacco; and tolerable cigarettes may be made from potato-leaves.

A good and cheap imitation of celluloid, which in its turn is a good and cheap imitation of ivory, is produced by boiling potatoes, after being peeled, for several hours in water containing eight per cent. of sulphuric acid, ridding the resulting pasty mass of its moisture by pressure, and afterwards moulding it into the required form—combs, knife-handles, pianoforte-keys, pipes difficult to distinguish from meerschaum, &c. The substance can also be dyed and turned in a lathe and applied to any of the purposes for which real ivory, now becoming scarcer every year, is usually employed, such as billiard-balls and various fancy articles. Some kinds of hardened potato-pulp are now extensively used in the manufacture of buttons. But a couple of generations back snuff was in high favour, and boxes were largely made. A common material for them was potato-pulp, which, after being mixed with some sticky substance, moulded, dried, and varnished, had all the appearance of superior papier-maché. As a penwiper and rack combined, a potato is said to be an excellent preservative against rust and mildew.

A curious dish, 'potatoes and point,' was said to be only too common amongst the poverty-stricken inhabitants of Western Ireland, who used, according to one explanatory legend, to place a salt herring in the centre of the table and point their 'praties' at it in order to get the flavour; according to another authority, salt, in the days when there was a heavy duty upon it, took the place of the salt fish. The dish is mentioned in the *Memoirs of Captain Rock*, printed in 1824: 'When there is but a small portion of salt left, the potato, instead of being dipped into it by the guests, is merely, as a sort of indulgence to the fancy, pointed at it.' R. Anderson, in one of his Cumberland ballads, says:

> Dinnerless gang ae hawf o' the week;
> If we get a bit meat on a Sunday,
> She cuts me nae mair than would physic a sneype,
> Then we 've 'tatey and point every Monday.

The following poem by the Rev. J. T. Pettee, 'Prayer and Potatoes,' said to have formed part of a charity-sermon in Massachusetts some five-and-twenty years ago, portrays a poor old woman, whose sole subsistence had been potatoes for many weeks past, as seated in an armchair bemoaning the failure of her store and racking her weary brain as to whence she is to obtain more. Suddenly she thinks of the deacon over the way, and sends for him.

> The deacon came over as fast as he could,
> Rejoiced at a chance of doing her good,
> But never once thought of potatoes.
> 'Now, tell me,' said he, 'the chief want of your soul?'
> And she, good woman, expecting a dole,
> Immediately said, 'Potatoes.'
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He prayed for wisdom, and truth, and grace:
> 'Lord, send her light from Thy holy place!'
> She murmured, 'Oh, send potatoes!'
> And still, at the close of each prayer he said,
> He heard, or fancied he heard, instead
> This strange request for potatoes.

'THE FATAL SHOT' AT TRAFALGAR.

By Arthur M. Horwood, Author of *In the Shadow of the Sphinx*, &c.

MR LAMB groaned, and restlessly rolled his head from side to side on his uneasy pillow. He was suffering from agonising toothache; and not being by any means a patient sufferer, he aggravated the malady by his fevered tossing and turning about. At intervals he anathematised the unsound molar and threatened it with extraction on the morrow; meanwhile, he compressed his jaw with one hand, and, with the other, scratched the skin of his face savagely as a counter-irritant.

It was quite a considerable time before he bethought himself of a common-sense palliative—a piece of cotton-wool steeped in brandy. He unsteadily floundered out of his truckle-bed, stepped gingerly across the tile flooring in the dark, and after upsetting one or two articles of furniture found a piece of wadding in his wardrobe, and then with a chink extricated a bottle from the cupboard. Of course the natural thing was next, in saturating the wool, to spill some of the spirit on his bare toes; whereat he gave utterance to a fretful cry through his compressed lips, then he savagely rams the wool into his decayed tooth and climbs back into bed.

Even then he experienced no relief; on the contrary, his distress rather increased: his mouth overflowed with saliva, and he worked himself up into a perfect frenzy. Again he bounded out of bed, ejected the wadding most emphatically, and proceeded to hurriedly drag on his clothes with a view to taking a nocturnal ramble. Toothache, he remembered, will sometimes yield to bodily exercise. He dressed himself fully, and, before quitting his room, placed a loaded pistol in his coat pocket; for Cadiz in 1805 was not so safe a place for nocturnal rambles as it is at the present day. Then he groped his way down a flight of marble stairs, fumbled a good deal over bolts and bars, and let himself out into the dim, silent street.

Mr Lamb was well acquainted with the topography of the Andalusian city, having occupied a stool in a Spanish merchant's office for several years. He took his way up the Calle San Francisco and the Calle Bilbao, and then turned down the Calle Fernando. The sound of surf breaking on the shore now reached his ears, and presently he emerged upon the Muralla, or sea-wall, that commands a view of the magnificent bay. For some little time past the number of ships lying at anchor had been augmented by the French fleet under Admiral Villeneuve.

Mr Lamb's eyes were confronted this lovely, quiet autumn night with a chain of anchor lights that seemed to reach from the Punta de San Felipe to Puerto Real across the bay. Farther along faintly glimmered those of the Spanish war-vessels, besides those of the merchant-ships that crept in and out in mortal terror of capture by those ubiquitous cruisers of His Britannic Majesty King George III. The Englishman paced along the sea-wall, occasionally stopping to idly count the number of lights, keeping his mouth tightly closed meanwhile. A few paces farther on he had to open it when gruffly challenged by a sentry, whose stone pagoda-shaped sentry-box cut a wedge out of the full rising moon, shining low down, huge and golden.

Mr Lamb was curtly admonished to leave the Muralla—the presence there of the public at one in the morning not being approved of in those troublous times, so he obediently retired, not caring which way he went, as he remarked to himself. Traversing one or two streets, he came out upon the Plaza de la Constitucion just as, with a sepulchral boom-boom, two o'clock was announced from the church tower of San Antonio, that lords it over the square. Then, from beyond its precincts, the quavering intonation of a sereno or night-watchman took up the refrain, *Ave Maria purissima! las dos han dado y sereno.*

The last long-drawn note floated away, and then the plaza relapsed into its former stillness. Mr Lamb paced around it to make its circuit before branching off down one of its outlets. Not a light shone from any of the tall houses; even the Casino had retired into darkness. The public oil-lamps at long intervals burned dim and yellow, rendered more so by contrast when the house-tops and the belfry of the church caught the first beams of the rising moon.

At first Mr Lamb thought he had entire possession of the square; but on traversing its fourth side he discovered he was mistaken by hearing a heavy snoring proceed from one of the stone benches before the church.

Upon a closer inspection a uniformed figure is disclosed lying at length. His hat has fallen off; his left arm pillows his head, showing a face deeply disfigured with a scar, whilst the right is stretched out at full length as though pointing at Mr Lamb. The Englishman examines the figure intently—why, he could hardly have said—and mentally decides he is a marine belonging to the French fleet. And, as if for confirmation, the snores are broken, and the husky voice of a drunken sleeper articulates, '*Tiens, le voilà, Lord Nelson!*' The trigger-finger of his outstretched right hand closes convulsively as though discharging a musket, and his mouth opens and shuts, the corner drooped as if biting a cartridge. The square has grown so light, as the moon peeps over the row of houses to the east, that Mr Lamb can plainly distinguish the frown that creases the man's heavy brow, the twitch of his

nostrils, and the very contraction of his left closed eyelid in simulating the action of biting. The buttons of his uniform catch the rays of the moon and glow like fire-flies, his gaitered legs and deep cuffs stand out like snow against the darker portions of his dress.

In contemplating this sworn enemy of his country, Mr Lamb, standing in the deep shadow of an ornamental column, has forgotten all about his toothache and falls to speculating upon the fate that may be in store for this weather-worn marine. 'He'll be fighting soon—directly the fleets sail out—perhaps in a couple of days' time—poor beggar—I wonder if he'll be killed! I ought to hate him—one of my country's enemies—perhaps I ought to be fighting him instead of peaceably regarding him and listening to his snoring and drunken muttering. My goodness, how he does snore! . . . Why, good'——

Mr Lamb is not alone in contemplating the sleeper. A dark figure in a ragged cloak has suddenly appeared bending over the marine—so suddenly that Mr Lamb thinks it must have sprung out of the ground. He can see no face—nothing but the cloak—and a hand—and a murderous knife! . . .

Mr Lamb utters a cry and starts forward out of the shadow—and the figure has vanished! as suddenly and mysteriously as it appeared; and the Englishman finds himself standing, the saviour of his country's enemy, in the broad moonlight, his heart in his mouth and his pistol in his hand, at half-past two in the morning, in the Plaza de la Constitucion.

'*Ave Maria purissima*,' wails the sereno at the corner of the principal street, '*las dos y media han dado y sereno*.'

Mr Lamb wipes the perspiration from his brow and reflects what he had better do. If he leaves the man asleep, the assassin (some savage Spaniard who does not love his country's present allies and quondam merciless conquerors) will return. He endeavours therefore to awaken the French marine, but without avail; his sodden slumber is not so easily broken. In desperation Mr Lamb rushes up to the sereno who has just called the hour, and backing his request by the production of a dollar prevails on the old functionary to come and stand guard over the man until dawn.

As the Englishman finally turns away and bends his steps homewards the marine is still snoring, and the sereno has placed his lantern and pike on the bench and proceeded to give utterance to his first melancholy cry at his new post.

It is three o'clock, and Mr Lamb returns to his bed free from toothache and sleeps the sleep of the just—and the merciful.

A few days later the combined French and Spanish fleets sailed out of Cadiz, and on the 21st October, as Mr Lamb was passing along the Muralla soon after midday, he paused and listened intently, straining his eyes seawards. The horizon was sailless, except for one or two feluccas gliding in under the influence of the light westerly breeze; but that mild breeze brought to Mr Lamb's ears the earliest intimation of an event that was to leave an imperishable mark on history—*a faint, sustained, dull rumble, as of thunder*, far, far away seawards.

'Olá, Señor Lamb, that was thunder, was it not?' exclaimed in Spanish a musical voice at his side, and the Englishman, withdrawing his gaze from the horizon, salutes a young lady in a mantilla, escorted by an elderly Don with a curled, white Vandyke beard and an elaborately-tasselled malacca cane.

Mr Lamb does not respond to the young Andalusian's remark without apparent effort.

'It *may* be thunder, Señorita Carmen, but—but' (swallowing nervously)—'I think it is the sound of *cannon!*'

'*Caramba!*' broke in the young lady's father. 'A naval engagement.'

'I—I feel almost sure. Listen!'

The three bent their heads and listened with bated breath.

Without a break, though rising and falling on the salt breeze, came the sinister murmur.

'There can be no doubt about it,' cried Mr Lamb after a minute, his face flushed, and speaking quickly. 'The combined fleets of Spain and France are being engaged in battle by my countrymen—by Lord Nelson. . . .

'Do you know,' he continued with a forced laugh, 'I feel I myself ought to be out there, instead of standing in safety on Spanish ground.'

'And yet,' rejoined Carmen maliciously, 'you told me yesterday you had saved a French marine's—an enemy's—life in the Plaza de la Constitucion the other night.'

'Yes, yes; quite so,' returned Mr Lamb rather pompously. 'No Englishman could have done otherwise. I don't repent of my act.'

'And yet, perhaps at this hour, he may be the means of doing much damage—sink a ship even,' joined in the Don, with a grim smile.

'Even then,' retorted the Briton manfully, 'I should simply have done the proper thing. It was common Christianity. The war, after all, is not of my making.' . . . He paused, looked at his watch, whose hands pointed to one o'clock, inclined his ear seawards — still the same distant rumbling murmur; still the same suggestion of a storm that neither approached nor receded; still the same sunshine and soft westerly breeze. 'Nevertheless,' he exclaimed with sudden animation, 'I should very much like to see what that fellow is doing at the present moment.'

Had Mr Lamb's wish been gratified, he would have witnessed the terrible battle of Trafalgar at its height, and in the thick of the fight the *Victory* silencing the guns of the *Redoubtable*, whose only retort is a spiteful crackling of musketry from the sharpshooters stationed in her

tops. Wreathed in smoke, the locality of these riflemen at times is only denoted by thin, bright tongues of fire that spurt downwards towards the deck of the British ship. Ever and anon the breeze fans aside the thick smoke, and groups of French marines and Tyrolese sharpshooters, their faces blackened with smoke and rigid and fierce with the spirit of battle, start into existence through the rifts, suspended high aloft, as though sailing on clouds, veritable angels of destruction, dealing death upon their enemies beneath them; and a closer inspection would have revealed the man whose life Mr Lamb had saved amongst a group of others in the mizentop, loading and firing with terrible rapidity and precision.

Amidst the roar of cannon the report of their small-arms is, except at intervals, inaudible even to themselves. When one and then another drops in a heap on the top, either wounded or killed, they are merely shoved aside or used as breast-works by the survivors, who sustain the fusilade to the utmost of their power.

Mr Lamb's marine is a crack shot, to judge by the savage glare of satisfaction with which he notes the effect of his every discharge.

Again he has brought down his bird.

Shot after shot he pours down with almost unerring aim.

A stronger puff than usual of the westerly breeze clearing away the intercepting smoke, he sees distinctly, as on a stage, a small, active, one-armed officer moving quickly across the deck of the *Victory*, his uniform bears stars, and he is an officer of consequence, pointing with his one arm to right and left as he rapidly gives his orders to those around him.

A horrible eagerness wrinkles the grimy face of the Frenchman; great beads of perspiration start out on his brow and furrow the black on his face. '*Tiens, le voilà, Lord Nelson!*' he whispers frantically to himself, and he again levels his musket—fires—the one-armed officer falls. . . . It is in truth Nelson.

It is now a quarter after one o'clock, and the minutes of the marine are numbered. He has become the target of the infuriated British. He knows he is doomed. The bullets rattle like hail around him; soon he and another are the sole living occupants of the top. He fires his last shot, which lays low an old quartermaster who is loading for a couple of midshipmen, and the next moment his own light goes out—a ball striking him in the head and another in the breast.

Vengeance has overtaken him—but, alas! the boasted, the idolised Nelson lies dying in the cock-pit of the *Victory*.

. . . . . .

When news of Nelson's death reached Cadiz, Mr Lamb became possessed of a strange and painful conviction (without more foundation than a dream he had had) that it was the man whose life he had saved who had perpetrated the deed. All his former complacency about having simply done his duty deserted him, and he became so depressed that his friends feared he would take his life. This quite probably would have been the case had not the sereno, who had stood guard over the Frenchman that night in the Plaza de la Constitucion come forward and solemnly declared that on that particular night, whilst his attention had been for a moment diverted, the assassin had again rushed forward and wounded the marine so seriously that he was sent on board his ship in a dying state.

Señorita Lola never mentioned to a soul that she it was who had bribed the sereno to give utterance to this well-intentioned fiction—not even to her husband. For Mr Lamb had become her husband in the following year.

A NORFOLK WILDFOWL DECOY.

By ERNEST R. SUFFLING, Author of *The Land of the Broads*.

JUST as one associates Newcastle with coal, so does one's thoughts revert to the dumpling-county when decoys are spoken of. East Norfolk is peculiarly and favourably situated for receiving visits from the great flocks of wildfowl which fly south when the cold weather sets in and during its continuance.

Observe how the whole county juts out into the North Sea, as if inviting the wing-weary and hungry flocks to rest and refresh before winging their way farther southward in search of a more congenial climate and a better prospect of adequate sustenance.

And it is not only the position, but the physical features of the county that present such irresistible attractions for migratory birds. Flat stretches of marshland, glittering and ample rivers, numerous and large 'broads,' as the lagoons are called, reed ronds, fen, and woodland are to be seen on every side; and then there are the lakes, many of them of considerable area, which form part of the estate surrounding the Hall, as the chief house in each parish is termed. With all these charms to please the eye of the feathered stranger, how can he possibly resist alighting in some wood-secluded pool, if only to rest his tired pinions and fill his empty crop? A hungry bird has his feelings like a human being; and when those feelings are of weariness and hunger, would he not be a stupid fellow if he passed over a land of plenty—a bird-paradise—without a halt?

Of course he would. So, be he duck or teal,

widgeon or mallard, down he stoops into a pretty, reed-fringed, wood-surrounded bay forming part of a large broad or lake.

Other ducks are there before the new-comers, ducks which, in their plumpness, contentment, and confidence, appear to be peculiarly familiar with the locality. And to tell the truth they *are* familiar, for they are the tame decoy-ducks, with which the new-comers at once fraternise.

They look around the quiet expanse of water and find no cause for alarm. There are the great brown trunks of oak and elm trees, with their naked branches glittering in the early morning sun, for it has been a frosty night, and the hoar-frost bejewels everything it touches with its mystical breath. The brown, dry reeds nod and give forth their peculiar musical sighing, as their long, graceful stems rub against each other in the gentle breeze which is just strong enough to ruffle the surface of the water, which is here and there broken and beringed by the rise of a playful perch or the rush for escape of a roach as it flies from the saw-like jaws of the ever-hungry pike.

There, on the left, knee-deep in water, stands a heron taking his early breakfast of gudgeon and such small fry; and now and again the glint of a busy kingfisher is seen, now green, now brown, as he too steals his morning meal from the pellucid water. See, he seizes a little fish and flies with it to a tree-root which rises, gnarled and hydra-like, from the lake, and giving the head of the small fry a sharp tap on the rough bark, tosses it above his head and catches it deftly, head downward, in his bill, and swallows it without the least fear of the fins or gills catching his distended throat.

On shore the lark sings his blithest as he mounts heavenward, and the wood-pigeons utter their monotonous coo-oo! coo-oo! from the lofty forest trees. 'Here is peace in this place surely!' thinks the poor wanderer, as he trails his wake on the surface of the lake, and finally settles down to enjoy himself.

Alas, poor bird! Peace and death are so closely associated in this sylvan spot that the former is but the precursor for the latter, as the incautious duck soon finds out, but only when too late.

What is that great archway of bent saplings in the little nook over there? How sheltered and inviting it appears! The water at its entrance mirrors the arch and makes it a complete circle; and see, both tame and wild fowl are gradually nearing its entrance!

There is corn floating on the water near the entrance, which both tame and strange ducks at once appropriate; and there is a brown and white dog popping in and out among the reed-screens which border the decoy.

What is the dog doing? Why does he appear and disappear in such a mysterious manner? He just shows himself and then is gone again.

What is the animal about?

That is just what every bird in the strange flock wishes to discover. A dog has a wonderful fascination for wildfowl, and it is that very fascination which lures the poor birds to their doom.

The decoy-ducks (the tame ones) know that now is their time to be fed, and accordingly swim into the 'pipe,' followed by their new friends, who cannot keep their bright eyes off the dog which is acting so strangely. Up the 'pipe' they go, farther and farther, not noticing that as they advance the series of hoops gradually become smaller and smaller, and that the water up which they are swimming also becomes proportionately narrow, and curves round, so that the entrance is no longer visible.

With wonder they sail onward, quacking questions in their mother-tongue, which is probably varied with the brogue or patois of the various tribes to which the flock belongs. Who can tell if the teal can speak or understand the Pochard language or the widgeon converse in Mallardese?

Anyway, onward goes the doomed band, wondering what is at the end of the curious cave of bewilderment into which they have entered, when suddenly a horrid two-legged monster—the decoy-man—appears behind them, and they scramble forward, half-flying, half-swimming, amid a tremendous splashing hubbub, right into the end of the net, where they cannot escape, a fact which the decoyman takes deliberate advantage of, by seizing his prey, one by one, and wringing their necks as he remarks to the dog which lies expectantly by him:

'Thet 's a rare good "push" my bewty; yew shull hev a extry dose o' old horse for yar breakfast, that yew shull, for yew du du yar work right well —yew du!'

Before having a chat with the garrulous old decoyman let us examine a decoy.

First, we notice that the entrance-hoop is some fifteen or sixteen feet wide and about ten feet high, and very artfully placed, so that it is partially hidden by reeds and the overhanging branches of trees. From the entrance-hoop the 'pipe' runs back some sixty or seventy yards, gradually curving as it recedes from the entrance, so that its tail-end cannot be seen from the mouth. Gradually the hoops diminish in size until they are not more than a yard across, and the whole ends with a purse-net, which is the Ultima Thule of the frightened wildfowl. The netting used to cover the 'pipe' is ordinary galvanised wire-netting.

The dyke or channel beneath the hoops of course diminishes in the same ratio as the hoops themselves, gradually becoming narrower as the 'pipe' is ascended. The water in the dyke is usually not more than a couple of feet deep.

There we have the 'pipe' complete; but besides the 'pipe' are the all-important screens, made of reeds worked in the form of thin, flat

walls, and placed at right angles with the 'pipe,' so that the dog can work round them, and with peep-holes here and there through which the decoyman can see how things are progressing. The screens are about five and a half feet high and twelve feet long, and vary in number from ten to fourteen.

Having seen the construction of the decoy, let us now examine the method of working it.

As is generally known, wildfowl are very shy and delight in retired spots. The first care of the decoyman, therefore, is to make the neighbourhood of his decoy as secluded and quiet as possible, and to allow the wildfowl to settle uninterruptedly upon the decoy-water.

The love of concealment leads wildfowl to be partial to waters whose margins abound with underwood and aquatic plants; hence, if the spot is not already furnished with these, they must be provided; for it is not retirement alone, but a search for food, which leads them into the quiet nooks.

Next to food, wildfowl love a grassy bank, where they may plume and arrange their feathers after a long flight, and on there being such a convenience near the mouth of a 'pipe' a great deal of the decoyman's success depends. It is a necessity, therefore, to have a nice, smooth, grassy slope on either side of the entrance to the 'pipe'—such green lawns are, so to speak, the *bait*.

Having allured the fowl to the mouth of the 'pipe,' the difficulty is to entice them off the bank into the water without their taking wing, and to lead them successfully to the far end of the decoy.

To get them off the grassy bank into the water, or, if in the water, to cause them to enter the 'pipe,' a dog tutored by the decoyman, shows himself from behind the foremost reed-screen. On seeing the dog the fowl will, if on the bank, immediately take to the water, where they feel more at home against the strange animal by the screen.

Now, among the wildfowl, a number of tame ducks—decoy-ducks—have, from the alightment of the strangers, mixed fraternally with them, and they know that by swimming up the 'pipe' they are not only safe from the dog, but that food awaits them. The decoy-ducks, therefore, straightway swim up the 'pipe' to secure their usual food, and the wildfowl at once follow; the dog in the meantime popping in and out among the screens in a most mysterious manner, as the poor wanderers, following their deceitful civilised friends, swim unconsciously to their doom.

Presently the head of the 'pipe' is neared, and then for the first time the decoyman shows himself, or, hat in hand, waves an arm from behind a screen. This is the immediate signal for the whole body of fowl to take wing and dash up the 'pipe;' but, as the hoops are now narrow and low, their wings come into contact with the netting, and they fall again into the water; and, being afraid to turn back, the man being close behind them, push forward into the tail of the purse-net, and become the lawful prey of the decoyman. Pochard are seldom, if ever, caught in a decoy, as on being startled by the sudden appearance of the man they *turn back* and fly in terror to the mouth of the 'pipe' and escape.

Let us indulge in a chat with this worthy. Strongly but loosely built, above the medium height, tawny-bearded, rugged of feature, wrinkled and gray-eyed, the decoyman is a picture of health, contentment, and good-humour. His gray eyes appear to scintillate as he speaks, lighting up his honest, weather-beaten countenance in a remarkably pleasing manner, a sure sign of rude health and a contented mind. He is, as most of the East Norfolk peasants are, a true descendant of the old vikings who plundered and settled here more than a thousand years ago. He needs no pedigree to trace his descent; his very name is a proof of his ancestry—Thirkettle. Many of the names on the east coast have an unmistakable Danish or Scandinavian ring about them—as Seago, Ulph, Hacon, Trorey, Kerrison, and a score others.

'Do you mind answering me a few questions, letting me into a few of your secrets, Thirkettle?' I ask.

'Not at all, maaster. I don't s'pose yew 'll set up 'coying agin me,' is his reply, as his expansive mouth lengthens into an extensive grin.

'Well now, why do you have two "pipes" so close together, but running in different directions?'

'Well, maaster, yew must know it 's the natur' of fowl to take wing head to wind, and it 'ont du to try and 'coy 'em up the "pipe" onless the wind blow pretty much *down* it; 'cos while the enemy is to leeward on 'em they forge ahead up the "pipe," makin' sure to be able to escape by using their wings, as is only natural. Sometimes they come up the "pipe" *with* the wind, but then when they get to the canopy-net they are scared, and turn round about, facin' the wind, and so escape, and then there 's the ould 'un to pay; every fowl 'ithin hearen take off, and the game is up.'

'How many do you average at a "push" for the whole season?'

'Well, I don't know 'zactly what a average is; but sometimes I take half-a-dozen, and sometimes ten times as many; all depends on sarcumstances of weather and season. I have taken as many as five score at one "push," but that was years ago. I 'm contented if I get a score, and pleased if I wring two score; but thet ain't so often as I should like.'

'May I ask what price the birds fetch?'

'Why, sartainly. Sometimes on the first day I 'll get as much as seven-and-six for a brace o' birds and even half-a-sovereign, but that soon come down to four or five shullins; and when

fowl are plentiful the price come down tu even three shullins or three-and-six a brace.'

'How many go to a dozen?' I ask.

'Oh, we don't give none in; twelve's a dozen, to be sure. Du yew think we gan em one in like the baakers with their loaves?'

'No, my friend; but'—fumbling in my pocket-book—'here is an extract from a book written just over a century since. I will read it:

'"Fowl and fish are very plentiful in the Broads, the pike and eels being very large. The duck, mallard, and teal are in such plenty as is scarcely to be conceived. They are taken in prodigious flocks at a time in the decoys. They send these fowl to London twice a week, on horseback, from Michaelmas to Ladyday, and one decoy will furnish twenty dozen or more twice a week for the whole season. Two teal are reckoned equal to one duck, and five duck and twelve teal are accounted a dozen. The usual market-price is about nine shillings for such a dozen."

'There, what do you say to that, Thirkettle?'

'Well, yew see, them wor better times. More fowl and less folks about to fright 'em. Now, last season was a werry fair one, and in the six months I took, big and little, over twelve hundred fowl; and when yew come to set them down, say at two shullins apiece, that ain't so bad for a winter's work.'

'What breed of dog do you think most adapted to this work?'

'Well, some use one kind and some another. I know some think nothin' beat a rough-haired terrier, and sartinly they are good dogs, and I've know'd some capital mongrels what du their work right well and clever; but as you see I am training this young spaniel to the business, though I find it a little difficult to keep him away from the water; it's his natur' to go in. He's a nice-coloured dog, you see, and it's my firm belief that the prettier colour you get a dog the better it is for 'coying: get 'im red if you kin, like an old fox, and he'll attract more than your sad-coloured go-to-the-buryin' black 'un.'

'Have you any idea of the number of decoys in existence?' I ask as a last question.

'No, maaster, yew've done me there, for I've never bin twenty mile from home in my life; and, as I ain't no scholard, I don't read a sight. Still I'd just like to hear that question of yourn answered.'

'And so you shall, my friend, for here in my pocket-book I have made a few notes. All told, there are only about forty now in existence; but at the beginning of this century there were about one hundred and forty, distributed thus: In Lincolnshire, thirty-nine; Essex, twenty-nine; Norfolk, twenty-six; Yorkshire, fifteen; and Somersetshire, fourteen. These, with one or two in some other counties, make the total.

'You look in splendid health, my friend; but do you not have a rough time of it in the very sharp weather?'

'Ah, love me, I du thet. Why, when it's freezin' hard I have to get into thet old tarry punt, and keep a-pullin' about half the night to pervent the ice a-formin' on the water. Fowl like open water, and I ha' to du my best to keep it open; and it ain't no lie I tell yew when I say I've had my eyelashes and beard all frozen as stiff as if they wor cut outer stone. It ain't all fun, maaster, this yer game; and yew dussent light a bit o' baccy in yer pipe, nor make no noise, or clash about to keep yer feet warm; and sometimes I've had mine so numb at the ankle jints that I've been a'most afraid to walk, for fear they'd break off at the ankles; I've felt as if I could kick 'em off at the jints just like a luse pair o' butes.'

Bidding farewell to the talkative decoyman, I retrace my steps through the wood, pleased with the garrulity of the man, and pondering over the lot of the happy, solitary fellow, who, when at work, must make no sound nor give utterance to a word even to his dog, and cannot smoke, nor scarcely move, for fear of spoiling his entire vigil. The good fellow's lot reminds me of the lines written by Cowper upon Robinson Crusoe's prototype, Alexander Selkirk.

> Oh, Solitude, where are the charms
> Which sages have seen in thy face?
> Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
> Than reign in this desolate place.

And as I ponder I do not envy the decoyman his solitary, frigid lot.

WITHOUT WORDS.

We met and we felt there was something between us;
We met for the first time one night at a ball;
We met, and it seemed that the past time had seen us
Companions in something held secret from all.
I bowed and you smiled, and our eyes interchanging
A look, as if only we waited the chance
To say what we met for; we joined the arranging
Of partners in rows for an old country dance.

Next morning we moved from the covert together—
The hounds giving tongue and the fox gone away;
And through our grand gallop across the clean heather
My tongue was uneasy with something to say.
And though I was silent I felt that the longer
We rode so together the nearer it came,
As though in my being a spark smouldered stronger,
Awaiting the impulse to break into flame.

Returning at evening when farm-lads were calling
Their field-weary cattle to stable and byre,
We rode past the covert as twilight was falling
Dew-laden with silver on sapling and brier;
When suddenly something, a look or a sigh, love,
Disturbed the fine balance between me and you,
And lo! without time for a word or reply, love,
Our hearts ran together like wind-shaken dew.

WM. WOODWARD.

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ON LEISURE, GENIUS, BOOKS, AND READING.

By AUGUSTINE BIRRELL, Author of *Obiter Dicta*, &c.

THE word 'scholar' comes to us from a Greek word which means leisure. It is a significant derivation. A scholarly life is a leisurely life. It may be a life of unceasing toil for all that, and of excruciating self-denial. Browning's 'Grammarian' had a tough time of it 'settling *Hoti's* business' and giving us the doctrine of the enclitic *de*. But he was not working down a mine or in a factory, nor was he arguing cases at the Bar or superintending a hospital in a crowded city. No—he was sitting alone in some dim corner, grinding at grammar. We no doubt read stories of great scholars who were manufactured as Sir Arthur Helps wrote essays—'in the intervals of business;' but wonderful examples as these gentlemen may be of industry and devotion, as a rule their scholarship is no great shakes. To become a Scaliger, a Casaubon, a Selden, a Milton, a Gray, a Bentley, a Gibbon, an Acton, or a Jebb, you must have leisure to grow learned.

Busy men, poor men with wives and families, plain men with no great gifts of acquisition or taste for study, vain men who have no fancy to become blear-eyed, ambitious men who want to ride upon the nation's neck for a brief season, must all forswear scholarship; and if they are honest men will make no pretensions to it. To be a scholar you must have σχολή.

But let us pluck up heart. To forswear scholarship is not to bid farewell to the delights of literature; for literature is the reflection in words of the great pageant of life, a mimic representation or reproduction in language of the movement and the mystery, the fleeting charms, the recurrent emotions, the gaiety and the melancholy of men's days upon earth. One does not need to be a scholar to appreciate these. Open eyes, quick wits, and a lively fancy are man's best endowments. This is the meaning of the old saying, 'An ounce of mother-wit is worth a pound of clergy.' Shakespeare once held in his firm hands a copy of North's translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, 1579, a sturdy folio still to be found in the old book shops. There he read as any one else might have done, how Antony, 'when Cæsar's body was brought to the place where it should be buried, made a funeral oration in commendation of Cæsar, according to the ancient customs of praising noble men at their funerals. When he saw that the people were very glad, and desirous also to hear Cæsar spoken of and his praises uttered, he mingled his oration with lamentable words, and by amplifying of matters did greatly move their hearts and affections unto pity and compassion. In fine, to conclude his oration, he unfolded before the whole assembly the bloody garments of the dead, thrust through in many places with their swords, and called the malefactors cruel and cursed murtherers. With these words he put the people into such a fury that they presently took Cæsar's body and burnt it in the market-place with such tables and forms as they could get together.'

Shakespeare turned this over in something we call his mind, and the outcome was the most marvellous speech ever put by poet in the mouth of man. Yet Shakespeare could not have read Plutarch in the original, nor is there any evidence Sir Thomas North could, since he was content to translate Plutarch from the French version. But however that may be, 'twas he set Shakespeare's imagination at work, and therefore he deserves our homage. Our worship we reserve for genius.

Do not quarrel with my use of the word worship in connection with genius. The genius I worship is a sublimated essence, something quite apart from 'the poor inhabitant below' in whom it was once incarcerated. I do not worship Burns any more than I admire the style of his letters to Clarinda or his behaviour to Mrs Burns; but the genius of Burns—that mysterious 'some-

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thing' which has put him on the pinnacle where he must ever remain a nation's joy and pride—is one of the most moving, melting things in our lives, as it is one of the richest possessions of our race. So, too, the genius of Carlyle. Leave the tea-tables to chatter of his fits of spleen and dullards to deplore his humorous extravagances; those of us who hunger after writers who stir the fancy, who set the boulders rolling uproariously down the hills, who throw great splashing stones into the dreary pools of our sluggish imaginations, still hug the genius of Carlyle, and decline to drag *The French Revolution* into a court of matrimonial causes. It may well be that in the case of Carlyle future ages will not follow our example. Like his great protagonist Newman, Carlyle flung himself so completely into the hurrying currents of his day as to endanger his chance of what is called immortality. But so far as I am concerned I wash my hands of posterity.

When you come to think of it, the two great possessions of a nation are its memories of great actions and the genius of its authors.

To enjoy the latter requires only a moderate amount of σχολή, or leisure. Some leisure is necessary; but enforced work, if not too severe, sharpens the literary as well as the bodily appetite. *Years in a Library* is not so good a title as *Hours in a Library.*

But two things are necessary: before reading you must learn to read; and, having learned to read, you must be fond of reading. Now, a vast number of people do not care a rap about reading. They may pretend to, but they do not. They say they cannot find time; it is the merest subterfuge. They could easily find time if they chose, but they prefer doing so many other things first. There is no great harm in this; there are other pastimes besides reading. Some people (not many) read a great deal too much, and would be all the better for doing a little observing. Mr Bagehot said of Shakespeare that if he walked down a street he knew what was in it. One of the wisest men I have ever known could neither read nor write. Still it remains true that unless you are fond of reading you will not read, and yet unless you read you cannot truly appreciate the work of genius.

Nor can you do this unless you have learned to read. This is by no means so easy as it sounds. There is only one way of reading so as to get pleasure from it, and that is to be able to read without knowing what you are doing. A man or woman who comes home tired after a day's work will either read this way or not at all. It is no use if you have to spell your way and stumble along the printed page like a hobbled pony. If that is your plight you will prefer a game of draughts or dominoes; and who could blame you?

I am sorry to say I have met boys in England, who have got all sorts of prizes in Board and other state-paid schools, who cannot read after the only fashion that makes reading of the least use. No wonder these boys soon forget all they ever knew. No wonder by the time they are twenty they have to go to evening classes to be taught over again by charity what they were once supposed to be taught by rates and taxes—namely, how to read. I once said, and I now repeat, 'Our whole educational system is not worth one of the pounds it costs—and it costs millions of pounds—unless it teaches a child to read English in the way that Macaulay said he could read Greek, that is, with his feet on the fender. I notice with horror a growing impatience with what is called "mere reading, mere writing, mere ciphering." Mere reading, indeed! Mere geometry, mere physical geography, mere Latin, mere Greek, mere anything you like to think of, except reading, which is the very soul and citadel of learning.'

Having learned to read, and being fond of reading, you have entered into your inheritance. It lies before you. Read what you like best; do not be ashamed of your tastes, or be deceived by novelty. If you are fond of fiction, give the best the first chance. Read for example *Guy Mannering* and Hugo's *Les Misérables.* If, having done so, you deliberately prefer *East Lynne,* it cannot be helped. Mrs Wood was a voluminous author; and, after all, books were intended to be read. But nobody who is really fond of reading needs to be told what to read. Lists of books are made for the people who do not care about reading, and are a little uneasy because of their indifference. They buy Sir John Lubbock's 'Hundred Best Books,' chatter about them for a brief while, and then resume the even tenor of their bookless way.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER VI.—HOW MASTER GILBERT BURNET PLAYED A GAME AND WAS CHECKMATED.

THAT night I was too wearied and sore in body to sleep. My mind also was troubled, for I had made an enemy of my cousin, who as I knew was not of a nature to forgive readily. His words about Marjory had put me into a ferment of anxiety. Here was my love, bound to me by no promise, at the mercy of all the gallants of the countryside. Who was I to call myself her lover, when as yet no word of love had passed between us? Yet in my inmost heart I knew that I might get the promise any day I chose. Then thoughts of my cousin came to trouble me. I feared him no more than a fly in matters betwixt man and man; but might not he take it into his head to make love to the mistress of Dawyck?—and all maids dearly loved a dashing cavalier. At length, after much stormy indecision, I made up my mind. I would ride to Dawyck next morn and get my lady's word, and so forestall Gilbert or any other.

I woke about six o'clock; and looking out from the narrow window—for Barns had been built three hundred years before—I saw that the sky was cloudless and blue, and the morning as clear as could be seen in spring. I hastily dressed; and getting some slight breakfast from Jean Morran, and saddling Maisie, who was now as active as ever, I rode out among the trees. I feared to come to Dawyck too early, so I forded Tweed below the island, and took the road up the farther bank by Lyne and Stobo. All the world was bright; an early lark sang high in the heaven; merles and thrushes were making fine music among the low trees by the river. The haze was lifting off the great Manor Water hills; the Red Swire, the scene of the last night's escapade, looked very distant in the morning light; and far beyond all, Dollar Law and the high hills about Manorhead were flushed with sunlight on their broad foreheads. A great gladness rose in me when I looked at the hills, for they were the hills of my own country; I knew every glen and corrie, every water and little burn. Before me the Lyne Water hills were green as grass, with no patch of heather; and to the left the mighty form of Scrape, half-clothed in forest, lay quiet and sunlit. I know of no fairer sight on earth; and this I say after having travelled in other countries and seen something of their wonders; for to my mind there is a grace, a wild loveliness in Tweedside, like a flower-garden on the edge of a moorland, which is wholly its own.

I crossed Lyne Water by the new bridge, just finished in the year before, and entered the wood of Dawyck; for this great forest stretches on both sides of Tweed, though it is greater on the side on which stands the house. In the place where I rode it was thinner, and the trees smaller, and indeed around the little village of Stobo there lies an open part of some fields' width. At the little inn there I had a morning's draught of ale, for I was somewhat cold with riding in the spring air. Then I forded Tweed at a place called the Cow Ford, and riding through a wide avenue of lime-trees came in sight of the gray towers of Dawyck.

I kept well round to the back, for I did not care that the serving-folk should see me and spread tales over all the countryside. I knew that Marjory's window looked sharp down on a patch of green lawn bordered by lime-trees, so I rode into the shadow and dismounted. I whistled thrice in a way which I had, and which Marjory had learned to know long before when we were children, and I used to come and beguile her out for long trampings among the hills. To-day it had no effect, for the singing of birds drowned my notes, so I had nothing left but to throw bits of bark against her window. This rude expedient met with more success than it deserved, for in a minute I saw her face behind the glass. She smiled gladly when she saw me, and disappeared only to appear again in the little door beside the lilacs. She had no hat, so her bright hair hung loose over her neck, and was blown about by the morning winds. Her cheeks were pink and white, like apple-blossom, and her lithe form was clad in a dress of blue velvet, plainly adorned as for a country maiden. A spray of lilac was in her breast, and she carried a bunch of sweet-smelling stuff in her hands.

She came gladly towards me, her eyes dancing with pleasure. 'How soon you have returned! And how brave you look!' said she, with many more pretty and undeserved compliments.

'Ay, Marjory,' I answered, 'I have come back to Tweeddale, for I have had enough of Glasgow College and books, and I was wearying for the hills and Tweed, and a sight of your face. There are no maidens who come near to you, with all their finery. You are as fair as the spring lilies in the garden at Barns.'

'Oh John,' she laughed, 'where did you learn to pay fine compliments? You will soon be as expert at the trade as any of them. I met a man yesterday in the woods who spoke like you, though with a more practised air; but I bade him keep his fine words for his fine ladies, for they suited ill with the hills and a plain country maid.'

At this I must suppose that my brows grew dark, for she went on laughingly:

'Nay, you are not jealous? It ill becomes a scholar and a philosopher, as you are, Master John, to think so much of an idle word. Confess, sir, that you are jealous. Why, you are as bad as a lady in a play.'

I could not make out her mood, which was a new one to me—a mocking, pleasant raillery, which I took for the rightful punishment of my past follies.

'I am not jealous,' I said, 'for jealousy is a feeling which needs an object ere it can exist. No man may be jealous unless he has somewhat to be jealous about.'

'John, John,' she cried, and shook her head prettily, 'you are past mending. I had thought you had learned manners in the town, and behold you are worse than when you went away. You come here, and your first word to me is that I am nothing.'

'God knows,' I said, 'I would fain be jealous, and yet'—— I became awkward and nervous, for I felt that my mission was not prospering, and that I was becoming entangled in a maze of meaningless speech. The shortest and plainest way is still the best in love as in all things.

But I was not to be let off, and she finished my sentence for me. 'If only you could find a worthy object for your feeling, you mean,' she said. 'Very well, sir; since I am so little valued in your eyes we will speak no more on the matter.'

'Marjory,' I said, coming to the point at once, 'you and I have been old comrades. We have fished and walked together, we have climbed the hills and ridden in the meadows. I have done your bidding for many years.'

'True, John,' she says with an accent of grudging reminiscence, 'you have dragged me into many a pretty pickle. I have torn my dress on rough rocks and soaked my shoes in bogs, all in your company. Surely we have had a brave time together.'

'You met a man in the wood yesterday who would fain have made love to you. That man was my cousin Gilbert.'

'Oh,' she replied, in a tone of mock solemnity and amused wonder, for I had blurted out my last words like the last dying confession of some prisoner. 'Verily, you are honoured in your cousinship, John.'

'It is against him and such as him that I would protect you,' I said.

'Nay,' she cried, with an affected remonstrance. 'I will have no fighting between cousins on my account. I will even defend myself as Alison did when the miller made love to her.'

'Oh Marjory,' I burst out, 'will you not give me this right to defend you? We have been old companions; but it was only yesterday that I knew how dearly I loved you. I have had more cares since yesternight than ever in my life. We have been comrades in childhood; let us be comrades on the rough paths of the world.'

I spoke earnestly, and her face, which had been filled with mockery, changed gently to something akin to tenderness.

'Dear, dear,' she cried, 'how little you know of women! I have loved you for years, thinking of you at all times, and now you come to-day speaking as if you had scarce seen me before. Surely I will bear you company in life, as I have been your comrade at its beginning.'

What followed I need scarce tell, since it is but part of the old comedy of life which our grandfathers and grandmothers played before us, and mayhap our grandchildren will be playing even now when our back is turned. Under the spring sky among the scented lilies we plighted our troth for all the years, and I entered from careless youth into the dim and resolute region of manhood.

With a great joy in my heart I rode home. I took the highway over the shoulder of Scrape, for I knew that few folk ever went that way, and I wished to be alone. The birds were singing, the fresh, clear air was blowing on my face, and the primroses and wind-flowers made a gay carpet under my horse's feet. All the earth seemed to partake in my gladness. It was a good world, I thought, full of true hearts, fair faces, and much good; and though I have seen much wickedness and sorrow in my day, I am still of the same way of thinking. It is a brave world, a royal world for brave-hearted men.

When I came to Barns I found that my cousin had gone out an hour since and left my father greatly wondering at my absence. He sat in the chair by the fireplace, looking more withered and old than I had ever seen him. My heart smote me for not staying at his side, and so I sat down by him and told him many things of my doings in Glasgow, and how I desired above all things to see the world, having had my fill of books and colleges. Then I told him what he had long guessed, of my love for Marjory Veitch and the promise which she had given me. He heard me in silence; but when he spoke his words were cheerful, for he had long liked the lass. He made no refusal, too, to the rest of my plans. 'You shall go and see the world, John,' he said, 'and take my blessing with you. It ill becomes a young mettlesome lad in these stirring times to lounge at home, when he might be wearing a steel breastplate in the King's Guards, or trying the manners of twenty nations. Though I could wish you to bide at home, for I am an old broken man with few pleasures, and I love the sight of your face.'

'Nay, I will never leave you,' I said, 'an you wish it. I am young yet and a boy's road is a long road. Time enough for all.'

After this I went out to see if the Weasel had come to any mishap in the last night's ride. I found him as stout as ever, so I saddled him

and rode away by the green haughlands up the valley of the Manor, for I longed for motion and air to relieve my spirit; and, coming home in the afternoon, I found my cousin returned and sitting with my father in the dining-hall.

He glanced sharply at me when I entered, and I saw by his looks that he was in no good temper. His heavy face was flushed, and his shaggy eyebrows were lowered more than their wont.

'Where have you been, Gilbert?' I asked. 'I found you gone when I came back in the morning.'

'I took my horse down to Peebles to the farrier. Its knees were sorely hurt last night on your infernal hills.'

Now I knew that this was a lie, for I had looked at his horse before I went out in the morning, and its wounds were so slight that it would have been mere folly to take him to a farrier; and Gilbert, I well knew, was not the man to be in error where horses were concerned. So I judged that he had ridden in the contrary direction, and gone to Dawyck, and, as I inferred from his sour looks, met with no good reception there. I could afford to be generous; I felt a sort of half-pity for his discomfiture, and forbore to ask him any further questions.

We sat down to supper, he and I and my father, in a sober frame of mind. I was full of my own thoughts, which were of the pleasantest; my cousin was plainly angry with something or other; and my father, in his weakness dimly perceiving that all was not right, set himself to mend matters by engaging him in talk.

'You're a good shot with the musket, they tell me, Gibbie,' he said, using the old name which he had called him by when he first came to Barns as a boy, 'and I was thinking that it would be a rare ploy for you and John to go down the water to Traquair, where Colonel Keith's horse are lying. He is an old friend of mine, and would be blithe to see any of my kin. They tell me he has great trials of skill in all exercises, and that he has gathered half the gentry in the place about him.'

'John,' said my cousin in a scornful voice—'John is too busily employed at Dawyck to care much for anything else. A flighty maid is a sore burden on any man.'

'I would have you learn, Master Gilbert,' I said angrily, 'to speak in a better way of myself and my friends. You may be a very great gentleman elsewhere, but you seem to leave your gentility behind when you come here.'

Now my cousin and I were of such opposite natures that I took most things seriously, while he found matter for a jest in all—yet not in full good nature, but with a touch of acrid satire.

'Even a barn-door cock will defend his own roost. How one sees the truth of proverbs!'

And then he added that which I will not set down, but which brought my father and myself to our feet with flashing eyes and quivering lips. I would have spoken, but my father motioned me to be silent.

'Gilbert,' he said, his voice shaking with age and anger, 'you will leave this house the morn. I will have no scoundrelly fellow of your kidney here. You are no true nephew of mine, and God pity the father that begat you!'

My cousin smiled disdainfully and rose from his chair. 'Surely I will go and at once, when my hospitable uncle bids me. The entertainment in this accursed hole is not so good as to keep me long. As for you, Cousin John,' and he eyed me malignantly, 'you and I will meet some day, where there are no dotards and wenches to come between us. Then I promise you some sport. Till then, farewell. I will go down to Peebles to-night and trouble you no more.' With a wave of his hand he was gone, and five minutes later we heard his horse's hoofs clatter over the stones of the yard.

When he was gone his conduct came back to my father with a rush, and he fell to upbraiding himself for his breach of hospitality and family honour. He would have me call Gilbert back, and when I showed him how futile it was, fell into low spirits, and repented in great bitterness.

. . . . . .

Now the worst of this day's business remains to be told. For when I looked at my father some time after, I found him sunk in his chair with his face as pale as death. With the help of Jean Morran and Tam Todd I got him to bed, from which he never rose, but passed peacefully away in the fear of God two days later. The heat into which he had been thrown was the direct cause; and though I could not very well lay the thing to my cousin's charge when the man was already so far down the vale of years, yet in my heart I set it against him. Indeed from this day I date my antagonism to the man, which before had been a mere boyish rivalry.

I stayed with my father to the end. Just before he died he bade me come near and gave me his blessing, bidding me be a better gentleman than he had been. We buried him, not in the Kirk of Lyne—for he had always said he never could abide to lie within walls—but on a green flat above Tweed where the echo of the river and the crying of moor-birds are never absent from his grave.

PHEASANT-FARMING.

PHEASANT-FARMING is one of the many industries which owes its existence to the perfection of breech-loading firearms. In the old days the sportsman with his muzzle-loader and the '*one good old pointer* or *setter*,' so earnestly recommended by that famous old sportsman, Colonel Hawker, found in a decently well-preserved covert quite as many birds as he could kill, and nobody thought of replenishing his woods by artificial means. But when the shooter with improved weapons became enabled to discharge ten shots in the time previously required to load and fire two, he demanded a proportionate increase in the head of game. For many years owners of large coverts depended on their game-keepers to rear the required addition to the natural pheasant population; but the craze for big bags developed, and fashion set a standard of magnitude Nature, aided by hand-rearing on the spot, could not satisfy. It was impossible to raise on the ground the enormous head of game which can be killed in a couple of days by half-a-dozen men, each equipped with three guns and two men to load them. The very essence of the modern battue is that pheasants shall 'come over' as rapidly as guns can be changed and triggers pulled; and the pheasant-farmer arose to supply the deficiency.

A great many men make a practice of rearing pheasants on a small scale; but the number of concerns in England entitled to be called 'farms' may be counted on the fingers of one hand. The number is not likely to increase: the market for pheasants and their eggs is comparatively limited; and though the prices obtained appear heavy, they are hardly commensurate with the large outlay necessary, and the expenses, troubles, and risks involved. The first essential to successful pheasant-rearing is space and plenty of it. Poultry-farming on an extensive scale has, as we all know, invariably proved a total failure; large numbers of fowls kept long on the same ground 'stale' it in some mysterious fashion, and, contracting a disease of tuberculous character, die with punctuality and expedition. The domestic fowl does not command a price high enough to enable the farmer to provide the acreage necessary to carry a large number of birds, which require frequent change of soil while the staled areas are allowed to rest; hence the impossibility of making a poultry-farm pay. Pheasants produce exactly the same effect on land, and are perhaps even more liable to disease; but pheasants and their eggs bring prices so much higher than those procurable for domestic fowls that the farmer can afford to give them the necessary space for change of soil.

One of the most successful concerns of the kind is that some half-dozen miles from Petersfield, on the Hampshire Downs. Seen from a little distance, the swelling hillside appears to be covered with large melon-frames set out in orderly array. These are the pens, of galvanised iron and wire netting, which play an important part in the business. Pheasant-farms are not all alike in general aspect, as the systems pursued seek to achieve the same end by different means. There is, for an instance, a farm at Berkhampstead which resembles a cattle-market more than anything else, with its ranges and blocks of substantially-fenced paddocks; and another in Wales which looks more like a poultry-yard on a large scale. However, as we have begun with the Petersfield farm, where they produce an average of ninety-five chicks from every hundred eggs, we may go on with it, feeling that we are at all events considering a successful system.

Perhaps the first thing the stranger asks himself is, 'Where are the coverts?' the ordinary mind associating hazel coppice or rhododendron plantations with pheasants as naturally as heather with grouse. There are none on the Downs, whose long curves of coarse grass are unbroken save by scanty hedges and by thin lines of hop-poles, which nearer inspection shows to be the supports of wire-net fencing six feet high. The whole farm, some four hundred acres, is thus divided into large enclosures of from twenty to fifty acres each. We will, if you please, look more closely into some of these.

The long herbage, sapped dry by summer heat, rustles under foot as we climb the hill. There is little to be seen save a long line of black coops which erstwhile contained foster-mothers now released; but all round is the whispering murmur caused by well-grown pheasant chicks brushing through the herbage, a sound that recalls the sleepy wash of afternoon tide on shingle. The birds when first hatched are tame as farmyard poultry; but the instinct that is in them develops surely as their plumage, and ere they can fly the birds which once crowded on the shorn runs to meet the feeder are shy as any brood reared in covert by their own mother. Now and again your eye may be caught by a chick crouching close, with outstretched neck, in vain endeavour to escape notice by statuesque stillness. Under the hedge which crosses the first enclosure stands the gallows—an awful warning to poachers furred and feathered, with its ragged row of sun-dried carcasses—stoats, rats, crows, jays, magpies, and a sparrowhawk or two — incorrigible criminals on a pheasant-farm all of them, who may look for no quarter. The sparrowhawk and the crow do most of the execution among the chicks; the other bad characters perhaps create more havoc among the eggs. Even now, a kestrel is poised motionless over yonder, with an eye, it is feared, to

unlawful game; this lovely little hawk as a rule is content with such small deer as rats, field-mice, and cockchafers, and thus renders service to the pheasant-farmer. He is, unfortunately for himself, prone to contract a taste for young game, when his fate is surely a place on the gallows with other criminals. A magpie flickers, black and white, from the grass and vanishes over the hedge. A bad lot is the magpie, and deserves the doom that awaits him in the farmer's gun.

Now, we are among the pens in which sundry full-fledged cocks are confined awaiting 'transportation for life' which will probably be short, as they, a round thousand, are booked for early despatch to a magnate in the Midlands, who wants a ready-made head of game in the coverts which a certain great personage has kindly promised to come and shoot. If you have yet any illusions concerning the tameness of hand-reared pheasants, a walk through these rows of pens should correct them. Though we move without unnecessary gestures, and our guide never ceases whistling the seductive whistle the birds ought to recognise as the feeder's call, the rattle and clatter of skulls against wire is incessant; as at our approach the birds spring up against the low wire-netting in frantic endeavour to take wing, you might imagine them freshly caught and caged, instead of birds which have never known liberty in the proper sense of the word. Violent as the rattling is, the birds seem to do their heads no harm; the loss of a few feathers is the worst, and —we must suppose—a headache. Now and again may be seen a bird which has practically scalped itself, but this is rare.

Low down on the hillside, facing the south-west, we enter what may be called the nursery. Here, instead of the large roomy pens hitherto seen, we have solid blocks of small ones, six feet long by two wide, each with a box at one end; in these hatching operations are carried on. Stay: having come so near the beginning we had best make a fresh start and trace the business from the commencement of the busy season. In the early spring, then, the birds which have passed the winter penned in batches of ten or fifteen are divided into family groups of six—five hens and one cock—and redistributed in the laying-runs. All the hen pheasant has to do is to lay eggs industriously; she is not required to hatch them, is not given the chance indeed, for the men remove the eggs twice a day during the season. Thus, released from maternal responsibilities, the hen pheasant grows reckless and improvident. In her natural state she is content with a nest whose makeshiftiness and general untidiness would draw tears from the eyes even of a rook; absence of materials for making a nest excuses her omission to attempt in the pen the hap-hazard collection of leaves she regards as good enough to hatch eggs in, but does not extenuate the curious recklessness with which she deposits them anywhere in the run. In the wild state, moreover, the hen pheasant, mindful perhaps of family cares, will lay only from nine to eighteen eggs; the penned bird thinks nothing of laying from thirty-five to forty, to the gratification of the farmer, who can sell them at £5 per hundred in the early season, and for about half that sum in July. The anxiety of covert owners to stock their shootings with birds that shall be well-developed and strong on the wing by October explains the difference between the prices obtainable for early eggs and late. The hens begin to lay about the middle of April, and continue to do so for about three months, though some very late eggs are found in August and even in early September. The eggs being removed as laid, the birds do not become 'broody' and cease laying while their reproductive power is still unexhausted. Whether this system will induce any tangible change in the physiological condition of the pheasant it is not yet possible to say; but in a general way we may take it for granted that keeping the birds in an unnatural state can hardly fail to produce some results. On some farms the laying birds are kept in large paddocks, one wing being clipped to prevent flight. It is not obvious what advantage one system possesses over the other, save that the eggs are more easily collected from the small pens and that without risk from careless feet. No doubt the farmer who approves the paddock principle could prove to your—or his own—complete satisfaction that the penning system was absolutely wrong. Such debatable questions as these, however, we may leave to experts.

By far the larger proportion of eggs is sold to owners of shootings whose keepers hatch and rear the young birds on the spot. Pheasants are home-staying creatures; when undisturbed they seldom leave the wood in or near which they were hatched, and when frightened away by the passage of hounds drawing for a fox, or even by a shooting-party, they probably return before dark to the copse or spinney whence they were driven. Hence the buyer is tolerably sure to get his own birds.

To revert to the business in hand, packing the eggs is an important phase of the industry in view of the fact that small hampers containing twenty or twenty-five eggs are sent by rail to all parts of the kingdom. This work is performed by the keepers' wives, who are paid so much per thousand eggs; each packer is supplied with cards bearing a distinguishing number, and one of these she slips into each basket before sewing down the lid. The same system is in vogue at biscuit-factories and works where fragile goods are packed by hand in large quantities, to enable complaints of careless packing to be traced to the offender. From Petersfield they send away about 200,000 eggs every season, and complaints

of breakage are rare; egg-packing, in fact, is one of the minor sciences, and has been brought to something like perfection. This number does not represent the total actually laid; a proportion is retained for stock, though the necessity for introducing 'fresh blood' annually entails procuring eggs by exchange or purchase from distant shootings or farms. The temptation to sell all the early eggs and depend on late layings for stock must be great when the difference in price is considered; but the farmer is obliged to resist it in order that he may be able to fulfil chance orders for birds, like that mentioned above for one thousand cocks, which keeps a whole field of pens occupied with distracted birds. Cocks only are in demand for shooting, as may be supposed; they fetch about a guinea per brace, while the hens, who owe their immunity to sober plumage and absence of tail worth mention, command as much as 25s. for breeding purposes.

Most farmers make it a rule to retain a certain proportion of the eggs throughout the season, and these as laid are entrusted to a staff of trustworthy domestic hens who are employed as foster-mothers. At Petersfield they employ four hundred of these professional nurses, all of steady and reliable character; no particular breed is preferred, the only question asked of the would-be seller of a fowl is, 'Does she sit well?' and if the bird fail to carry out the contract made on her behalf she is packed off in disgrace, and her price recovered in accordance with the stipulation made at the time of purchase. Three shillings is the standard price for a broody hen; if the manager did not fix his price he would probably spend nine-tenths of his busiest time in bargaining. The number of eggs committed to the care of one hen varies: at Petersfield the limit is fifteen, at Berkhampstead nineteen, the size of the 'nest' depending on the expert's opinion of the fowl's capabilities. The nursery arrangements also vary on different farms: at Petersfield a good deal is left to the honour of the hen, who, to her credit, seldom betrays her trust; on another large farm they adopt the somewhat cumbrous plan of placing the sitting fowls in open lockers round a large barn. This system entails a good deal of extra labour, as the hen must be lifted off her nest once a day to be fed; and as hens cannot be depended on to observe punctuality, they are tethered to pegs by short cords while they feed, dust themselves, sulk, or fight, as the temperament of each suggests. No doubt the foster-mothers get mixed occasionally when restored to their nests; but the domestic fowl is not an exacting bird, and raises no objection if placed on a new nest every day. As soon as the young family is hatched out, the farmer removes them with their fussy nurse to one of the large enclosures, where coops are ranged at intervals of half-a-dozen paces along a carefully-mown 'ride.' For about ten weeks they remain practically undisturbed save by the feeder, who visits them every morning and evening with supplies of meal, maize, and other dainties. By the time they are ten weeks old, however, their wings are tolerably well furnished, and it behoves the farmer to adopt measures to prevent the escape of his precious charges.

There is no great inducement for the young birds to try and break bounds; but a fright *may* startle them into taking wing, when, if any wind be blowing, they may easily 'top the fence' and fly away to rejoice the heart of some neighbouring landowner by settling in his woods. There are two methods of detaining the birds: one is to decoy them with food into spacious pens forty or fifty feet long; the other to 'clip and quill,' which, however, is regarded by some farmers as a makeshift expedient to be adopted only when necessity compels. Penning the birds involves much additional work, as the runs must be moved periodically, so as to take in a portion of fresh ground. At Petersfield every pen is moved once a week to cover one-third of fresh soil, and thus guard against the risk of staling. The runs are constructed in sections about nine feet long, and an ingenious contrivance is used to lighten the labour; this is a section, deeper and wider than the regulation size, mounted on low wheels. This is passed over the section it is desired to move, which is then drawn out like a telescope and closed until the next section can be brought up to it. Two great advantages are secured by the use of this device: one is that one man can do the work which would otherwise employ two; the other, that it does not frighten the birds, which, for some reason known only to themselves, are little alarmed by the vicinity of one man, but become mad with fear when two approach them.

If the farmer thinks that his birds grow stronger and wilder in large captivity he has recourse to the alternative plan. The birds are decoyed into a long run, the end sections of which are covered with string netting instead of the orthodox wire; having driven them gently up to this end the keepers remove an intervening section, and with large landing-nets carefully capture the birds one by one, placing them as caught in shallow hampers covered with sacking. This is rather a delicate operation, for the pheasants mobbed in the end of the run make frantic endeavours to escape, and the covering net suggests nothing so much as a boiling pot with the incessant bounding and jumping. If a wire-covered run were used for this purpose scores of birds would inevitably brain themselves or break their necks despite the seeming solidity of their skulls. The hampers when filled are probably carted into a fresh enclosure, as change of soil is now desirable; and within this four keepers set to work on the contents of the hampers. One man draws the bird from the basket and hands it to the second, who passes it on in a particular way to

the third, who is armed with a large and sharp pair of scissors. If the bird be a hen he clips half-a-dozen pinion-feathers at a stroke from one wing; if a cock he drops his scissors and deftly draws out as many, immediately releasing the bird, which runs a few yards, tries a flight, tumbles ignominiously, and, recovering, bolts into the long grass. The cocks are 'quilled,' as the phrase has it, because clipping leaves stumps which retard the growth of new flight-feathers, and the cocks will in all likelihood be wanted as 'full-winged' birds for sale in October. For the luckier hens there is no such hurry, and consequently no objection to their awaiting the natural sequence of events—the shedding of the clipped stumps in the moulting season and ultimate growth of the new primaries. The fourth keeper, by the way, kneels by with his notebook on a coop and takes the census of cocks and hens.

The older the birds grow, as already remarked, the wilder they become. When next 'taken up' they have passed the age when an appeal to their little crops would be efficacious; though still dependent on the ministrations of the feeder, they are not to be decoyed by maize into a pen as in their innocent chickhood. It is necessary now to drive and net them. However well the beaters perform their work, some recalcitrant youngsters are sure to evade them by hiding in the grass, and to secure these a few old fowls are turned into the enclosure; the lonely young pheasants foregather with their sometime nurses, and the keepers are then able to drive and net roosters and pheasants together. A few strays are probably still left behind after this operation, and to recover these the farmer applies his knowledge of the pheasant's idiosyncrasies. If you are of observant habit you will, when passing through the high wire-netting fences, observe a well-trodden tunnel through the grass beside the netting. This 'run' is formed by the birds, which contract the habit of wandering round their prison — perhaps twenty acres in extent — presumably in search of the broken mesh which the farmer takes good care shall not exist. When the second drive with decoy fowls still leaves the tally of birds short, a few simple net-traps with bottle-neck entrances are set at intervals round the enclosure, and in a day or two every bird remaining is sure to find its way into one or other of these, from which its intelligence is not sufficient to show the way out.

'It all depends,' as the incipient solicitor said in answer to the questions in his examination paper, what happens to the pheasant when thus taken up in the autumn. They may be consigned in batches of ten or fifteen to roomy coops to spend the winter, and be used as breeding stock, or they may be clipped again and set at liberty for the same purpose. Autumn clipping, by the way, is not free from disadvantages; it allows of the birds being left at large in a twenty-acre field; but removal of the pinion-feathers, exposing the flank to cold and wet, is liable to cause disease. On the other hand, 'cooping' entails all the labour and expense of moving the pens periodically, and largely enhances the trouble of distributing food and water. Those unhappy ones among the cocks who are doomed to fulfil orders for shooting—and they are the large majority—cause least trouble; from the nets they go into hampers, and in the hampers into the carrier's cart, where we may bid them adieu till we meet them again if not introduced by 'mark over!' at a later stage in company with brown crumbs and bread sauce.

Human poachers give the pheasant-farmer but little annoyance. The keepers live on the ground, and if they should lack vigilance, the bounds of the farm are patrolled by watchdogs. These are not on 'point duty,' as the police would say; each is secured by a chain, which travels on a stout wire a hundred yards long or more, secured to staples in the ground at either end—an arrangement which at once affords him opportunity of exercise and largely increases his scope of active utility.

THE BULLY OF HAIPHONG.

PART II.

AFTER the heated atmosphere of the room they had just quitted, the comparative coolness of the night outside came upon them almost with a shock. They walked side by side for some little distance in silence, and then the new-comer turned to the lieutenant beside him and warmly thanked him for the assistance he had so promptly rendered him.

'I beg you will not speak of that,' said the officer. 'I should have been playing a very poor part had I not acted as I did. But, before we proceed farther, will you tell me if you are aware of the character of the individual with whom you have had the quarrel?'

'I know nothing whatsoever of him,' replied the young man. 'I only know that he brought scandalous accusations against a person who has always shown himself to be one of my truest and kindest friends. On the strength of that I demanded an apology from him, and when he refused to give it I struck him. Pray, who may he be?'

'He calls himself Desrolles,' the lieutenant replied, 'but whether that is his real name or not is more than I can tell you. He is a most extraordinary character; and if all we have been told concerning him be true, it is evident he is compelled to live in exile. He has no occupation, but dwells by himself in a strange old "go-down" a mile or so outside the town. Unfortunately for your peace of mind I must tell you that he is a noted duellist, ever ready to pick a quarrel, and always prepared to substantiate his argument by force of arms. He has been the bully of this colony for many years past. By the way, I don't think you have as yet told me your name.'

'My name is Henri Duchesne,' answered the young man, 'and I am staying for the present at the Hôtel de Tonking. I only arrived in Haiphong this afternoon.'

'In that case you have certainly made good use of your time. I wish, however, you had picked a quarrel with any one else. As I have just said, Monsieur Desrolles is the most dangerous man you could have chosen, and from what I know of his character I am afraid there is not much fear of his relenting.'

'I beg you will not speak of such a thing. I have no desire that he should relent, nor would I permit it. We cannot let the name of one who is very dear to us, and to whom we owe almost everything we have in the world, be dragged in the dirt, and then allow his traducer to go scot-free. If my opponent is the dangerous man you say, then I'm afraid my chance is a poor one; but, in any case, better be dead than a traitor. See, this is my hotel. If you will enter it with me I shall be pleased to offer you such hospitality as it can afford.'

'I am afraid that cannot be,' said the lieutenant; 'there is so much to be done. I must return to the café in order to confer with Monsieur Desrolles's second, and to arrange the meeting for to-morrow morning. As he is the insulted party, of course the choice of weapons will rest with him; in case, however, that it should be necessary, I should be glad to know your preference.'

'I have none,' replied Henri Duchesne. 'I'm afraid I'm only fairly proficient with either.'

'In that case I suspect you stand but a poor chance of coming out of this affair alive. To be candid with you, I must tell you that Monsieur Desrolles has fought more duels than any of us can remember. I have seen him knock a cork off a post at thirty paces and hit a five-franc piece eight times out of ten at fifteen.'

'Then clearly my chance to-morrow is a very poor one. However, it cannot be helped, and having no one to blame but myself, I must make the best of it. Now, for the present, adieu. I suppose you will call here after you have made the necessary arrangements?'

'Without fail,' answered the lieutenant, and with a ceremonious bow withdrew.

A few minutes later Duchesne found himself sitting in his own private apartment in the hotel, looking out across the moonlit veranda into the stretch of open country beyond. For the first time he realised how far distant he was from his own home and the quiet and peaceful, almost monotonous, life he had once considered so vitally necessary to his existence. Then by gradual transition his thoughts turned to his widowed mother and his one unmarried sister, both of whom had worked so hard, and had even surrendered their savings, in order that he should undertake the journey which was destined to result in such unexpected disaster. He wondered what their feelings would be when the news reached them that he had become the victim of a vulgar café brawl. He could imagine their distress when they should hear how all their hopes had ended. His mission had been an important one, so much had depended upon it; they had accustomed themselves to think that when he returned with the one item of intelligence which was necessary to make them as happy as folk could well be in this world, only peace and security could be their portion for the rest of their mundane existences. Now, however, on the very first day that he had landed in the country where he was to commence his inquiries, he had been drawn into a quarrel, and by his own action had shattered all their hopes and aspirations. If only he had thought of all this before he had taken upon himself another's battle, how different the result might have been! And yet, how could he in honour have acted otherwise? Only a few weeks before, he had shaken Monsieur de Saldenac by the hand and had been wished God-speed by him; he would have been less than human, therefore, had he permitted another to insult the person to whom he owed so much. From a contemplation of this he fell to thinking of the morning, and to wondering what his fate would be. His second, Monsieur Gustave Thielbert, had informed him of Desrolles's capabilities; and, as far as he could see, he was little better than a dead man.

With these thoughts in his mind he sat in the window and looked towards the jungle, remembering as he did so that it was just possible this might be his last evening upon earth. The thought was not a consoling one, and he endeavoured to put it away from him as quickly as might be; but it was not to be dispelled. By the time his second returned to acquaint him with the decision that had been arrived at he was as nervous as a little child.

'It is all settled,' said the lieutenant as he entered the room and found the young man so eagerly awaiting him. 'I have seen Desrolles's second, who informs me that they are prepared to choose swords. The hour will be sunrise; and, if you will permit me, I will call here in plenty of time to conduct you to the rendezvous.'

Duchesne having thanked him, the other withdrew, leaving his principal to pass the night as best he could.

Next morning the sun had not yet made its appearance above the horizon when Duchesne left the hotel and found the lieutenant awaiting him in the cool gray street outside. With the exception of a few natives, who seemed to have no settled place of abode, nobody was astir, so that they were able to make their way out of the town to a spot in the jungle, with which it appeared the lieutenant was already well acquainted, without attracting any unnecessary attention.

Having arrived there, they found Desrolles and his second awaiting them. The challenger received his opponent with a stately bow, and, while the seconds withdrew to arrange the preliminaries, contented himself by walking up and down the jungle glade switching the heads off small flowers with the cane he carried in his hand. A few moments later the combatants were supplied with their weapons and placed opposite each other in the centre of the glade. As he took his sword and tested its steel upon the ground before him, Duchesne thought of a certain letter he had written the previous evening, and which he had made his second promise to post without fail should the encounter terminate as fatally as he had every reason to expect. Contrary, however, to the anticipations of the seconds, who had taken their places on either side of the combatants, the duel did not terminate as quickly as they had expected. From what the lieutenant had heard, he had no idea that his principal would prove in any way capable of affording Desrolles sport even for a few minutes. He had imagined that they would cross swords, and that almost before one could look round there would be a flash of steel, and after that Duchesne would be lying upon the ground fatally wounded. To his surprise, however, he discovered that the young man was no mean fencer. His strength and science were not perhaps equal to those of his antagonist, but he was young and at the full height of his power, and before they had crossed swords three minutes it was plain to those about them that unless Desrolles put into execution some of those feints for which he was famous, the youngster would be able to hold his own against him for some considerable time to come. Again and again they separated, rested for an interval, and then re-engaged. So far as the onlookers could see, neither had as yet received a scratch. Then the older man lunged, Duchesne parried, there was a flicker and a momentary tangle of steel, and a second later the hitherto unvanquished Desrolles fell backwards and measured his length upon the ground, with a thrust between his ribs. For a few seconds those present could scarcely believe their eyes. They stared first at Duchesne, and then at his prostrate antagonist, scarcely able to credit the evidence of their senses; and, if the truth must be told, the hero of the combat was as amazed as they. Meanwhile the doctor, who had accompanied them in case his services should be required, had knelt beside the fallen man, and was endeavouring to staunch the wound. Desrolles himself had lost consciousness.

'Oh, what have I done?' cried the unhappy youth who had caused the trouble, and who now seemed to see the effect of his action rising up before him.

'You have vanquished the best swordsman in Tonking,' answered his second quietly as he took the sword from his hand and proceeded to wipe the blade upon a tuft of grass. 'Thanks to you, Monsieur Desrolles's reign of terror is at an end.'

'For pity's sake don't talk like that,' cried Duchesne. 'If this man dies I shall never be able to hold up my head again.'

'Nonsense,' replied his second. 'It was a fair fight, as those present will be able to testify. Now, if you will be guided by me, you will return to the town, transact your business, whatever it may be, and then take your departure from Tonking. If I know anything of Monsieur Desrolles, he will be on his feet again before you can look round, and quite ready to turn the tables on you at the first convenient opportunity.'

'I am grateful to you for your advice,' said Duchesne, 'but what you propose cannot be. I have business here that will take longer to transact than you think.'

Then, approaching the surgeon, he inquired nervously after his patient.

'It is a nasty wound,' replied the other, 'and he has lost a lot of blood; but I think, if we get him back to his own house and find some one to nurse him, there will not be much fear for his recovery. The fellow has a constitution like iron, and, as you can see for yourself, his body is covered with wounds received in this sort of way.'

'How far is it to his house?'

'Not more than a quarter of a mile.'

'And how do you propose to get him there?'

'Easily enough. We will construct a stretcher of bamboos and carry him upon it.'

This was no sooner said than done; and a quarter of an hour later those curious in such matters might have observed one of the principals and the two seconds of the recent duel assisting to carry the fallen man through the stifling jungle towards his own abode. It was a strange place they found when they reached it: a long, dilapidated building, half-native, half-European, surrounded by a broad veranda, the latter covered with a creeper the flowers of which seemed to embody all the colours of the rainbow. It was a place in which a naturalist or a botanist would have found life delightful, but to Duchesne it seemed desolate beyond all possible conception.

Each bearing his share in supporting the litter upon which the wounded man lay, they ascended the two steps into the veranda and passed into the only room which the fallen man had made habitable. It was a large apartment, and with a little taste might have been made homely, if not, in a certain degree, picturesque. Now, however, it

was in such confusion that any attempt to set it straight would have seemed worse than hopeless. The floor was of a kind of wood that might have been capable of taking a high polish, but was now black, not only with dirt, but with all sorts of messes that had been spilt upon it during the time its present occupant had been in possession. One or two coloured prints decorated the walls, but upon them the climate had exercised a disastrous effect. A portrait of the great Napoleon hung above the door, a table stood in the centre of the room, with two cane chairs beside it; while in one of the farther corners stood the owner's bed, covered with a tattered quilt. The cooking, so it afterwards appeared, was done by an Annamite boy in a hut at the rear of the dwelling; and here Desrolles had dwelt ever since the disastrous circumstances occurred which had united to bring him to Tonking.

Having laid him upon his bed, the doctor convinced himself that the movement caused by the litter had had no bad effect upon the wound, and the others stood round and waited for what was to happen next.

'One thing is very certain, gentlemen,' said the doctor as he finished his survey, 'he must not be left alone. Perhaps if one of you would call at the convent on your way to town we might get a Sister to come out and take charge of him.'

'That is not necessary,' said Duchesne, taking a step forward. 'I shall remain with him. As I was the cause of his wound, it is only fit and proper I should do all in my power to assist him to recover from it.'

The other men said nothing, but the doctor looked up at Duchesne sharply.

'I thought you were his enemy,' he said. 'Otherwise, why did you fight him?'

'Because I could not help myself,' the young man replied. 'Now I wish to remedy what I have done.'

'You do, do you? Well, think it over before you commit yourself,' he said. 'Remember, your nursing will not be a matter of two or three days, but of some weeks. The life of our friend here will depend entirely upon your care; for I don't mind telling you he is in a precarious position.'

'The more reason that I should remain with him,' said Duchesne. 'Do not let us waste any more time talking. My mind is made up, and nothing will turn me from it. I can be very obstinate when I choose.'

'So it would appear,' said the doctor quietly.

A few moments later the remainder of the party had returned to the town, amazed at the turn events had taken, leaving the doctor and Duchesne alone in the house with their patient.

To Duchesne it seemed as if he were acting a part in some evil dream. He could scarcely believe that at the same hour the day before he was on board the mail-boat out of sight of land, knowing nothing of Tonking, and little dreaming what was in store for him as soon as he should put foot ashore. Within those fourteen hours he had landed in a strange country, had picked a quarrel, fought a duel, and was now devoting himself to the task of nursing back to life the adversary he had wounded.

'Do you think you understand your duties?' the doctor inquired as he put into their various cases the instruments he had been using.

'Perfectly,' answered Duchesne. 'And you may be sure I will do my best. Now, one question before you go?'

'A hundred if you like.'

'I am a stranger in Tonking,' Duchesne began, 'and I am here in order to try and discover the whereabouts of a relative who disappeared from France about twenty-five years ago. I thought perhaps you might know him.'

'My dear fellow,' said the doctor, with a laugh, 'surely you do not suppose I am familiar with every man who has cleared out of his native country that length of time ago? Pray, what was this man's name?'

'He was the Count de Clairvaux,' replied Duchesne, 'a noted man in his day. I have lately discovered that he is heir to great wealth, and if he is dead I inherit the property as next-of-kin.'

'In that case you rather hope he is dead, I suppose?'

'I do not *hope* that,' returned the other gravely. 'I trust I may never desire any man's death; but if he were dead, and I could prove it, I do not deny that it would be a very good thing for us all, particularly for my mother and sister, who have known great poverty.'

At this juncture there was the sound of a slight movement from the man on the bed. The others turned, to find their patient conscious once more. The doctor went up to him and placed his fingers on his wrist.

'Not a word as you love your life,' he said. 'If you attempt to speak before I give you permission I can promise you you will be a dead man in less than five minutes. Just bear that in mind.'

The wounded man scowled at them but said nothing. He resented the intrusion upon his privacy, but he felt that the case was against him, and the fear of death—which, strange to relate, is quite distinct from the fear of dying—held him speechless. However, he was not going to make them any the more welcome to his dwelling.

'Now, Monsieur Duchesne, with your permission I will take my leave,' said the doctor, when he had given some further instructions and had taken his helmet from the chair on which he had placed it. 'From what I know of the style of living of our friend yonder, you will not be able to say very much for the *cuisine*. The boy you will doubtless find chewing betel-nut at the back. He had better accompany me to town, when I will furnish him with such stores as I think you will require.'

Duchesne thanked him, and the other immediately withdrew, leaving him alone with his patient.

GEORGE MORTIMER PULLMAN.

THERE have been, and there are, a great many men who by their inborn talents and their own unaided efforts have risen above their fellowmen and occupied leading positions in after-life; but there are not so many who from a low station in the social scale have advanced to the eminence of affluence and at the same time have conferred lasting benefits on the community. This is especially true of the millionaires of America, among whom may be found those who have no other claim to notice than that of having become prosperous men of business and amassed large fortunes.

George Mortimer Pullman—whose death has just been recorded—although he died rich, was not one of these. Besides being successful from a worldly point of view, he has established a record, of which his countrymen may well be proud, as a benefactor of society at large. The subject of our notice was born on March 3, 1831, and he was therefore in the sixty-seventh year at the time of his decease. His father was a small farmer of Chautauqua County, New York State, and he was not able to give his son any other education than that provided in the local schools; but the little education young George did receive was of a good quality, and his home-training was such as to aid him in the formation of fixed habits of industry and firmly-settled principles of morality and integrity. Although he was small of stature, his employment in the fields imparted to his body that degree of toughness and activity common to American farmers' boys.

At the early age of fourteen he was employed as a boy-of-all-work in a country store. When seventeen he proceeded to Albion (N.Y.), where his brother was carrying on business as a cabinetmaker. Here he served an apprenticeship, during which he was taught to employ wood and woven stuffs in the most useful and decorative manner. But, besides acquiring a taste in that direction, he also learned something of engineering and mechanics generally, and gained confidence in his own faculty for devising mechanical appliances. By sheer industry and thrift he also gathered a few dollars with which to start in business for himself. The first opportunity he had to do so he seized with avidity.

It was at the time when the Erie Canal was being widened. It became necessary to bodily move some of the warehouses, both in brick and stone, that were worth saving, and young Pullman was one of the first to do it. The undertaking proved a financial success to him, and besides he gained great experience and established a record which was to be of great value to him afterwards. Contract followed contract; but his greatest success in this line awaited him elsewhere. At the foot of Lake Michigan, the new city of Chicago had sprung up with such rapidity that people forgot all about one important point, that of its drainage and sewerage. It was ultimately found that the lower floors of the buildings were but little, in places not at all, above the level of the lake. In order to construct sewers it became necessary to raise up several feet, and to hold up, whole blocks of business premises, both in brick and stone, while new cellars and foundations were put under them. In 1859 Pullman moved from New York to Chicago to take part in this new feat of engineering.

But already in 1858 Pullman had taken up a new idea, in following out which he established a reputation which will endure as long as railways last. At that time the railway system of the United States was yet in its infancy; but the extension of the roads westward was going on apace, and long-distance travelling was extending along with it. It became necessary to improve passenger coaches, and attempts were made in that direction; but they proved failures. It was not until George Pullman took the matter seriously in hand that the long-required reform came. He carried on a series of experiments by remodelling two day-coaches on the Chicago and Alton Railroad, and later on the Galena Railroad. He met with but little encouragement, however, for he was a pioneer, and no attention had yet been paid to the idea of making long-distance journeys endurable, if not enjoyable. Meanwhile Pullman was working on steadily in the development of his own plans. He did his part in raising Chicago to a higher level; he added considerably to the capital required for other undertakings; but it was not before 1863 that he was ready to commence his new enterprise. In that year he rented suitable workshops, engaged a staff, and began the development of his scheme. His fundamental idea was to secure sleep for the railway traveller, and for that purpose he applied powerful springs upon trucks with sixteen wheels—entirely an innovation. The result was his first sleeping-car, the 'Pioneer,' at an outlay of eighteen thousand dollars. Railway men stood aghast at this lavish outlay; but they began to think seriously about it, and Mr James F. Joy, the president of the Michigan Central Railroad, was very nearly so rash as to try the experiment on his own line. Then Pullman stepped in, and built four more cars, costing twenty-four thousand dollars each, so that even enterprising Mr Joy was startled by such extravagance. To test the matter, Pullman offered to

place his cars along with the old coaches, and to see which would pay best. The result was that the old coaches were always empty until the new sleeping-cars were filled, the travelling public being enthusiastic about the improvement. Still the railway world objected; but by keeping his interests in the invention unencumbered, since he had been able to carry on all the preliminary experiments at his own expense, Pullman was independent of all outside help. He was the one-man power, unhindered. The vast extent of the United States and the length of its railway journeys proved a permanent foundation for his enterprise. His own personal character and ability and administrative capacity greatly aided him; and success attended success, until the Pullman car became an established institution of American railway travelling.

Another success, however, awaited Pullman in the train of his first invention. He had succeeded in establishing a prosperous manufacturing company, which had workshops at St Louis (Mo.), Elmira (N.Y.), Detroit (Mich.), and Wilmington (Del.). Yet all these manufacturing resources did not enable the company to keep pace with the demand for the cars, and it became necessary to provide additional facilities. This Pullman did by another achievement—he invented a new town which would meet his requirements, and proceeded with its construction very much, as in 1863, he had put together the 'Pioneer.' As an attempt to purchase any large parcel of land all at once would have sent it up to a speculative value, great circumspection had to be used in its acquisition. By purchasing through third parties, he was able to secure about 3500 acres of land on the shore of Calumet Lake, then outside the city limits of Chicago, for less than eight hundred thousand dollars. In 1880 the construction of 'Pullman City' was begun. Profiting by his Chicago experience, Pullman began by constructing his sewers first; then came the water-mains and the other piping for which it is generally customary to tear up town streets after they have been made. The streets and avenues were then laid out, and finally the erection of workshops for the manufacture of railway cars and their outfits, and of dwellings for single families, as well as flats, was proceeded with. The construction of stores and other workshops followed. A remarkable result was obtained. In a town now of 12,000 inhabitants there is not a single drinking-saloon nor a house of ill-fame. Among the first buildings erected were two churches, the use of which, however, must be paid for. Only the public library, containing about 8000 volumes, was the free gift of Mr Pullman. There are grounds for athletic sports, a large arcade for general shopping, a market hall, and a public school attended by over 1000 children. The original idea was that good wages should be paid, that all rents should be reasonably low, and that food supplies should be of the best and be sold at fair prices. All this has been realised, and, what with sanitation and administration, a model town has been erected.

After more than a dozen years of practical working what do we find? Of the 12,000 inhabitants, 6324 are employed by the Pullman Car Company. The average wage of these, including boys and women, is $2·26 per day. They have deposits amounting to $632,800 in the savings-bank, or an average of $316 to each person. The eight miles of the well-paved streets of Pullman are scrupulously clean, and so is its moral character, and workmen from its shops are sought for as men who have a well-known certificate. As was said at the beginning of this article, there is no other business career which can be at all compared with that of the late Mr Pullman. Other men were his peers in railway enterprise, or even exceeded him in accumulated wealth, but none excelled him in his originality of conception or in the penetration which foresaw a coming demand and promptly met it. It may be finally added, from the latest statistics which are available, that the gross earnings of the Pullman Company, which in its first business year were $280,000, were $10,002,356 for 1891–92. Its dividends were $2,300,000, and it added $3,250,389 to its 'surplus fund.' Upon its roads the company uses 2512 sleeping, parlour or drawing-room, and dining cars, which does not include some that are running in foreign countries—for instance, in Australia. During the year ended June 30, 1892, Pullman cars carried 5,279,930 passengers, and ran 191,255,656 miles. The latest return shows that the Pullman Car Company at the present time owns about 2600 cars, which run over more than 126,000 miles of road, and furnish sleeping-berths on the rails to between six and seven million travellers every year. The longest regular, unbroken run made by Pullman cars is that of 4332 miles from Boston (Mass.) to Los Angeles (Southern California). The nominal capital of the company is $30,000,000, the present market value of which is nearly double that amount.

To Sir James Allport, general manager of the Midland Railway, belongs the credit of introducing the Pullman car service into this country, as after an interview with Pullman in America in 1872, the first train was run in England in 1875. The service soon spread to all the important English lines, and has been the signal, as every traveller knows, for even greater comfort and luxury in railway travelling.

Pullman was married to Miss Hattie Singer, of San Francisco, by whom he left two sons and two daughters.

A KALAHARI STORY.

By Carl S. Gunnery.

'TAKE the whip and help them along, Jack. I'm going to ride up to the kopjie.'

The speaker, a youth of seventeen, handed the long whip to his companion, unhitched a horse that was tied to the back of the wagon, and jumped lightly into the saddle.

'Has Makolo come back yet?' asked a weak voice from the inside of the tent-wagon.

'No, father; but I'm going on to the kopjie to have a look for him and choose a good place to outspan. How do you feel now?'

'About the same, my boy; the jolting is awful.'

'If we get through to-night we ought to have you safe into Shoshong in three days; then we'll be able to fix you up better.'

He rode away towards the hill, soon leaving the wagon behind. He kept a sharp lookout, and carried a rifle slung on his back. A revolver just showed in his belt, and he himself looked worn and troubled.

It was little wonder he looked troubled, for, since his father had been seriously wounded, on him had devolved the task of getting the wagon, his father, and all their possessions back to a place of safety. To have to pilot and protect a wagon heavily loaded with ivory and skins through three hundred miles of bad country, water scarce, no roads, the wheels often a foot deep in sand or jumping over boulders, and day and night expecting an attack from some hostile tribe of Kaffirs, with no help except from his younger brother and three Cape Kaffirs—that is a hard task to set a man, it is an awful responsibility for a boy of seventeen. But he did not shrink from it. As his horse picked a way up the kopjie he looked anxiously for Makolo. He chose a place to outspan for the night—the strongest place should they be attacked. He was glad to find a good stream of fresh water among the rocks. There was little vegetation except cacti; but below, on the plain, was rich grass for the cattle. Away in the distance he could see plainly the hills round Shoshong, the stronghold of the friendly Bamangwatos; but he knew that he was now in one of the most dangerous parts of his journey, not far from the Kalahari Bushmen, and still in the country of the chief from whom they were fleeing.

The wagon was fixed up for the night, the evening meal partaken, and darkness was on them before Makolo arrived. He was only a lad, about as old as the younger of the two brothers; but they had perfect reliance on him. Once Ralph Watson had saved his life; since then Makolo had served Ralph and Jack with all the questionless fidelity of a dog. His dress consisted only of a monkey-skin *muchi* or apron, and in his hand he carried a rifle. He sat down on his haunches, and, replying to the questions of the two lads, told them that he had been to a kraal distant 'four hours' run' for a man, and that the Kaffirs were drinking beer and dancing, which looked bad. It was not a big kraal, only about twenty men; but they were bad men, and he expected an attack.

'When do you think they will come?' asked Jack.

'Just before the sun shows,' said the Kaffir.

'Come along, then,' said Ralph; 'at any rate we will die hard.'

Makolo took a hasty meal of a sort of porridge and a long drink of water, then helped the two boys and the other Kaffirs to cut down a lot of cacti to form a rough barrier in the most unprotected spots. The oxen were driven in, the rifles loaded, and everything made ready for the expected fray. Inside the wagon Hunter Watson lay half-conscious and burning with fever. After a good trading trip with his two sons along the edge of the Kalahari, he had been forced into a quarrel by a small independent chief, and, wounded badly in the thigh, he had only been saved by the pluck of his two sons. Bitterly he had often regretted that he had consented to allow his sons to adopt his adventurous mode of life, and now it seemed that the end had come for all of them. He could not stand, and how could two boys with only three Kaffirs withstand an attack of a horde of yelling savages?

They all had a couple of hours' sleep during the night, watching in turns, but soon after four o'clock each was well awake. They tried to eat a little food and then took their places. They could be attacked on all sides, but they were on the top of the hill, with clear ground all round them. Hunter Watson had managed to shift his position so as to be able to assist as far as possible from the wagon; and just before the first streaks of dawn he silently shook hands with his two sons and waited.

They had not long to wait; the foe were on them on all sides—fully thirty of them.

'Don't waste a shot,' shouted Ralph. 'For God's sake keep cool and kill every time.'

A shower of assegais fell into the enclosure, some striking the wagon and some the oxen, who began to bellow with fright. The shouts sounded all round them, and the coming rush of human wild beasts was only a shadow in the dim light.

Three rifles spoke together, answered again by horrid yells, then another, and another. Then revolvers came into use. 'Thank God for those

cactus bushes!' thought the boys. Had they not been there nothing could have saved the gallant little band of defenders. All was noise of strife, the crack of firearms, groans and yells of pain and the fever of battle, the bellowing of the terrified oxen, the hard breathing of fighting men.

The light increases. See! There is a huge, naked Kaffir climbing over the boulders; he is inside. Makolo sees him, and before he advances two steps an assegai well aimed transfixes his throat and he falls heavily to the earth. In the corner farthest from the wagon Ralph has expended every bullet. He has no time to load again, and is using the club end of his rifle to keep back the rush. Blood is flowing from his arm and his left leg, but he fights like a demon.

At every point the fight is fierce. Jack falls with a groan on one knee. Two assegais whiz past him; he uses his last cartridge on a man who has made his way half over the barricade. The man falls over the top, and another, leaping lightly on to his body, poises his weapon to strike. Jack feels his hour has come; but no, a rifle-shot from the wagon saves him just in time, and his life is given back to him once more. He scrambles up on to his feet half-dazed, and, leaning against a rock, reloads his revolver and rifle. There seemed to be a lull for a moment. Ralph and Jack had time to look round them. Four men lay dead in the enclosure; they had forced their way in only to die. One was speared on his own stabbing-assegai; he must have fallen on it as he was shot, and his face was distorted by a horrid grin. Outside they could not see how many they had accounted for; but of their own number none had escaped altogether. They saw Makolo, breathing heavily by the wagon, tear out a piece of broken assegai which stuck in his left arm. His face, too, was covered with blood and dust. Over by the corner one of their two other Cape Kaffirs lay dead on the body of an enemy, his hands still clasped in death round his throat.

But it was only a momentary lull, and soon they were all at it as hard as ever. It seemed impossible to keep them back. Lucky it was for them that they had been able to reload, and in the good light they never wasted a shot. Now and again a shot from the end of the wagon told that the hunter was still alive. The tent of the wagon was stuck all over with assegais.

The fight was getting hotter, fiercer. It seemed that they could not hold out longer. Each man had determined never to be taken alive, when Ralph shouted out, with awful anguish in his voice, 'It's all up, Jack; here come some more of them. Good-bye, old chap.'

But what was it in the fast-approaching body of men that he saw? Surely they were white shields of cow-hide! They were—the white shields of the Bamangwatos.

'They are friends,' he shouted—'friends from Shoshong. Keep going, old chap.'

Just then the attacking party also saw the new-comers. They were within half a mile now. The cry went round among them and they fled. Over the stockade Ralph scrambled, and Jack tried to follow, but neither had strength enough left to run; but they saw their enemies being chased away over the plains by the group of friendly natives.

Some of the new-comers advanced straight to the enclosure. They were a hunting party, had heard the shots, and come on at once. Lucky for the boys they had been so near, else they must surely have been slain.

But what a sight met their eyes in the small enclosure! Hanging with his head out of the end of the wagon, a long assegai through his breast, but still grasping his trusty rifle, Hunter Watson lay dead. He had fired his last shot, fighting against fearful odds, and was dead before he knew that help had come.

A sad morning indeed for the two brothers, for not only were they fatherless now, but there, lying beside a heap of slain, lay Makolo. Was he dead too? Ralph knelt down beside him and lifted up his head. No—he wasn't dead; he moved his lips.

One of the friendly natives gave him water from a gourd. He smiled into Ralph's face.

'We beat them—boss,' he whispered; 'beat them—six against many—good-bye—boss Ralph.'

He smiled again—and his faithful black head fell back on Ralph's shoulder—and he died happy.

On the top of the kopjie they buried Hunter Watson, and left him to lie there among the plains and hills he had hunted over for years. Beside him they buried Makolo and the other Kaffir who had fought so well. Then with sad hearts they turned away from the spot where they had left father and friends.

The friendlies treated them kindly and escorted them back to Shoshong. They admired the pluck of the two white boys who had fought like men, and when they were rested and recovered from their wounds, started them on their way south, asking them to come back and trade in their country.

. . . . . .

They came back and did well, for the trading stations of Watson Brothers are known even to-day in the land of the Bamangwatos.

SUNRISE.

When the violet arch grows pearly gray
O'er the eastern plains afar,
And the blackbird wakes to its matin lay
By the glint of the morning star;
When dusky phantoms of the night
Do fold their robes and flee,
And the jubilant fairies take their flight
To their home by the greenwood tree;
When fugitive shades to the woodland rush,
And the darkness westward flies,
The fair young Dawn with a rosy flush
Looks up in the eastern skies.

SAM WOOD.

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FACETIÆ OF CANADIAN MONEY-LENDING.

By V. L. R.

AMONG a daily multitude of routine transactions, with an odd happening of a less prosaic and more emotional character—the gentler sex usually being strongly in evidence here—the business of a land mortgage corporation's office is occasionally varied by a shaft of humour, intentional or otherwise, from some of its correspondents. These outbursts, generally emanating from those of the bucolic persuasion, are often good.

There was, for instance, the written appeal made not long since to the mortgagees by a rural borrower, who, instead of proffering the stereotyped request for an extension of time for payment of interest 'to he trashed'—meaning, of course, until he had threshed his grain—asked for the favour on the more serious if less cogent plea that he was already 'all covered with morgeses.' This announcement he seemed to regard as about the most 'fetching' he could advance. Whether the mortgagees so viewed it, or whether they looked upon it in the light of an unwelcome revelation, would be another question.

Another correspondent sending a remittance, writes: 'i am a day late be good enough to overlook it rained like fun all day yesterday could not get out snowing like blazers here to-day except my best wishes.'

The following from a French Canadian—an excellent borrower is Jean Baptiste too—is a sample of many letters, meant to be in English, received from that branch of our community: 'i gone as you if you can lent me four hundered dolors more on my place for 10 year Wich the same condition you lent me the last monez by Kip what is due to you for this Spring of the 400 i gone bill a New house this spring and i gone Need a few onderd dolors more pleas anser Me at once and oblige.' Of course the discerning reader will, after allowing for idiosyncrasies of expression and lack of punctuation in this, readily interpret it to mean that the writer desires a further advance of $400, the interest due on a loan already in force to be deducted from proceeds of new mortgage, the balance to go towards cost of erecting a dwelling-house. The mortgagees having written in answer to this, declining to make the required additional advance, shortly afterwards received the following 'if-you-don't-somebody-else-will' reply, of a type quite common in like cases, and the sentiment expressed not being by any means confined to any particular nationality or creed: 'pleas lett me know by farst mail amuch i how you if you don't want give me what i ax i gone have some from another company my place is good for $—— in any time anser by farst mail.'

The next communication in order is from another section of our population, its writer being of the Teutonic section of the community: 'my intenches is to pay yous out Know on the morge that yous hold agonest my farm thot is if i don't geet delaid with my money I expect it on the first or the fift of april you can ancer me with return mail.' It is hardly necessary to explain here beyond the first few words; the writer's announcement being that his 'intentions is' to now pay off his loan in full. Such 'intenches' are of course welcomed or otherwise by the lenders, according to their experience with the borrower and security, or both.

Considering the difficulty experienced by the recipients in deciphering the handwriting of the following epistle, its concluding sentence is not without humour: 'Will you please Send me the amount of my Entrise [interest] Dew up to Jeneury last as I want to pay up in full. I Want to have Morgas Renued for Seven years. I want to change the Date from June to Jeneury as it would Put me in a better Pishion to Pay. Please rite Planely so I can read it without truble.'

One of the details of the business of the regular lender on the security of farms that causes him most trouble is that of having the fire premiums on the buildings paid with some degree of regularity. The insurance companies generally look to the mortgagee for payment of these premiums; the average borrower, either from lack of business

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experience, or from Arcadian simplicity, or what our Yankee cousins expressively term 'general cussedness,' seeming to be possessed with the belief that so long as his property is mortgaged its buildings must be insured somewhere, and that the premium is bound to be paid somehow, even if as a last shift, and when it cannot be in some mysterious and unexplained way otherwise realised, it has to be liquidated by himself. In the meantime, if the opulent mortgagee's insurance clerk has developed a few more wrinkles or gray hairs over the worry caused by this and hundreds of other concurrent incidents like it, the borrower's consolatory reflection is: 'Well, them loan companies is dashed onreasonable, anyhow, gol darn 'em.' As witness this typical reply to a request by a lender for repayment of a premium disbursed by him many months before for the borrower's account; note the austere, not to say injured, tone: 'I was not Awair that there was Hany insurance on the bildins thair was not anything said about it at the time but you companies want everything in your hands I enclose $——'

That 'figures can't lie'—that is, under some conditions—most paying or receiving tellers will decline to admit. We know of one teller who, temporarily combining both paying and receiving functions during the holiday season, found himself at the end of a certain day's business $139 short. Try as he would, he could not locate the error. He was certain the amount had not been actually overpaid by him, and as sure that no one but himself had had access to the cash during the day; but there was little satisfaction in this. His honesty was unquestioned, and accordingly, as he insisted that time would clear the matter up, the amount was in the meantime charged to 'suspense accounts,' and developments awaited. Instructions were given the ledger-keepers to use more than ordinary care in comparing with the ledgers every deposit pass-book presented, and some six months later this resulted in the vindication of the official. A pass-book was handed in showing a credit of $25 on the day of the shortage; the ledger entry was $164, the difference between the two of course representing the sought-for $139. The mistake arose from the fact that instead of having entered properly, first the depositor's name, then the number of his ledger folio (which in this case was 164), and, finally the amount to be credited, $25, the teller had inadvertently repeated the folio number in the cash column. The discovery of this mistake within such a comparatively short time would have been all but impossible had it not chanced that the deposit account in question was one of the kind more or less frequently disturbed, involving correspondingly frequent inspection of the depositor's pass-book. Had the account been one of the sort referred to in the following paragraph, the teller would likely have been called upon to make the amount good long ere this.

A man deposited with one of our savings-banks on April 4, 1873, $2800; and on June 23 of the following year, $600 more, at the then prevailing rate of interest. Nothing further was heard from or of him by the bank for sixteen years, during which period the interest on his $3400 had of course been regularly added and compounded half-yearly in the ledgers. Towards the close of 1890 a couple of rustic-looking young men entered the bank, and exhibiting a yellow, age-worn pass-book (the one for the account in question), asked 'if it was any good.' Inspection and inquiry of course proved that it was—very much so. The depositor had died some years previously, leaving a will disposing of his estate, but making no mention of the deposit, the existence of which he appeared either to have forgotten or to have revealed to nobody. The savings-bank, knowing nothing of his whereabouts, had of course remained in ignorance of the facts. One day, however, the men referred to, in pulling down an old shed near their benefactor's former dwelling, found concealed behind the sheeting of one of the walls this book. Plentiful libations of rain-water during its long incarceration had impaired the whiteness of its leaves, some of which had also been gnawed by mice; altogether it was 'not much to look at.' Nevertheless, investigation disclosed that it was perfectly valid, and in due course the delighted heirs surrendered it for $7766 (£1553) cash—a very substantial as well as unlooked-for Christmas-box.

Of course, in the correspondence incidental to the business of the land mortgagee, the word 'mortgage' must necessarily recur quite frequently. It is surprising how seldom the word is correctly spelled by the average borrower. The favourite orthography is of course the phonetic 'morgage:' but 'morge,' 'morgich,' and even 'morgue,' have their votaries; while there are dozens of other ways, more or less ingenious, that are met with in a correspondence of large volume, and embracing customers of varied descent. So impressed did the writer become some years ago with the frequency and persistency with which this word was misspelled, as it came under his notice in different communications, that he started to list the various efforts in this direction as he came across them. This list is subjoined:

1. Morgiga.
2. Morguage.
3. Morgeses.
4. Morgage.
5. Morlage.
6. Morchg.
7. Morage.
8. Mortague.
9. Mortage.
10. Morgich.
11. Morctgage.
12. Morgoge.
13. Morgue.
14. Mortgague.
15. Mordgatge.
16. Mogueage.
17. Morgueage.
18. Mortgig.
19. Marage.
20. Mortegage.
21. Morgeg.
22. Martgage.
23. Morgege.
24. Mortgagw.
25. Margage.
26. Mortagage.
27. Matagss.
28. Mourge.
29. Morgague.
30. Murthgage.
31. Martagage.
32. Morgag.
33. Mortagee.
34. Morgago.
35. Mortguage.
36. Morgies.
37. Mordgage.
38. Moraegee.
39. Mortugage.
40. Morggas.
41. Martage.
42. Morge.
43. Morguge.
44. Morgest.
45. Morgiage.
46. Mertgage.
47. Mogage.
48. Mortgag.
49. Mortag.
50. Moagage.
51. Morige.

52. Morggage.	60. Mortegague.	68. Morgg.
53. Mortgare.	61. Morguest.	69. Mergage.
54. Mourtgage.	62. Moguagu.	70. Moragge.
55. Mortcage.	63. Mortoage.	71. Morggge.
56. Motage.	64. Morg.	72. Morgetse.
57. Mortgue.	65. Martgager.	73. Moraj.
58. Moraage.	66. Morguga.	74. Maugrech.
59. Mordage.	67. Morgeage.	

While this collection contains no less than seventy-four versions of the word's orthography—every one authentic and every one wrong—it is believed the list is capable of being added to, at the expense of a moderate degree of systematic watchfulness, to the extent of at least the twenty-six more variations required to make the even hundred. But probably the seventy-four presented will supply a sufficiently rich vocabulary for ordinary use!

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER VII.—THE 'PEGASUS' INN AT PEEBLES, AND HOW A STRANGER RETURNED FROM THE WARS.

OF my doings for some months after my father's death I must tell hastily. I fell heir to the lands of Barns; and, being of age, entered at once into my possession. The place remained the same as in my father's time—the same servants and the same ways about the house. I lived simply as I had always lived, spending my days in seeing to the land, in field-sports, and some little study, for I had not altogether forsaken the Muses. But all the time I felt as one who is kept at home against his will, being conscious of a restlessness and an inclination to travel which was new to me, but which, I doubt not, is common to all young men at this time of life. I talked much with Tam Todd of the lands which he had visited, and heard of the Dutch towns, with their strange shipping, their canals, and orderly houses; and of the rough Norlanders, clad in the skins of wild animals, who came down to the Swedish markets to trade; of the soldiery of Germany and France, and the Scots who had gone over there to push their fortunes with their swords; and what I loved best, of the salt sea, with its boundless waste of waters and wild tales of shipwreck. Formerly I had been wont often to bid Tam sharply to hold his peace when he entered on one of his interminable narrations; but now I sat and drank in every word like a thirsty man. It was the winter-time, when the roads were often snowed up, and all the folk of the place gathered in the great kitchen at nights round the fire; so it was the time for stories, and we had our fill of them.

One blustering day, the first Monday, I think, after the New Year, when the ice was beginning to melt from the burns, and a wet, cold wind from the north-west was blowing, I rode down to Peebles to settle some matters about money with Saunders Blackett, who had managed my father's affairs and was now entrusted with mine. All things were done to my satisfaction; so, bethinking myself that the way to Barns was cold and long, and that it was yet early in the afternoon, being scarce four o'clock, I found myself thinking pleasantly of the warm inn-parlour of the 'Pegasus,' so thither I went.

The 'Pegasus' or 'Peg' inn stands at the corner of the Northgate and the High Street, a black-gabled building, once the town house of the Govans of Cardrona, and still retaining marks of its gentility in the arms carved above the door. A great sign flapped in the wind, bearing on a white ground a gorgeous representation of a winged horse soaring through clouds. The landlord at this time was one Horsbrock, a portly, well-looking man, who claimed to be a connection of the Horsbrocks of that Ilk, and held his chin two inches higher in consequence. The place was famed in all the country round for good wine and comfort.

I stabled my horse, and bidding the host bring me a bottle of Rhenish (so fine a thing it is to have succeeded to lands and money), I went into the low-ceilinged room where the company sat. It was panelled in a darkish wood, and hung round with old rusty weapons—halberds and falchions and what not—which glimmered brightly in the firelight. A narrow window gave it light, but now it sufficed only to show the gray winter dusk coming swiftly on. Around the fire sat some few of the men of Peebles, warming themselves and discussing the landlord's ale and the characters of their neighbours.

They rose to give me welcome when I entered, for my name and family were well known in the countryside.

'It's awfu' weather for man and beast, Laird,' said an old man with a bent back, but still hale and hearty in the face. 'A snawy winter I can abide, and a wet ane; but drizzlin', dreepin', seepin' weather, wi' a wind that taks the heart out o' ye, is mair than my patience can stand.'

'You have little need to speak, you folk,' I said, 'living in a well-paved town, with stones beneath your feet and nothing more to do than go round a street-corner all day. Up at Barns, with Tweed swirling in at the yard gate, and the stables flowing like a linn, and the wind playing cantrips day and night in and out of the windows, you might talk.'

'Ay, but, good sirs,' put in a thin voice, which

came from a little man I had seen at the bowling-green, 'ye may thank the Lord for a roof abune your heids and dry claes to put on, when sae many godly folks are hiding like pelicans in the wilderness among the high hills and deep mosses. I bless the Lord that my faither, that sant o' the kirk, is not living in thae evil times. He was a man o' a truly great spirit; and had he been alive, I 'se warrant he wad hae been awa to join them. He was aye strong on his conscience. "John Look-up" — so the godless called him. "John Look-up," said my mother, "ye 'll never be pleased till we 're a' joltin' in a cairt to the Grassmarket o' Edinburgh. And a braw sicht ye 'll be, hanging there like a hoodie-craw, wi' a' your bairns aside ye." Ay, these were often her words, for she had a sarcastic tongue.'

'Aboot the hill-folk,' said the old man who had first spoken, drinking his ale and turning up the measure to see that no more was left; 'did ye ever hear o' my son Francie and what happened to him when he gaed awa to Moffat wi' 'oo'? He gaed ower by Traquair and keepit the road till he got to Moffat, for he had a horse that wasna ower sure o' its feet on the hills. But when he had it a' sellt, whae does he meet in wi' but Wull Hislop, the travelling packman, whae 's sair needing a beast. So Francie sells him his horse and comes aff hame walking ower the muirs. He gaed up Moffat Water and ower the muckle hill they ca' Corriefragauns, and got on nane sae bad till he cam' to the awfu' craigs abune Loch Skene. He was walking briskly, thinking o' hame and the siller in his pouch, and how he wad win to Peebles that nicht, when he saw afore him the awfu'est sicht that ever he had seen. It was a man o' maybe the same heicht as himsel', wi' a heid o' red hair, and nae claes to speak o', but just a kind o' clout about his middle. He began to speak in an outlandish voice, and Francie kenned at yince that he maun be yin o' thae Hieland deevils brocht doun to hunt up the Whigs. He was for Francie's money, and he oot wi' a big knife and flashed it up and doun. But this was no' to Francie's liking. "Put that doun, ye ill-looking deevil," says he; "ye 'll find I 'm nane o' your hill-folk, but an honest man frae Peebles, wi' a nieve as hard as your heid 's saft; and if ye dinna let me by I 'll put ye in the loch as sure as my name 's Francie Trummle." The body understood him brawly, and wi' a grunt slunk aff among the heather; and Francie had nae mair bother wi' him. But oh! it 's an awfu' thing to think o' men o' your ain blood hunted and killed wi' thae foreign craturs. It maks me half-mindit to turn Whig mysel'.'

'Dinna fash yoursel', Maister Trummle,' said a younger man, a farmer by his looks; 'ye 're better bidin' in peace and quiet at hame. The Lord never meant folk to gang among hills and peat-bogs, unless after sheep. It 's clean against the order o' things. But there 's yae thing that reconciles me to this Whig-hunting. They 're maistly Wast-country folk, and Wast-country folk are an ill lot, aye shoving their nebs where they 're no wantit. There 's no' mony Whigs in Tweeddale. Na, na, they 're ower canny.'

Master Turnbull made as if he would have answered, when a clatter of feet was heard in the passage and the door opened. Two men entered, one a great swarthy fellow well known for his poaching escapades when the salmon came up the water, and the other Peter Crustcrackit the tailor. They did not enter in company, for Peter swaggered in with as gallant an air as two bent legs and a small body could permit, while the other slunk in with a half-apologetic look, glancing keenly round to see who were the other occupants of the room.

'The "Peg" is honoured with your company to-night, I see,' said Peter, making a bow to me. ''Tis the finest gathering that I remember—the Laird o' Barns, worthy Maister Trumbull, myself, and my honoured freend Maister Simon Doolittle.'

The black-fisher lifted his face from the ale which the landlord had brought. 'Your guid health, gentlemen. I 'm prood o' your company, though I 'm no' just fit for 't, since I 'm no' half-an-'oor oot o' the Dookit Pool.'

All eyes were turned to the speaker, and we saw that his clothes hung limp and wet.

'And pray, how did you get there, Maister Doolittle? Was 't by the working o' Providence or the wiles o' sinfu' man?'

'A mixture o' baith. I took a bit daunder up Tweed to the Castle Rock to see how the water was rinnin'. It 's been raither drumly for fishin' o' late. Ye a' ken the rocks that they 're no' exactly the sort o' place that a man wad choose for dancin' a reel in tackety boots. Weel, I was admiring the works o' God as manifested in a big, deep, swirlin' hole, when, afore ever I kenned I was admirin' the hole frae the middle o' it. I was gey near chokit wi' Tweed water; but I wabbled a bit, and syne grippit a birk and held on.'

There was a pause, and he took a draught of ale.

'Weel, I roared as loud as I could, and the auld runt whae bides i' the Castle heard me. He cam' doun and askit me what was wrang. "Wrang?" says I. "If ye dinna ca' ten feet o' water and you no' able to soom wrang, I just wis' ye were here yoursel'." So he gangs cannily back and brings anither man to look at me; and the twae thocht for a while, and then each grippit an airm, and after a gey wammlin' I got oot. I was angry at their delay, for I couldna hae held on muckle langer, so I kickit them baith and cam' aff here. I 've muckle need o' yill, for I feel as if I had eaten ten pund o' snaw.'

'Come nearer the fire, Simon,' said one. 'Ye 're a muckle-tried man.'

'I 'm a' that,' said the brown-faced poacher, and relapsed into silence.

The lights were now lit in the streets of Peebles, as we could see by the glimmer through the windows; but in our room no lamp was needed, for the bright firelight was sufficient for a man to read a little book by. The great shadows danced on the wall, bent and crooked into a thousand fantasies: and the men by the fire nodded and spoke little.

The mild-mannered man, him they called John Look-up, was sleeping in his chair, and his jug of ale, which he had emptied, hung limply in his hand. In a little it fell to the floor and rolled beneath his chair; but the sleeper never stirred. The poacher sat shrouded in vapour which the heat of the fire had brought out of his wet garments; and a mingled smell of damp cloth and burning wood filled the room. Silence reigned undisturbed; and I verily believe that in five minutes we should all have been sound asleep had not something occurred to rouse us.

This was no less than the entrance of another guest. The door was flung open, and a man entered swaggering with a great air and bearing into the slumbrous place a breath of the outer world. He was the finest man I had ever seen, two inches and more taller than myself, who am not short, and clean-made as a greyhound. His face was tanned a deep brown and bare save for a yellow moustachio on his upper lip. His hair hung long and fine over his shoulders, setting off the erect poise of his head. He had removed his cloak and hat, and showed a dress of the height of fashion; his cravat was of delicate foreign lace and the sash around his middle of the finest silk. But what I marked especially were his features—the thin, straight nose, the well-bred chin, and the clear eyes; but for a certain weakness in the jaw, I should have called it the handsomest face I had ever seen. More, it was a face that was familiar to me; I had seen the like of it before, but where I could not tell, and I cudgelled my brains to think of it.

'Ah, my faith,' said the stranger, speaking with a foreign accent, 'what have we here? A roomful of sleepy citizens. Or drunk—egad, drunk, I believe.'

And he walked over to where Peter Crustcrackit sat nodding, and stared in his face. Now the noise wakened the rest; and Peter also, sitting up with a stupid air, thought that he was still in the shop, and cried hurriedly: 'What d'ye lack, sir? Silks or satins or plain kersey?' and ran into a recital of his wares.

The new-comer looked at him with an amused smile. 'It is not difficult to tell your profession, my friend: the ninth of a man.'

Then he surveyed the rest of us in turn with his restless eyes, until his look fell upon me. He must have marked something about my appearance distinct from the others, for he bowed and addressed me politely:

'You are not one of these fellows, I think. May I ask the favour of your name? I have been long absent from this country, and have forgot faces.'

'You are welcome to it,' said I. 'They call me John Burnet—of Barns,' I added, for the first time using my new-found title.

He crossed to my side in an instant and held out his hand. 'Your hand, Master Burnet. You and I should be well known to each other, for we shall be near neighbours. You may have heard of Michael Veitch of Dawyck, him that was soldiering abroad. I am that same, returned like the prodigal from far countries.'

Now I knew where I had seen the face before. It was but a coarse and manly counterpart of Marjory's, though I fancied that hers was still the braver and stronger, if all were told.

'I have often heard of you,' I said, 'and I am glad to be the first to bid you welcome to your own country-side. These are some men of the town, honest fellows, who come here for their evening ale.'

'Your health, gentlemen,' he cried, bowing to the company. 'Landlord, bring ale and a bottle of your best Burgundy till I pledge these honest fellows.'

'Eh, sirs,' I heard Peter Crustcrackit mutter under his breath, 'sic an invasion o' gentles. The Northgate o' Peebles micht be the High Street o' Embro, for a' the braw folk that are coming to't. I maun think about shifting my shop.'

It would be well on for eight o'clock ere Master Veitch and I left the 'Pegasus' to ride homeward. The night was quieter and milder, and overhead a patch of clear sky showed the stars. He had with him two serving-men, who carried his belongings, but they rode some little distance behind. He was full of questions about Dawyck and his kinsfolk there, and the country-side around; so I must needs tell him something of what had passed between Marjory and myself. He seemed not ill-pleased, and as he grew accustomed to the thought, almost glad. 'What,' he cried, 'little Marjory, who was scarce higher than my knee when I left! To think that she should have grown into a woman already! And you say she is pretty?'

Which question gave me much opportunity for such talk as one must use when he feels the littleness of words.

Then he must ask me about myself, of my father, of whose death he was ignorant, and what I purposed to do. 'For I doubt,' said he, 'that you will have but a dull time of it at Barns in that great desolate house. It little befits an active man to pine at home like a mouse in a cell.'

So from one thing to another, he had me to tell him of all my desires, of how I longed above all things to travel and see the world; and he spoke to me in such a fashion that ere we had come to the ford of Tweed my intention was fixed to ride out like the Spanish Don to see what might befall me.

THE PATENT OFFICE LIBRARY.

By J. B. C. KERSHAW.

I. THE CONTENTS.

CHANCERY LANE, London, is a street so intimately associated, both in name and position, with 'Law,' that those whose knowledge of it is limited to that gained by its use as the shortest and most convenient route to other places may be forgiven if they regard it as wholly given up to law stationers, law booksellers, law societies, law insurance corporations, and—lady barbers.

There lies hidden, however, behind the frontage buildings of Chancery Lane, an ugly stone building, with insignificant entrances from two sides, which houses a government department of the greatest importance to the manufacturing arts and industries of our country.

This is Her Majesty's Patent Office, where all business relating to the issue or renewal of patents for inventions is transacted.

Those who connect government offices and buildings with the architectural pretensions of the Colonial and Foreign Offices in Whitehall, will view Her Majesty's Patent Office for the first time with somewhat of a shock. Externally it possesses absolutely no architectural features of any worth; and, even if it possessed such, they would be practically lost, since it lies buried in a mass of office-blocks of buildings that most effectually hide it from view. Of its interior architectural arrangements there is even less to be said that betokens praise; for dark, tunnel-like passages, in which gas-light is most usually required, are striking features of the place. It is therefore comforting to know that this building is doomed and that a structure more in accordance with the importance of this department of the administration is planned to take its place.

To a stranger visiting this building for the first time, the policeman who guards the main stairway, and closely scrutinises each visitor as though *he* were the dynamiter for whom he has been waiting these many years, and the numerous appliances for fire extinction, may prove to be its most striking interior features. A big fire in this building would be most disastrous; since here are preserved all the documents that establish the priority and validity of patents worth exceedingly large sums of money. Hence the necessity for these safeguards against those forms of outrage in which the anarchists indulged some years ago and against accidental outbreaks of fire. A visitor interested neither in patents nor fire-extinguishers might, having penetrated thus far into this very gloomy building, conclude that it contained little of interest to himself. But let him mount the stairs to the top of the building, and he will be surprised to find a library unequalled in the whole of London in the range and number of its volumes upon theoretical and applied science. Open daily to the public from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., it is an immense boon to great numbers of people; and it is, in a sense, self-supporting, since the cost for maintenance is more than met by the surplus funds arising from the fees for patents. No troublesome formalities are necessary in order to gain access to its treasures. The visitor merely signs his name and address, and is then free to handle and use for reference purposes all the books and papers within its walls. This is such a saving of time and temper to readers that one could wish to see the custom extended to other reference libraries. It presupposes, certainly, a certain standard of honesty amongst the readers which is unfortunately not always attained, and thefts do occasionally occur. These are, however, not by any means so frequent as many might expect in a library open to all classes and types of men; and the greater economy in working such a system possibly balances the expenses entailed in replacing stolen books or journals. The contents of this library may be divided broadly into two groups—patent literature and general science literature.

Are you about to patent some new invention? Here, in a group of rooms devoted to this branch, are copies of all the patents granted in this country since the year 1617; and indexes of all kinds to assist you in your search to find whether you have been forestalled in your invention. The space demanded for this part of the library is rapidly increasing. Each year there is a growing number of patents to be dealt with. In 1870 the number was under four thousand; in 1896 over thirty thousand patents were applied for.

Are you a student of any branch of theoretical or applied science? Here, in the main portion of the library, are rows upon rows of books dealing with the subject of your study. Ranged round the central reading-rooms are bays and smaller reading-rooms, crammed from floor to ceiling with English and foreign books of science or technology. The library contains eighty thousand books; and new volumes are added weekly.

Two large tables are covered thickly with the last issues of the scientific press of Europe and America, and the filed back numbers and bound volumes of this current journalistic literature is one of the most valuable possessions of this library. Over one thousand weekly, monthly, and annual scientific or technical papers and journals are taken; all of which are carefully preserved and ultimately bound. Proceedings of societies of all kinds—engineering, mining, physical, electrical, chemical—of many lands and various tongues, find a place on its shelves; and in these one can read the

original accounts of scientific discoveries or new methods of manufacture which have later been embodied in the text-books of the subject. For, in these latter days of haste and hurry, no man having discovered a new scientific fact or method waits until he has accumulated sufficient of these to justify him in writing a book. The text-books of to-day are merely compilations in handy form of what has already been published through other channels; and in these proceedings and journals of scientific societies we have the fountain-head of the scientific and technical literature of our day.

Are you an engineer, designing some new feature in the mechanism of engines? You will find here the latest books in English, French, or German upon steam and steam-engines.

Are you an electrician, anxious to inform yourself as to the real nature of the power you so easily produce, and which, in your hands, is made to serve mankind in so many various ways? Here are the books of Maxwell and Thomson and Herz, which show how little we can be said to know, and how vast is our ignorance concerning it.

Are you an architect, interested in sanitation? Here is a whole literature of your subject ready to your hand. In short, there is no branch of physical or applied science that is not represented by some of the best and latest English or foreign books upon these shelves; and the mind is staggered when it fully grasps the vast amount of knowledge and research recorded in the pages of the volumes gathered within these walls. We know not how many thousand years man has been upon this earth; but during all these long years he has doubtless been slowly but surely learning to spell out the lessons nature is able and willing to teach him. The actual record of his progress is seen without these walls; but the written record is here, and is destined as the years roll on to become more full and more complete.

II. ITS READERS.

Interesting as the contents of the shelves of this library may be to students of theoretical or applied science, those who regard human nature with an observant eye will find perhaps even greater interest in the study of the human beings who frequent it. Probably no library in London, or the United Kingdom, attracts such a motley crew of readers; the variety being to some extent due to the connection of the library with the Patent Office. All other reference libraries attract only two classes—those who wish to read books and those who wish to write them. This library attracts a third class—the inventors; and these are often far more interesting to the student of humanity, because they include amongst their number many visionaries.

These are the inventors who have been gifted with rather too much imagination; their inventions are impracticable because they forget or ignore some elementary elements of success; they are the poets of this inventors' world, in which ideas must be transformed into concrete form before they attain success.

An inventor certainly requires imagination, without which he can do nothing; but it is a fatal defect to have too much.

The successful inventors, the men who are ceaselessly at work on problems connected with our manufacturing arts and industries, are not seen here. Such men have either private capital or are financed by wealthy men; and all their business with the Patent Office is transacted through the patent-agents, whose offices abound in this district of London.

England has not yet produced any man so prolific in inventions as Edison; but there are many inventors in this country whose patents are to be numbered by the score, and it is these men who provide the greater number of patent-agents with the business upon which they depend. The clerks and assistants of these patent-agents form one of the largest classes of readers at the library. Many of these spend their whole time in the patent rooms of the library, searching through the files of old patents; when one search is completed they begin a new one, which is to decide, like its predecessor, the validity of some client's latest invention.

It is one of the peculiar, and, as many think, bad features, of Her Majesty's Patent Office procedure that no thorough official search is made to ascertain whether any invention has been forestalled. Thus, unless an inventor makes such a search for himself, or pays a five or ten guinea fee to a patent-agent for having one made, the validity of his patent may always be questioned until it has survived the ordeal of the law courts.

The inventors who are seen here, and who form the most interesting contingent of the frequenters of the library, are the poorer class of inventors, who come to conduct this search for themselves. To these may be added the suspicious ones, who would trust the details of their invention to no one, not even to a patent-agent, until it has been fully protected. These men are easily distinguished. Many of them are from the country, and lack the ease and self-confidence of the true Londoner. Most of them are visiting the library for the first time, and require much assistance from the librarians before they understand where to look and how to search for what they want to find. There is an eagerness and alertness in the manner of all which betrays nervous tension. They have often thought for years over some problem or difficulty that has presented itself to them in the course of their every-day labour or duties. They have perhaps spent hardly-earned money and all their leisure hours in experiments; and time after time have they failed to achieve what they desired. But at last, perseverance has been rewarded; and their invention, upon which so much time and thought and money has been expended, seems to possess all the merits of novelty and feasibility which command success. Every inventor who arrives at this stage has dreams

of wealth which only very seldom realise themselves in hard cash. Not one patent in one hundred is of any great value; and of these valuable ones not one in ten brings a fortune to the man in whose brain it originated. Patents demand money as well as brains, in most cases, before they assume very practical form, or before they are sufficiently developed to be sold for large sums of money; and, as is so often the case, it is the financier and not the inventor who reaps the harvest of reward.

To return, however, to our poor inventor. If he is not entirely ignorant of patent procedure he knows that the Patent Office makes no search to test the validity of his invention; and so he comes to undertake it himself. If he finds that his invention appears in no previous patent, he is confirmed in his belief that he will at last see his dreams realised, and that he will in a short time possess great wealth. If, on the other hand, he finds his ideas have been anticipated, his dreams of fortune fade away like mist before the morning sun; and life, as he has known it for so many weary years —hard, toilsome, pitiless to those who, like himself, lack money—lies painfully clear before his view. A short three hours—or even less—spent in this library may plunge the man who entered it hopeful and bright into deepest despair; and it is certain that within its walls many silent tragedies of this kind are enacted week by week, and noticed by only few, if any, of those around. But inventors are a hopeful race, and though some who suffer such a disappointment of all their hopes may never recover from it, there is no doubt many recommence their experiments and elaborate other inventions from which they expect the same, or even greater, realities of wealth and happiness.

Another class of readers who frequent the library are those who come solely for purposes of study. These are attracted by the range and number of the volumes it contains dealing with science in all its branches. Many students of science do not know of its existence. Those who do are frequent visitors, and appreciate fully the advantages they possess in the perfect freedom of reference to all the books upon its shelves. Here you see a student from one of the London technical schools or science colleges reading up some special points of difficulty that may have arisen in connection with his studies. There is a young fellow, who has just returned from the goldfields of South Africa, deep in the latest treatises upon gold-mining and metallurgy. Men who are writing text-books, or less important literature, are to be found here as students, obtaining matter for their yet unwritten productions at those fountain-heads of scientific literature—the proceedings and journals of scientific societies.

The current literature with which the tables of this library are so lavishly endowed also attracts a very large number of readers connected either by profession or in the way of business with the sciences, or applications in arts or industries, with which these papers and magazines deal.

A man must be an unusually good linguist to reap the fullest benefit from this library. English, French, and German are essential; since it is the peoples of these three tongues who lead the world in science and in the manufacturing arts and industries. But books and papers and journals in Italian, Russian, and Scandinavian are also to be found; and thus a knowledge of practically all the languages of Europe is the chief qualification for him who would make the most of his opportunities here.

There are few English students of science or technology who possess such linguistic knowledge; and the majority of readers here confine themselves to the literature in their own tongue. But a considerable proportion do avail themselves of the foreign books and papers; and doubtless the greater attention now being paid to the teaching of at least two modern languages to science students will lead to greater use of the works of foreign origin in this library as the years pass on.

THE BULLY OF HAIPHONG.

PART III.—CONCLUSION.

IT was an awkward moment for both, particularly for the man who had the use of his tongue. He did the best he could, however; and, after he had explained matters a little, busied himself in an attempt to reduce the room to something like order. By the time he had finished, the Annamite boy had returned with the package from the doctor, and it was necessary to cook something for the sick man. In this way Duchesne found himself kept busy until darkness fell; and for the same reason it was not until he had himself partaken of a wretchedly inadequate evening meal, cooked by the native boy, and had made his patient comfortable for the night, that he had leisure to appreciate the strange position in which he was placed.

As a matter of fact, his lot for the following week was by no means an enviable one. His patient was at first incapable of anything; afterwards, when he could talk, he was by turns morose and aggressive. As for any gratitude to the man who in reality had saved his life, he showed none; if he felt any he managed to conceal it very effectually. Upon Duchesne, however, when the young man had in a great measure become

accustomed to his position, this exercised little or no effect. At first he did not care very much whether he won the old man's liking or not. His one aim and idea was to help him to recover from the wound he had inflicted upon him. But, strange though it may seem to say so, in spite of the other's sullen temper, or, at other times, in spite of his outbreaks of ferocity, he found himself being drawn in some inexplicable fashion towards him. There was something about the old man that appealed to him—a loneliness, a peculiar association with some dim and almost forgotten past that was as difficult to analyse as the reasons that gave rise to it.

With Desrolles the case was in its effect rather similar, though widely different in the means by which he arrived at it. To his surprise, he found himself after a while liking to have the young fellow about, and beginning to dread the day when it would become necessary for him to leave. It is possible he knew that when the other was gone he would never find an audience who would listen so patiently when he embarked on his tirades against the government; no one who would pay such attention while he gave utterance to his utterly irrational plans for altering the existing order of things, and for restoring France to her old fame as a monarchy. Had he been taxed with it he would probably have denied the assertion with a fine flow of language, and have even been prepared to prove as much at the point of the sword. But in his heart there was without doubt a small spark of gratitude, and, if the truth must be told, also of shame. Not once, but times out of number, he had tried conclusions with other men in the same way and had never suffered defeat. More than once his victims had been young men, and when they had died the authorities had been foolish enough to attempt to make trouble for him. Now he had been beaten, and badly beaten too, by a boy whom he had boasted he would crush between his finger and thumb. He could not understand how it was that he had been defeated; but he felt sure that if the duel were to take place again he could reverse the position of affairs. Only let him get well once more, and he would spit him like a pigeon. But as this thought came into his mind the young man entered the room, bringing the bowl of broth he had been preparing. As he came over Desrolles looked up at him. On second thoughts, he was not quite sure that he *would* carry out his threat. The young man was not a bad sort of fellow; he had pluck at any rate, and that was something, he told himself, in these degenerate days. Consequently he took the bowl almost savagely from his nurse's hand, and having tasted what it contained, busied himself for the next few minutes grumbling at its poorness. Duchesne smiled, but did not contradict him. He knew his man by this time, and could make allowances for his little ebullitions.

Seven days later the doctor announced that the old man was well enough not to require a nurse any longer. He informed him of this fact, and was bidden peremptorily to mind his own business. Consequently he left the house in a rage, and encountered the younger man, who had been into the town, on his homeward route.

'You really think he can safely be left?' inquired the latter when the other had told him the decision he had arrived at.

'He is as safe as he ever has been in his life,' replied the doctor; 'and, if you will allow me to say so, it is all due to your careful nursing. You needn't be afraid that you'll be thanked for it, however. He hasn't an ounce of gratitude in his constitution. As likely as not as soon as you have left him he will find another cause for a quarrel, and be sending you a second challenge before you can clear out of the country. By the way, have you discovered any news of that lost relative of whom you spoke to me?'

'Not a word. I cannot find any traces of him. But then that is scarcely to be wondered at, for it is pretty plain to me now that he must have lived here under an assumed name.'

'But how do you know that he lived here at all? Might he not be in Hanoi?'

'It is possible, of course; but he wrote to my father from Haiphong many years ago. It is very strange that I can hear nothing of him, for I have made all sorts of inquiries of all sorts of people.'

'You deserve better fortune,' said the doctor, 'in return for your goodness to that old curmudgeon yonder. If I can be of any assistance to you I trust and hope you will command me.'

Duchesne thanked him for his courtesy, and went on along the jungle-path until he came to Desrolles's 'go-down.'

He found the owner seated in the veranda reading a tattered old Parisian newspaper. He had by this time quite resumed his old style of living and also his old fashion in dress. With it had come back all his former love of sarcasm, and that haughty, insolent manner which had caused him to be hated and feared in the settlement for so many years.

Duchesne went up the steps, and, after commenting upon the heat, seated himself beside him.

'I regret to inform you,' he said, 'that it will be necessary for me to leave you to-morrow morning. The doctor has told me that there is no longer any necessity for me to intrude my presence upon you.'

'The doctor is a meddlesome fool,' answered Desrolles hotly; 'and I shall take the earliest opportunity of telling him so. But of course it is natural you should desire to leave me. This place is not fit for the accommodation of a pig, much less a man. It is my misfortune that, after the services you have rendered me, I am unable to make you some better return; but in this cursed country the wise man does not look for any reward. Personally I have long ceased to do so.'

'I do not desire one,' said Duchesne simply.

'In that case you are even more singular than usual,' the other replied. 'In my time I have met many men, but never one who did a kindness for another and did not expect to get something back.'

'I fear you have a poor opinion of your fellow-men.'

'The very poorest possible,' he answered candidly; 'and small wonder. But there—that doesn't affect the matter at issue. Why must you leave me?'

'Because I have my work to do,' answered the youth, 'and my time is limited.'

'I think I understood you to say on the day'—— here Desrolles paused for an instant, and the old nasty look came back into his face at the recollection—'well, on the day of my accident, that you had come to Tonking in the hope of discovering traces of a missing relative.'

'That is so,' said Duchesne. 'I came out here to find an uncle who disappeared from France twenty-five years ago. So far my search has been quite without success. If the man in question came here he must have changed his name at once, and afterwards have disappeared without leaving a single trace of his whereabouts.'

'In this country a man may disappear at a moment's notice,' returned Desrolles. 'It would be impossible to find a more convenient place. But tell me more about this uncle of yours. It is just possible I may be able to help you. Remember, I am one of the oldest inhabitants of the country. I was here with Garnier in seventy-three, and have never been out of it since. If your relative spent any time in the colony, it is a franc to a centime I shall remember him.'

This aspect of the affair had never struck Duchesne, and he hastened to make the best possible use of it.

'He was the Count de Clairvaux.'

Desrolles thought for a few moments and then shook his head.

'I know nothing of him under that name,' he said; 'but, as you said just now, he is almost certain to have changed it for another. Titles are not of much account here.'

He paused again for a few moments.

'You say he was your uncle? On your mother's side of course, since your name is Duchesne?'

'I'm afraid in a certain sense I misled you. He was my father's eldest brother.'

Desrolles gave an involuntary start.

'Your father's eldest brother?' he cried. 'Do you mean to tell me you are a De Clairvaux?'

'That is my real name,' said the youth. 'But why does it excite you so? Are you acquainted with the family?'

'By repute, of course,' the other answered. 'Who is not? But why do you deceive me? I thought you called yourself Duchesne?'

'I do,' the young man replied, a slight colour rising in his face. 'It was only a year ago that I learned it was not our real name.'

'For what reason did he adopt it?'

'If you knew anything of Raoul de Clairvaux's life and the circumstances which eventually drove him out of France you would not ask that question.'

Although it was evident that he tried hard to prevent it, Desrolles's face grew black as thunder.

'*Pardieu*, young man! he may not have been all you say—he had his excuses.'

Duchesne gazed at him in blank amazement.

'What do you mean?' he asked. 'How do you know that he had excuses?'

Desrolles, however, had recovered his composure by this time.

'I don't know it,' he answered hastily. 'I am only judging his case by many others. But tell me more. You say your father changed his name. Perhaps he stepped into his brother's shoes?'

'There were no shoes left to step into,' said the young man. 'My uncle squandered his entire fortune; and my father, who was the soul of honour, surrendered his own private means to pay his debts. The year following he married my mother on what little was left, and settled himself in Rouen, where he died four years later, leaving his widow and her two children totally unprovided for. Can you wonder that we do not reverence the name of Raoul de Clairvaux?'

He paused, and during the interval Desrolles rose and walked a little way up the veranda. When he returned Duchesne thought he could see traces of tears in his eyes.

'Your story is most affecting,' he said. 'And pray, how did you all live after—after—well, after your father's death?'

'As best we could,' replied the young man; 'thanks to a brave mother, who worked her fingers to the bone to keep and educate us. My mother's case was the more sad because I have good reason to feel certain her marriage with my father had been a family arrangement—she herself loving the man whose wickedness had driven him out of France. But you look pale. What is the matter? Are you feeling ill?'

'Nothing. It is nothing,' cried Desrolles, turning his face away. 'Only a passing twinge—that is all. I shall be better in a moment.'

Both were silent for a few moments, each occupied with his own thoughts. Then Desrolles gave a little preliminary cough.

'And what is your object now in trying to find this *mauvais sujet?*' he asked.

'Cannot you guess?' asked Duchesne. 'Why, six months ago he became the heir to a magnificent property and as fine an income as any man can boast in France.'

'Good heavens! This is very interesting. And, pray, who left it to him?'

'An old aunt who could surely never have heard of his misdeeds.'

'And if he is not to be found—or is dead—what then?'

'It all passes to my sister and myself as the next-of-kin. If he is dead we shall be richer than we ever dreamed of.'

'But you will have to prove his death, will you not?'

'That is why I am here. Monsieur Desrolles, you can have no idea what his death will mean to us. If I can prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the man no longer lives, I shall be Count de Clairvaux; my mother will dwell with me in the old house where our race have lived for the last five hundred years; my sister, who loves a poor but good man, will have a dowry that will enable them to marry and achieve their hearts' ambition; and then I shall be able to wed the girl to whom I am betrothed, and whom I love better than life itself. And to think that all our happiness should be dependent on the life of a man who has never been known to do a good deed since he was born!'

'You speak straight, my young friend. And what if he lives?'

'In that case I shall tell him what I have discovered. He will then be able to return to France and resume his old career of shame.'

'And by so doing he will deprive your mother, your sister, to say nothing of yourself, of the wealth you speak of, and the happiness you would all find in it. Do you mean that you would be as quixotic as that?'

'Why not? If he is alive the money is his—not ours. We have no sort of right to it.'

'But surely to a clever man it would not be difficult to find the proof you require. There are hundreds of men in this colony who, for a reward, would swear they were present at his death. Have you thought of that?'

Duchesne rose from his seat and said haughtily: 'I do not know such men, monsieur.'

'I beg your pardon,' answered Desrolles, with a meekness that was far from being usual with him. 'I had no desire to offend you. I only wish that it were possible for me to assist you to find the man you want. But as you do not know under what name he passed out here, and I have no idea what he was like, I'm afraid I cannot help you. You have no photo of him, I suppose?'

'That I have,' replied Duchesne, as he produced a leather pocket-book, which he opened. 'It is the only one we could obtain, and it was taken in Paris in the year sixty. Photography was not as perfect as it is now, but my mother declares it to be a good likeness as he was at the time.'

Desrolles took the picture and glanced at it for a few seconds. Then he handed it back, saying as he did so:

'No, I'm afraid I cannot help you.'

Duchesne gave a little sigh as he replaced the photograph in his pocket.

'It is like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay,' he said. 'However, for my mother's sake, I will not give in. It would break their hearts if I were to come home empty-handed. They worked so hard to help me to find the money to undertake the journey that Heaven surely could not let it be altogether fruitless. It would be better to find the man himself.'

At this juncture Desrolles made an excuse and went into the house. For the remainder of the day he was strangely silent. It was plain that he had something on his mind. After the evening meal he sat in the veranda smoking cigarette after cigarette, the very essence of ill-humour. Towards ten o'clock, however, he seemed to have made up his mind; and when the young man had gone to bed and was asleep, he rose and went to an old native chest standing in the corner of the room, where he began searching for something among its contents. Having found what he wanted, he glanced at the bed where Duchesne was sleeping peacefully, and donned his hat. A moment later he had left the house and was making his way as fast as he could go through the jungle towards the town. As he walked he talked to himself in a fashion that had long since become familiar to him; and a bystander, had there been one near enough, might have heard him mutter something to the following effect:

'The lad says she loved me. Ah! who should know that better than I? And all these years she has led a life of poverty when, but for my sin, she might have had so much. But I can make amends to her now. Thank God I can make amends, and, what is better, without her knowing it. And for me—what? This money that has been left is mine. With it I could get out of this hell and lead the old life once more. But there, what would it benefit me? By this time all those who knew me will be dead. And she must be considered. She loved me once; perhaps she even loves me a little now. No, no! If it can be done they shall have it all.'

After a quarter of an hour's walking he entered the town and made his way towards the house where dwelt the man he desired to see. Ascending the steps into the veranda, he knocked upon the door.

'Who is there?' a voice inquired from within.

'It is I—Desrolles,' answered the man outside. 'I must see you at once. I have business of the utmost importance with you.'

'Monsieur Desrolles?' said the householder, as he opened the door to admit the man of whom he stood in such awe. 'Come inside, *mon ami*, and tell me to what happy chance I am to attribute the honour of his late visit?'

Desrolles did as he was desired, and having been ushered into the other's sitting-room, sat down, placing a small packet of papers on the table as he did so.

'Forgetful as the world is in such matters, perhaps you still remember our dear Despard,' he began as soon as the other had seated himself—'poor Despard, who died three years ago of fever?'

'Of course I recollect him,' replied the other.

'How could it be otherwise? Was he not my best friend? We lived in this house together.'

'That was so,' said Desrolles. 'Now, tell me if it did not ever occur to you at one time that he must have been a great man in France?'

'It is possible,' said the little man. 'But, at the same time, I'——

'It is quite *certain* that he was,' corrected Desrolles; and then added with conviction, 'he repeatedly told me so. I knew it from the first. He was the Count de Clairvaux.'

'The Count de Clairvaux! How could that be? I thought he was'——

'Never mind what you thought,' broke in Desrolles; 'that has nothing whatever to do with it. If you do not believe me, let me tell you that when he died he gave me certain letters—here they are—which conclusively prove what I say to be true. You may examine them for yourself.'

The other untied the packet, and one by one read the faded, musty letters it contained.

'These are certainly letters to the Count you mention. But'——

'I do not want any "buts,"' said Desrolles imperiously. 'I tell you the man *was* Count de Clairvaux. He told me so, and I always suspected it. If he were not, why should he have these letters? In what year did he come to Tonking? Answer me that.'

'In 1873,' replied the other.

'Very good. So did the Count, as I am in a position to prove.'

'But you do not really believe that our friend Despard was'——

'*Mon ami*, I do not say I believe anything. I simply assert that Despard *was* the Count de Clairvaux. On this point I am not to be moved. If you doubt my word you insult me, and I will send my friend Carniac to wait upon you to-morrow morning. You know my reputation, I think.'

The other changed front immediately.

'I do not doubt what you say for a moment,' he hastened to explain. 'If you assert that he gave you these letters, I am convinced of his identity.'

'That is good. I am delighted to hear that you are reasonable. In that case you would, of course, be prepared to swear that he left those letters in your care?'

'But he did not!'

'*Sapristi!* Am I to understand that you'——

'Do you mean that I am to say that Despard left these letters with me when he was dying?'

'Exactly, when he was dying. The fact of the matter is, there is a young man in Haiphong just now who is the Count's heir. If De Clairvaux is dead he inherits everything. They—his mother, his sister, and himself—have been in abject poverty for years, and now a windfall has come to De Clairvaux, which will pass to them on his death. Now, I happen to know that De Clairvaux *is* dead.'

The other scratched his chin and looked at Desrolles out of his sharp eyes.

'I think I understand,' he said at length. 'You, yourself, are De Clairvaux, and you want to help this young man.'

'My name is Desrolles,' broke in the old man, bringing his hand down on the table with a burst of fury. 'But I want this young man, in whom I take an interest, to understand that his uncle is dead—but not through me. Do you understand? You must hand him these letters which were left you by our friend Despard, and if necessary tell him, what is quite true, that the latter died in your arms, leaving these papers with you. Such an action cannot prejudice you at all. If you do not care to serve me'——

'Pardon me,' said the other. 'I will serve you with great pleasure. Let it remain as you say. Send your young friend to me, and I will talk to him.'

Next morning Desrolles greeted Duchesne with a smiling face.

'*Bon jour, mon ami*,' he said; 'I have an idea for you. I have been thinking over what you told me last night, and have come to the conclusion that I *do* know something of the man of whom you told me. If I mistake not, he passed here under the name of Despard. At any rate there is an old fellow living in the town yonder by the name of Dupré, with whom he was on intimate terms, and in whose house he lived for some considerable time, even if he did not die there. I do not say so authoritatively, but I think it is just possible that this Despard and the man you seek might be one and the same person. At any rate there can be no harm in your going there to inquire.'

Duchesne did as he was advised, and an hour later returned to the bungalow nearly beside himself with joy.

'Oh, how can I thank you for the advice you gave me?' he cried in an ecstasy. 'There can be no doubt that the man you knew as Despard was my uncle, the Count de Clairvaux. I have the letters and papers he left with his friend to prove it. I have also the certificate of the doctor who attended him on his deathbed, and of the clergyman who performed the ceremony at his burial. I cannot make you believe how grateful I am to you. On Thursday next I return to France with my news. Thank God, my mother and sister are now provided for, and my journey has not been in vain after all.'

'I offer you my felicitations,' said Desrolles, but with an effort. 'I trust this new-found prosperity may prove a blessing to you.'

'God grant it may,' answered the young man devoutly.

. . . . . .

'So our old friend Despard proved after all to be what he pretended—an aristocrat,' said one functionary to another on the Thursday following—the same day, indeed, that the young man whom they

had known as Duchesne bade the Colony of Tonking farewell.

'Well, well! it shows how mistaken we are all liable to be,' returned the other. 'Now, if you, my dear Desrolles, had been found to be a noble seigneur I should not have been surprised. You have the grand manner.'

'That shows again how easily one may be mistaken,' said Desrolles. 'I am nothing in the world —literally nothing, and I am not going to pretend to be more.'

'You are unusually modest to-day, *mon ami*,' said the other. 'Pray, furnish us with the reason.'

'I am suffering from the effects of a charitable action,' replied Desrolles, 'and it irritates me.' Then, with a bow, he left his friends and made his way through the jungle towards his own desolate abode. Reaching it, he stood in the veranda and looked for some moments at the sun, which was fast disappearing behind the jungle trees.

'She loved me,' he said to himself, very slowly; 'she loved me!'

Meanwhile the mail-boat was steaming across the sunlit seas, carrying with her the young man who had arrived Henri Duchesne, and was returning Count de Clairvaux.

Scarcely a day passed but he thought of the man he had left behind him, and when he reached home he brought tears into his mother's eyes with his description of that rugged old duellist whom he had tamed by kindness.

'Poor Desrolles,' he said; 'I wish I could have persuaded him to accompany me. I tried, but he would not hear of it. "Here I have lived, and here I shall die," he said. And I believe he means it. However, we will never forget the help he gave us; will we, dearest? For, remember, had it not been for him, it is just possible I should never have heard of my good fortune.'

Little did he guess how near he was to the truth.

WOOD-PIGEON SHOOTING OVER DECOYS.



HEN the season for partridge and pheasant has closed, but the wintry February weather or cold winds of early March still debar sportsmen from entering upon the delights of spring sports, the guns are often laid aside with great reluctance, for men feel that hunting alone is a poor substitute for the varied pursuits of the winter months. As a matter of fact, however, though game is out of season, there is no reason why excellent, if unaristocratic, shooting should not be enjoyed for some weeks longer by any who care to brave the exposure necessary to obtain a good day's wood-pigeon shooting.

All through the winter huge flocks of wood-pigeons frequent the large woods of the southern counties of England, which, as the weather becomes warmer, break up, a few birds remaining to breed, but the majority returning to their northern homes once more till the approach of winter shall again drive them south in search of food. In the early days of winter these flocks of pigeons finished off the acorns that the pheasants had left, and attended the late-sown fields of wheat and beans. Nor, when the snow fell, were they averse to making a meal of the green tops of turnips that showed above the white covering and afforded sustenance for all the half-frozen denizens of the woods and fields; then away to the early young clovers, picking out the 'eyes' of the little plants and doing incalculable damage to the growing crop, until they finally dispersed for the summer season.

At all these times, and in all these places, it is quite possible for a sportsman to make a bag of the birds if he set about it in the right way, though the pigeons are most accessible when feeding on the turnips. Still, that fare sadly spoils their flavour; besides, there are, I imagine, few men who care to risk their health for the sake of shooting wood-pigeons from a snowy retreat in a ditch. However, although, as we have said, they are more accessible then than at any other time, those who know how to set about it can make a very fair bag of them at any season if only they can find their feeding-ground; for wood-pigeons, when once they have chosen a field or spot, will not lightly give up attending it, and unless some unforeseen change in the weather takes place, the sportsman can rely upon the regularity of their movements.

Of course, the first thing to do on reaching the feeding-ground is to select the most suitable site for a hut from which to shoot, and a great deal depends upon the choice of a fitting place; for, unless it be carefully chosen, the sportsman as likely as not will have the chagrin of watching the birds feeding in another part of the field or alighting on favoured trees just out of gun-shot. It is not a difficult thing, however, to choose the right place, for there is generally some especially tall tree or spinny which marks the most favoured haunt of the birds.

The sportsman's next care is to construct his hut; but although we use this term as being the one most generally applied to the artificial structure which conceals the gunner, it must not be inferred that his place of concealment in any way resembles what we are accustomed to associate with the meaning of the word. Indeed, although

his 'hide' must be effectual and complete, there must not be the slightest approach to a building, and when it is finished the holly, gorse, broom, grass, brakes, or oak boughs of which it is composed must harmonise so entirely with the surrounding bushes or fence that not even these wariest of birds shall be able to detect a sign of anything unnatural. A good plan is to shape a rough framework with strong boughs first, and then, when these are so arranged as to give the occupant room to shoot without showing himself, to cut away every twig that is not absolutely essential, and finally to interweave the structure with whatever material may be most natural to the surroundings until all similarity to a hut has been destroyed, and the place appears part of the fence in which it is made. The hut should have no door, and, if possible, the means of ingress should be along the ditch, with a large bough ready to hand to cover the spot when the sportsman has gone within.

But all these preparations are of little avail without proper decoys; and though there is a great deal of skill to be acquired in the making of a hut, it is as nothing compared with that which can be attained to in the working of the decoys. The clumsy blocks of wood rudely carved and coloured to represent a wood-pigeon which are sold by gunmakers may be of some assistance in a covert (personally, we never found them so); in the open they are absolutely useless. Nor are tame pigeons much better; and if the shooter cannot get real decoys he had much better use dead or stuffed wood-pigeons, although even with these he will not be able to effect much compared with what a clever hand can do with live decoy-birds if these be well trained. Wood-pigeons, if taken young, can be very easily reared by hand, and become so tame that they will freely feed from the hand or mouth of their master; but great care must be exercised to prevent their being frightened by strangers, or their training will be put back, and birds once made shy are very slow to become tame again. If, however, they are successfully tamed and gently handled they will prove most amiable pets, and can be kept in captivity for years.

For use as decoys they should be properly braced with some soft material, care being taken not to graze the skin nor to fasten the brace too tightly and prevent their breathing. The braced birds should be taken to the shooting-ground in a suitable partitioned box or basket, and then placed on 'pulley irons' similar to the 'coy-sticks of the bird-catchers, though, of course, proportionately stronger. They are placed at a distance of from twenty-five to thirty yards from the hut (or even more if the birds be very shy), and a string keeps them in communication with the occupant of the hut, who, on seeing a flock of pigeons approach, works his decoys precisely as a bird-catcher would do, leaving off the instant his quarry observes his decoy-birds, as the wild pigeons will then assuredly make for them, and while circling round give the sportsman his opportunity for shooting.

The precise moment that the gunner should fire must be left to his discretion, though, on the one hand, he should wait until the birds are well within reach, and flying away from his hut rather than towards it; and, on the other hand, he must take care lest by waiting too long he loses a shot altogether by the birds settling down out of reach, for it is but rarely that wood-pigeons will alight near a fence or ditch. A good deal of practice is necessary for even a crack shot to get accustomed to the somewhat embarrassing and cramped position; but there is a knack that can be learnt in this as in every other kind of shooting, and when once acquired the sport becomes an exceedingly fascinating one. All the accompaniments are so different to what one generally finds when shooting in this country that the very novelty of the thing has a charm of its own. Then, too, there are few prettier sights than that of a flock of pigeons wheeling round or pitching above one's head to the musical whistling of their wings; and no one could help being fascinated by the work when once the initial difficulties of constructing the hut and working the decoys have been mastered.

Wood-pigeons are proverbially difficult to kill, so that a good gun and a straight aim are very necessary, unless one is content to see one's game go away time after time hard hit, but good for a mile or so before falling. Unless hit in the head or wing it is an astonishing thing to see how much shot a wood-pigeon will carry away, and it is wise to 'mark' every bird that goes away hit, for they will often settle on a tree hard by, to fall dead a few minutes later.

But besides the wood-pigeons or ringdoves proper, there are, in some counties, flocks of the smaller kind—stockdoves, as they are called. These generally feed and associate with the ringdoves during the winter, and can be killed in precisely similar fashion; but though their flight is far swifter than that of the ringdoves, they are much more easily killed and afford better sport, as they are more persistent than their larger cousins, and if the sportsman remain out of sight will return to his hut time after time during the same day. There is one curious thing that it is well to remember, however, in connection with these plucky little fellows, and that is, that although they may be decoyed with a ringdove on the puller, it is quite out of the question to decoy a ringdove with a stockdove on the iron; so that it is best to be provided with both kinds if possible, though ringdoves only will do very well if the others are not available. Indeed, it is not difficult to decoy the stockdoves with a tame pigeon from the cote if no better decoy be forthcoming and one happens to have one of the right

colour, for of course a fancy-coloured bird would be worse than useless.

Wood-pigeons are very regular in their hours of feeding, though these vary with the time of year. But in the winter when one shoots them it is a fairly safe rule to reach the ground in sufficient time to have all ready for them by half-past eight in the morning, as it is important not to disturb them to make the hut and thus show one's self in the neighbourhood; it is not often much use waiting after three o'clock in the afternoon. For those who love to be alone with Nature and to pit themselves without the attendant crowd of keepers and beaters against the wildest and wariest of British birds, there are many far less profitable ways of spending time than in having a day after the wood-pigeons.

A FAMOUS DUELLIST.

ONE of the most notorious of French duellists at the period of the restoration of the Bourbons in 1815, when scarcely a day passed without a hostile meeting, was the Count de Larilliere, a native of Bordeaux. At that time he was a man of about thirty-five—tall, well made, and with polished manners. His appearance, indeed, utterly belied the recklessness of his disposition.

One day, as he was walking with a friend in the principal street of Bordeaux, he saw approaching them one of the richest and most respected merchants of the town, with his newly-married wife on his arm. Larilliere advanced towards them, hat in hand, with all the outward semblance of a well-bred man, about to make a speech of more than ordinary politeness.

'I beg your pardon,' said he, addressing himself to the merchant, who, with his wife, had halted abruptly, 'but I have just made a bet with my friend, whom I have the honour of presenting to you'—here he introduced his friend in due form—'that I will kiss your wife on your arm'—the merchant, knowing the Count's character and reputation, here became deathly pale—'after having first given you a box on the ear.'

Saying this, the miscreant stared impudently in the face of the amazed merchant, and in spite of all the resistance he could offer, put both threats into immediate execution. A challenge and a meeting followed, which resulted in the injured party receiving his death-wound, and the aggressor going forth in search of new victims.

In course of time Larilliere had fought upwards of forty duels, and was able to boast of having killed no fewer than eleven individuals. He was now bent upon making up his dozen, after which he proposed to rest, and continue his practice with the new cavalry sabre, to which he had taken a strong fancy. This laudable desire was not destined to be realised, however, for he was himself killed in a duel, under strange circumstances, a few days after the death of his eleventh and last victim.

On the evening of a masked ball at the Grand Theatre at Bordeaux, Larilliere was seated in the adjoining café. It was about eleven o'clock, and the Count, not being in a very quarrelsome humour, was occupied in peacefully imbibing a glass of punch. Suddenly a tall young man, wearing a black domino and black-velvet mask, entered the room, and strode up to the table at which the formidable Count was seated.

No particular notice was taken of the newcomer at first; but no sooner was he observed to be in the close vicinity of Larilliere's table than all eyes were attracted towards him. Without a single preliminary observation, he seized hold of the Count's glass, threw away the punch it contained, and ordered the waiter in a loud voice to bring a small bottle of orgeat in its place.

Witnesses of the scene say that at this moment, for the first time in their lives, they saw that Larilliere had turned pale. It was the common belief in Bordeaux that during all the years this man had been applying himself to the work of destruction he had never once allowed his countenance to betray the slightest emotion.

'Scoundrel!' he exclaimed, 'you do not know who I am,' at the same time making a vigorous but unsuccessful effort to remove the stranger's mask.

'I know who you are perfectly well,' the other replied coldly, forcing Larilliere violently back into his seat.

All present started to their feet, and, without venturing to interfere, anxiously waited the issue of this strange provocation.

'Waiter,' exclaimed the stranger, 'be quick with that bottle of orgeat!'

At this second command the bottle was brought, and the masked man, drawing a pistol from his pocket, proceeded to address his adversary thus:

'Unless in the presence of this company, and for my own personal satisfaction, you at once swallow this glass of orgeat, I will blow your brains out with less compunction than I would those of a dog. Should you, however, comply with my bidding, I will do you the honour of fighting you to-morrow morning.'

'With the sabre?' demanded Larilliere, convulsed with rage.

'With what weapon you please,' replied the stranger disdainfully.

Whereupon the Count swallowed the orgeat, every one present preserving a death-like silence.

The masked man, satisfied with the result, now retired, saying in a voice loud enough to be heard by all in the room:

'To-day I have humbled you sufficiently; to-morrow I intend to take your life. My seconds will wait upon you at eight o'clock in the morning. We will fight on the spot where you killed the young Chevalier de C——.' This was the name of the Count's last victim.

The following morning Larilliere found himself in the presence of a man, no longer wearing a mask, who appeared to be some five-and-twenty years old, and of a calm and dignified but singularly resolute bearing. His seconds were two private soldiers belonging to one of the regiments of the garrison. They brought weapons with them, but Larilliere's seconds took exception to them, at which a scarcely perceptible smile passed over the stranger's face.

On taking his position, Larilliere turned to his seconds and said in a low tone:

'For once I believe I have found my equal.'

The combat commenced; and at the first passes the Count was convinced that he had to deal with a skilful antagonist. However, his courage did not fail him, though at times he seemed to lose somewhat of his customary composure. Lunges and parryings succeeded each other with rapidity on both sides. Larilliere had already tried his usually fatal finishing-thrust more than once, but each time only to find his effort turned aside by his adversary's blade.

Harassed at finding his efforts unavailing, he insolently remarked to his opponent:

'Well, sir, at what hour do you intend to kill me?'

A momentary silence ensued. Then the stranger, who seemed to have profited by that slight interval to assure himself that the advantage lay decidedly with him, quietly remarked:

'Immediately!'

Rushing forward, he thrust the point of his sword through his adversary, who sprang backwards, tottered, and sank into the arms of his nearest second.

Putting his right hand on the wound, the Count was just able to say:

'That, sir, is not a sabre cut; it is a thrust with the point. With the sabre I feared no one;' and in a few moments he fell back dead.

The stranger now advanced politely towards the seconds of the man he had slain, and inquired if he was at liberty to depart.

'Will you at least tell us your name?' they asked in reply.

Larilliere's opponent proved to be one of the young officers of Blaye, who had determined to avenge the murder, as he considered it, of the Count's last victim. When the fact of Larilliere's death became generally known in Bordeaux many mothers of families actually had masses said, in thankfulness for having been delivered from so dreaded a scourge.

THE EVE OF HER WEDDING.

Hush! Let me hide my happiness,
A little while let grief hold sway,
And sweetness blend with bitterness,
Before I give myself away.

Soon, soon, must pass for evermore
The scenes of old; new paths I choose;
Oh let me count my treasures o'er,
That winning love's delights I lose.

Dear home! How all its nooks and trees
Recall my childhood's joys and tears,
Mixed with immortal memories
Of twenty tranquil transient years!

Familiar sounds of birds and bees
On summer evenings fair and still,
Set to the music of the breeze,
Or twilight tinkling of the rill.

O babbling brook, O darling glade,
Old church beside thine ancient yew,
Where oft my childish feet have strayed,
I bid you all a last adieu!

Dear simple souls, so staunch and true,
In cottage homes o'er hill and dell,
A distant home is mine; to you
And yours I bid a last farewell!

A last farewell! Though all appear
Part of my very being's whole,
Linked with my whole life's sojourn here,
Knit to each fibre of my soul;

Linked with the golden dreams of youth,
And all its gay and gladsome things,
When childhood's innocence and truth
Lent to each buoyant day its wings.

My father smiles, and chides in vain
The tears my mother's love lets fall;
My sister's heart is wrung with pain—
Good-bye! I soon must leave you all!

This little hour I give to grief,
With tender thoughts mine eyes are wet;
I almost seem to find relief
In reminiscence and regret!

One little hour! My woman's eyes
With waning childhood's dews are dim.
Away! Love calls! I must arise,
And hasten forth and follow him.

J. Hudson.

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A DAY WITH MACAULAY.

By G. L. APPERSON.

EVERY Londoner knows the Albany, that long row of buildings, let out in chambers to bachelors, which links Burlington Gardens to Piccadilly. It has been well called 'a luxurious cloister, whose inviolable tranquillity affords so agreeable a relief from the roar and flood of the Piccadilly traffic.' In the Albany, in a set of chambers numbered E1, lives in January 1841 the Right Honourable Thomas Babington Macaulay. Both his *History of England* and his peerage are yet in the future. At the date named Mr Macaulay is known to readers as a brilliant essayist, but to the world at large is better known as member of parliament for Edinburgh and Secretary at War in the Whig administration of Lord Melbourne.

His chambers are comfortably furnished, and overflow with books. The hall, the two sitting-rooms, and the bedroom are all walled with volumes. On this January morning Macaulay sits breakfasting among his books. The room has few ornaments beyond some fine Italian engravings, bronze statuettes of Voltaire and Rousseau, and, on the mantelpiece, a handsome chiming French clock given to the essayist by his publisher, Mr Thomas Longman. Macaulay is seldom without a book, either in his hand or in his pocket; and this morning, as he breakfasts, he turns over the pages of a volume of Addison and Steele's *Spectator*, reading a sentence or two here, glancing over old favourite passages with a smile of friendly recognition, and more rarely reading rapidly a whole essay.

Presently he rises from the table and goes to his desk. As he crosses the floor the shortness of his figure suddenly becomes apparent. There is little, indeed, in Macaulay's whole appearance to indicate the genius and learning which are enshrined within his brain. He is short, robust, and plain-looking. His head is massive and his features are rugged and homely. When in repose his face has little animation; but when he talks it is lit by the emotions of the moment, and the deep-blue eyes sparkle with vivacity. A solid, robust individuality, of untiring energy and unwearying kindness and courtesy—such is Thomas Babington Macaulay.

Seated at his desk, he begins his labours on an article which he is preparing for the *Edinburgh Review*—an article destined to become famous as the essay on Warren Hastings. His text is the *Life* of the great Governor-general of India by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, a book which Macaulay, a day or two earlier, described to the editor of the *Edinburgh* as the worst book that he ever saw; and accordingly the opening paragraphs of the review which the essayist now writes are calculated to sting the reverend author with the causticity of their comment. A few sheets are drafted with flowing pen, and then Macaulay rises to prepare for his official day.

The new session of parliament has not yet opened, but Macaulay spends a few hours daily in Pall Mall. He emerges from the seclusion of the Albany into the full tide of life in Piccadilly, and heads for St James's Street and clubland. He looks in at Brooks's Club for a few minutes, and then continues his walk down the street into Pall Mall, and so to the War Office. With Macaulay's doings within the walls of that ill-arranged human hive we have no concern here.

Early in the afternoon the right honourable gentleman leaves his office, and, after a short visit to the library of the Athenæum Club, he makes his way Citywards. Macaulay knows the whereabouts of pretty well every second-hand bookshop and bookstall in London, and is almost as well acquainted with the stock of each shop as is the worthy bibliopole who owns it. Book-hunting is a pursuit that he loves; and when worried by the cares of office there is no relaxation so much to the minister's mind as a book-hunt among the back-lanes of the City. It would be tedious to follow this afternoon ramble in detail. Macaulay calls in at many shops where he is a well-known figure and customer, and turns over the literary wares on many a stall.

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Ballads are a specially favourite quarry of the hunter. Street ballads and songs of every kind he buys with avidity. At one bookstall, at the end of his peregrinations this afternoon, he buys a bundle of ballads, mostly broadsides, coarsely printed and adorned with the roughest of woodcuts. As he walks along Macaulay notices that a small crowd of children, who have taken much interest in his purchase, are following him; and to his intense amusement he overhears them discussing among themselves whether or not the gentleman is going to sing! Much to their disappointment, however, the supposed singer of ballads hails a passing cab, and is swiftly conveyed to the Albany. But could the children see him as he sits in the cab, his lips moving in unuttered recitation, and his hand occasionally raised with declamatory gesture, they would be still more surely persuaded that the short gentleman, if not going to sing, was at least about to make a speech. Macaulay is composing one of those ballads which will shortly be famous under the title of *Lays of Ancient Rome*, and as the lines shape themselves within the energetic brain, the lips move in time and tune to the ringing, martial rhythm of the stirring tale.

An hour or two later, Macaulay is dining within the historic walls of Holland House—once the abode of Addison and his Countess, and now full of memories of Moore, Crabbe, Sydney Smith, and many another man of light and leading. Charles Greville, the clerk of the Council, and one or two other guests, are present at the hospitable board over which Lady Holland presides; but the party is small, for Lord Holland, to whom Macaulay pays so brilliant a tribute in one of his shorter essays, has been dead only a short three months.

After dinner the party reassembles in the splendid library, which is one of the glories of Holland House. It is a long gallery lined with books, and with a bay window at each end. Tradition says that Addison, when composing, was accustomed to walk up and down this gallery, finishing during the operation two bottles of wine, which stood one at each end of the long apartment. Macaulay describes it as a 'venerable chamber, in which all the antique gravity of a college library was so singularly blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room.'

In this classic gallery Macaulay is to-night in great force. Once in the full flow of talk he gives his companions few chances to say much. He is a brilliant monologist, but knows little of the give-and-take of what is truly called conversation. He touches an amazing variety of subjects. Some chance allusion by another member of the company happens to start him on the Fathers of the Church, and Macaulay forthwith expatiates on that not too interesting topic. He mentions that while in India he had read the writings of St Chrysostom, gives the substance of a long sermon by the 'Saint of the Golden Mouth,' and thence travels on to certain obscure points in history, until Lady Holland, tiring of subjects of this kind, interrupts the flow, and shunts the talker on to a new track of ideas by saying, 'Pray, Macaulay, what was the origin of a *doll?* When were dolls first mentioned in history?'

Macaulay at once replies by explaining that the little girls of ancient Rome had dolls, which they offered up to Venus when they reached a certain age, and quotes Persius in support of this statement. From dolls he gets on to Milman's *History of Christianity*, to Strauss's *Life of Christ*—then a comparatively new book, and thence to the subject of myths in general. Macaulay is indeed a wonderful fount of rare and curious lore about every conceivable subject. His hearers may feel somewhat exhausted, somewhat submerged beneath the flow of learning and apt quotation; but Macaulay leaves off as unexhausted and as inexhaustible as he began.

Back once more in the quiet of the Albany, the brilliant talker appears in quite a different character. Before going to bed he sits down to write a little letter to one of his nieces. He writes a real child's letter in the simplest words and phrases, and winds it up with a description of a 'nice little girl, with a nice little rosy face,' for whom as a reward for good behaviour,

> They brought the browned potatoes,
> And minced veal, nice and hot,
> And such a good bread-pudding,
> All smoking from the pot!

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER VIII.—I TAKE LEAVE OF MY FRIENDS.

THE next month was, I think, the busiest in my life. For from the evening of my meeting with Michael Veitch my mind was firmly made up to go and travel abroad, and with this determination came all the countless troubles which a man must meet before he can leave his home. I was busy night and day, now down at Peebles, now riding up Manor and all over the Barns lands, seeing that all things were in right order ere my departure. I got together all the money I desired, and with drafts on the Dutch bankers, which the lawyer-folk in Edinburgh got for me, I was in no danger of falling into poverty abroad.

On Tam Todd I laid the management of all things in my absence; and Tam, much impressed by his responsibility, though it was a task which he had really undertaken long before in the later years of my father's life, went about his work with a serious, preoccupied air, as of Atlas with the world on his shoulders.

Then I had to visit many folk up and down Tweed to take farewell; and I had so many letters given me to men of standing abroad that if I had delivered them all I should have had to spend more time than I cared. One I valued more than any other, a letter written by Master Gilbert Burnet of London to a professor in the University of Leyden, which I hoped would bring me into the company of scholars. For I had changed my original intention of going to the wars; first, because I found on examination that in my inmost heart I had that hankering after learning which would never be sated save by a life with some facilities for study; second, because now that I was the sole member of the house it behoved me to bide on the land and see to it, and any such thing as soldiering would keep me away for too great a time. I sent, too, to the College Library at Glasgow for all the books on the Low Countries to be had, and spent much profitable time reading of the history of the place and how the land lay.

During these days I was much in the company of the new master of Dawyck, and a most delectable comrade I found him. He was of a free, generous nature, and singularly courteous to all, high and low, rich and poor alike. Yet with all these excellencies there was much that I liked ill about him, for he was over-fond of resorting to the taverns at Peebles, where he would muddle his wits in the company of his inferiors.

He came perhaps every third day to Barns to ride with me in the haugh, and he would abide to supper-time or even over-night, making me fear for Marjory's peace of mind. To his sister he was most dutiful and kind; and I was glad to think that now the days might be more pleasant for her with her brother in the house. And it pleased me to think that when I went abroad my lady would be left in no bad keeping.

The days, the short January days, passed quickly over my head, and almost ere I knew the time had come for my departure. And now when the hour came so nigh I felt some pain at the thought of leaving home and my beloved countryside for unknown places; though, to tell the truth, such thoughts were not ill to dispel by the contemplation of the pleasures in prospect. Yet it was with mingled feelings that I rode over to Dawyck on a sharp Monday afternoon to bid Marjory farewell.

I found her in the low, dim room looking to the west, where she was wont to sit in winter. A great fire crackled cheerily on the hearth, and many little devices about the place showed a woman's hand. Holly with scarlet berries put colour into the sombre walls, and Marjory herself, fairer than any flower, made the firelight dull in the comparison. So light and lovely she looked as she greeted me, with her bright hair and unfathomable eyes.

'I have come to see you for the last time, Marjory,' I said; 'to-morrow I set out on my travels.'

'I am vexed that you are going away,' she said, and looked at me sadly; 'it will be lonely in Tweeddale without you.'

'My dear lass, I will not be long. Two years at the longest, and then I will be home to you and travel no more. What say you, Marjory?'

'Your will be done, John. Yet I would I could have gone with you.'

'I would you could, my dear,' I said. 'But that might scarce be. You would not like, I think, to sail on rough seas, or bide among towns and colleges. You love the woods too well.'

'Wherever you were,' said she, with her dear eyes drooped, 'I would be content to be.'

'But, Marjory, lass,' I spoke up cheerfully, for I feared to make her sad, 'you would not like me to stay at home, when the world is so wide and so many brave things to be seen.'

'No, no. I have no love for folks who bide in the house like children. I would have you go and do gallantly and come home full of fine tales. But where do you mean to go, and how will you pass your time?'

'Oh,' said I, 'I go first to Rotterdam, where I may reside for a while. Then I purpose to visit the college at Leyden to study, for I would fain spend some portion of my time profitably. After that I know not what I will do, but be sure that I will be home within the two years. For, though I am blithe to set out, I doubt not that I will be blither to come back again.'

'I trust you may not learn in those far-away places to look down on Tweeddale and the simple folks here. I doubt you may, John, for you are not a steadfast man,' and at this she laughed, and I blushed, for I thought of my conduct at Glasgow.

'Nay, nay,' I answered, 'I love you all too well for that. Though the Emperor of Cathay were to offer me all his treasure to bide away, I would come back. I would rather be a shepherd in Tweeddale than a noble in Spain.'

'Brave words, John,' she cried, 'brave words! See you hold to them.'

Then after that we fell to discussing Michael and his ways of amusing himself, and I bade Marjory tell her brother to look in now and then at Barns to see how Tam Todd fared. Also I bade her tell him that it was my wish that he should hunt and fish over my lands as much as he pleased. 'And see you keep him in order,' I added, laughing, 'lest he slip off to the wars again.'

'Oh John,' she said with a frightened look, 'do not speak so. That is what I fear above all things; for he is restless even here, and must ever be wandering from one place to another.'

'Tut, my dear,' I said. 'Michael, be sure, is too honest a man to leave you again when I am off, once I have left you in his care. Have no fear for him. But we are getting as dull as owls, and it is many days since I heard your voice. I pray you, sing me a song, as you used to do in the old days. 'Twill be long ere I hear another.'

She rose and went without a word to her harpsichord and struck a few notes. Now, Marjory had a most wonderful voice, more like a linnet's than aught else, and she sang the old ballads very sweetly. But to-day she took none of them, but a brisk martial song which pleased me marvellously well. I will set down the words as she sang them, for I have hummed them many a time to myself:

Oh, if my love were sailor-bred
  And fared afar from home;
In perilous lands, by shoal and sands,
  If he were sworn to roam;
Then, O! I'd hie me to a ship,
  And sail upon the sea,
And keep his side in wind and tide
  To bear him company.

And if he were a soldier gay,
  And tarried from the town,
And sought in wars, through death and scars,
  To win for him renown,
I 'd place his colours in my breast,
  And ride by moor and lea,
And win his side, there to abide,
  And bear him company.

Forsooth a maid, all unafraid,
  Should by her lover be,
With wile and art to cheer his heart,
  And bear him company.

'A fine promise, Marjory,' I cried, 'and some day I may claim its fulfilment. But who taught you the song?'

'Who but the Travelling Packman or maybe the Wandering Jew?' she said laughingly; and I knew this way of answer which she used when she would not tell me anything. So to this day I know not whence she got the catch.

Then we parted, not without tears on her part and blank misgivings on my own. For the vexed question came to disturb me whether it was not mere self-gratification on my part thus to travel, and whether my more honourable place was not at home. But I banished the thoughts, for I knew how futile they were, and comforted my brave lass as best I could.

'Fare thee well, my love,' I cried as I mounted my horse, 'and God defend you till I come again;' and whenever I looked back till I had passed the great avenue I saw the glimmer of Marjory's dress, and felt pricked in the conscience for leaving her.

CHAPTER IX.—I RIDE OUT ON MY TRAVELS AND FIND A COMPANION.

IT was on a fine sharp morning early in February that I finally bade good-bye to the folk at Barns, and forded Tweed, and rode out into the world. There was a snell feel in the air which fired my blood and made me fit for anything which Providence might send. I was to ride Maisie as far as Leith, where I was to leave her with a man at the Harbour-Walk who would send her back to Tweeddale; for I knew it would be a hard thing to get passage for a horse in the small ships which sailed between our land and the Low Countries at that time of year.

At the Lyne Water Ford, Michael Veitch was waiting for me. He waved his hat cheerfully, and cried, 'Good luck to you, John, and see that you bide not too long away.' I told him of a few things which I wished him to see to, and then left him, riding up the little burn which comes down between the Meldon Hills, and whither lies the road to Eddleston Water. When I was out of sight of him I seemed to have left all my home behind me, and I grew almost sorrowful. At the top of the ridge I halted and looked back. There was Barns among its bare trees and frosted meadows, with Tweed winding past, and beyond a silvery glint of the Manor coming down from its blue, cold hills. There was Scrape with its long slopes clad in firs, and the gray house of Dawyck nestling at its foot. I saw the thin smoke curling up from the little village of Lyne, and Lyne Kirk standing on its whin-covered brae, and the bonnie holms of Lyne Water where I had often taken great baskets of trout. I must have stayed there gazing for half-an-hour; and whenever I looked on the brown moors and woods where I had wandered from boyhood, I felt sorrowful whether I would or no.

'But away with such thoughts!' I said, steeling my heart. 'There's many a fine thing awaiting me; and, after all, I will be back in a year or two to the place and the folk that I love.' So I went down to the village of Eddleston whistling the 'Cavalier's Rant,' and firmly shutting my mind against thoughts of home. I scarce delayed in Eddleston, but pushed on up the valley, expecting to get dinner at the inn at Leadburn, which stands at the watershed, just where the county of Edinburgh touches our shire of Tweeddale. The way, which is a paradise in summer, was rugged and cold at this season. The banks of the stream were crusted with ice, and every now and then, as I passed, I raised a string of wild-duck, who fled noisily to the high wildernesses.

I came to Leadburn about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, somewhat cold in body, but brisk and comforted in spirit. I had Maisie stabled and myself went into the hostel and bade them get ready dinner. The inn is the most villainous

bleak place that I have ever seen, and I who write this have seen many. The rooms are damp and mouldy, and the chimney-stacks threaten hourly to come down about the heads of the inmates. It stands in the middle of a black peat-bog, which stretches nigh to the Pentland Hills; and if there be a more forsaken countryside on earth I do not know it. The landlord, nevertheless, was an active, civil man, not spoiled by his surroundings; and he fetched me an excellent dinner—a brace of wildfowl and a piece of salted beef, washed down with very tolerable wine.

When I had finished, and mounted my horse, I found a stranger looking up at me with a glance half-quizzical and half-deprecatory. Then he spoke:

'Ye'll be the Laird o' Barns settin' oot on your travels?'

'Good Lord! What do you know of my business?' I asked; and as I looked at him I knew that I had seen the face before. Of a sudden he lifted his arm to rub his eyebrows, and the motion brought back to me at once a vision of excited players and a dry parched land, and a man perplexedly seeking to convince them of something; and I remembered him for the man who had brought the news to Peebles of the rising of Tweed.

'I know you,' I said. 'You are the man who came down with news of the great flood. But what do you here?'

'Bide a wee and I'll tell ye. Ye'll mind that ye tellt me if ever I was in need o' onything to come your way. Weel, I've been up Tweed and doun Tweed, and ower the hills and up the hills till there's nae mair places left for me to gang. So I heard o' your gaun ower the seas, and I took it into my heid that I wad like to gang tae. Sae here I am at your service.'

The fellow's boldness all but took my breath away. 'What in Heaven's name would I take you with me for?' I asked. 'I doubt we would suit each other ill.'

'Na, na; you and me wad gree fine. I've heard tell o' ye, Laird, though ye've heard little o' me; and by a' accoonts we're just made for ane anither.'

Now if any other one had spoken to me in this tone I should have made short work of him; but I was pleased with this man's conduct in the affair just past, and besides I felt I owed something to my promise.

'But,' said I, 'going to Holland is not like going to Peebles Fair; and who is to pay your passage, man?'

'Oh,' said he, 'I maun e'en be your body-servant, sae to speak.'

'I have little need of a body-servant. I am used to shifting for myself. But to speak to the purpose, what use could you be to me?'

'What use?' the man repeated. 'Eh, sir, ye ken little o' Nicol Plenderleith to talk that gate. A' the folk o' Brochtoun and Tweedsmuir, and awa' ower by Clyde Water, ken that there's no' his match for rinnin' and speelin' and shootin' wi' the musket. I'll find my way oot o' a hole when a'body else 'ill bide in't. But fie on me! to be blawin' my ain trumpet at siccan a speed. But tak' me wi' ye; and if I'm no' a' I say, ye can cry me for a gowk at the cross o' Peebles.'

Now I know not what possessed me, who am usually of a sober, prudent nature, to listen to this man; but something in his brown, eager face held me captive, and his powerful make filled me with admiration. He was honest and kindly—I had had good evidence of both; and his bravery was beyond doubting. I thought how such a man might be of use to me in a foreign land, both as company and protection. I had taken a liking to the fellow, and with our family such likings go for much. Nevertheless, I was almost surprised at myself when I said:

'I like the look of you, Nicol Plenderleith, and am half-minded to take you with me as my servant.'

'I thank ye kindly, Laird. I kenned ye wad dae't. I cam' to meet ye here wi' my best claes for that very reason.'

'You rascal,' I cried—half-laughing at his confidence and half-angry at his audacity—'I've a good mind to leave you behind after all. You talk as if you were master of all the countryside. But, come along; we will see if the landlord has not a more decent suit of clothes for your back if you are going into my service.'

From the landlord at the inn I bought a suit of homespun clothes which by good fortune fitted Nicol, and left his old garments as part payment. Clad decently, he looked a great, stalwart man, though somewhat bent in the back, and with a strange craning forward of the neck, acquired, I think, from much wandering among hills. I hired a horse to take him to Edinburgh; and the two of us rode out of the yard, followed by the parting courtesies of the host.

Nicol rode like a trooper, sitting his horse as if he had rarely been out of the saddle in his life. 'Where did you learn it?' I asked him, when we were almost into the little town of Penicuik. 'You seem to have been much used with horses.'

'Ye may weel say that, sir. I've ridden a horse on places that never a hoof touched afore. Ye'll hae heard tell o' Talla Linns and the sklidders abune?'

'Heaven defend us!' I cried. 'You have never ridden there?'

'Ay have I,' said he grimly, 'and to waur bits; but thae stories 'ill keep till anither time. It's no guid to spoil our startin' by tellin' wanchancy tales. If ye wad like it, Laird, I wad sing ye a bit glee;' and when I gave my

consent he broke into one of these wild, stirring ballads the country folk sing at the fairs, and from this place onward beguiled the way with many curious catches.

When we came to the brae above Rosslyn he halted and looked back to where the long-backed hills of Tweeddale broke the sky-line. A tender look came over his face. 'There ye are,' he cried, waving his hand, 'a' my ain bonny hills. I ken ye every ane, and mony a time I've wandered among ye. But it'll be lang or I see ye again, for I'm awa to laigh lands; but I'll no forget ye.'

I gripped his hand, for his feelings were mine, and I honoured the man; and from that moment began a perfect understanding between the two of us. Now I was glad that he had come with me, for he shortened the way with stories and jests which he had gathered in his many travellings, and had me now laughing and now sad, but always delighted.

Of our journey to Edinburgh I have little else to tell. We came to the town in the afternoon, and went through the streets to the port of Leith after leaving our horses at the place arranged for. I was grieved to part from Maisie, for I had ridden her from boyhood and she had come to know my ways wondrous well. We found a vessel to sail the next morn for Rotterdam, and bargained with the captain for our passage. When all had been settled, and we had looked our fill upon the harbour and the craft, and felt the salt of the sea on our lips, we betook ourselves to an inn, 'The Three Herrings,' which fronted the quay, and there abode for the night.

GARGOYLES AND VANES.

By Sarah Wilson.

WHEN we look up to the rows and rows of long level sky-lines made by the ridges of our roof-tops, it is pleasant to note their monotony occasionally broken by crest-tiles of an ornamental character. Few of us are aware of the prehistoric ancestry of these decorative ridges. In the old time before us, roofs were covered with sods or thatch, and out of these primitive materials grew weeds and wild-flowers, as their seeds were borne on to them by the winds, or carried to them by birds, which gave to their outlines the flowery effect these ornamental ridge-tiles try to reproduce for us. There are, moreover, some other features on our roofs well worthy of notice.

Let us look at some of the old rain-water spouts, or gargoyles. It is only recently that the word gargoyle has found its way into our dictionaries. Even technical glossaries of repute passed it over a few years ago. But now it is not only included, but chosen for illustration in lexicographical works that are enlivened with woodcuts. This advance in public estimation is probably the result of the exceptional wave in the waters of sanitary science now passing over us, which has drawn attention to the manner our ancestors made provision for the limitation of one of the evils with which they had to contend. We find our predecessors not only contrived a means to prevent the damp that would have ensued if rain-water had not been diverted from falling off their roofs into the foundations of their buildings, but so treated these discharging spout-heads from their gutters as to make them give considerable ornamentation. The application of the term gargoyle to these contrivances is said to be due to the dragon-like character that was at first given to them, coupled with the fact that there was a particular dragon known by that name that kept the district round Rouen in trepidation. Directly these fantastic spouts came into use they were treated as works of art, in so far as two were never made alike. Those who have studied the subject aver that many of them are fine works of sculpture; and they are often so adroitly placed as to bring out the salient points of a fabric, and conduce to its pleasing effect. They were employed from about the middle of the thirteenth century, and were gradually improved in form and delicacy of design and execution. At first they were somewhat short and thick, but after a time were made longer, to project farther, and with more elegant details.

Draped figures pouring out the waters from urns or vases are frequently seen on ancient buildings; but grotesque animals and strange birds are more usual. They are most conspicuous when placed at the angles of towers. They are, however, quite as frequently found along the aisles of churches, protruding from the parapets, to throw off the waters falling from the higher roofs of the naves. There is one on the roof of the aisle of Morpeth Church in which the rain pours out of a vessel held by a female figure. There are many ancient examples in Yorkshire churches, as at Bedale, Wensley, and Spennithorne. They form interesting features below the parapets of Pope's Tower at Stanton Harcourt, as well as on the church close by, peering down into the ripe old garden and scanning the distant country. In the quaint nook in the ancient city of Wells called the Vicars' Close, which is approached through a hoary archway rich with sculptured ornamentation as hoary and impressive, there

are several elaborately carved gargoyles looking down from the embattled and open-work parapets of a neighbouring roof upon the placid length of the close and upon the gabled fronts of the vicars' houses with their charming oriels, one of which represents a hooded monk with a roll in his hand, from which the waters issue. There are examples in Northamptonshire, in Somerset, at Lostwithiel in Cornwall, and, in fine, in most counties. In France and Italy they are still more numerous. Nor has 'the modern,' as we have been called, discarded them. They help to make up the picturesque outlines of the superb chalet in Northumberland known as Cragside. Craning their long necks above the roof-tops of various parts of the structure, curious creatures look over the rocky steeps, the rock-formed steps in the banks, the cascading and eddying burns, their fern-clad banks, the sweeps of choicest heather, the flowery walks, and the great silent stone-strewn moor encircling the grounds, with considerable contribution to the attractiveness of the building.

Weather-cocks or vanes, or fanes, as they were formerly named, are also interesting features on roofs. They have their legends, and can even boast a fulfilled prophecy. There was an old assertion, similar in character to many of Mother Shipton's prophecies, that the ball on the top of St Paul's Cathedral and the vane of Bow Church should one day be under the same roof, which, unlikely as it appeared, actually took place when they lay side by side for repair, or additions, in a London foundry. They have a dash of comicality, too, as when in the days of Jumbo's popularity a huge elephant was placed as a vane on a high water-tower at Colchester. Their artistic value has been noted and made use of in many works of repute. Even the late poet-laureate more than once gave them a place in his word-pictures. In *Walking to the Mail*, John asks: 'Whose house is that I see?' And goes on to explain:

> 'No, not the county member's with the vane:
> Up higher with the yew-tree by it and half
> A score of gables.'

And in *The Letters* the first line reads, 'Still on the tower stood the vane.' In *Aylmer's Field*, too, there is mention of a blazing wyvern that 'weather-cock'd the spire.'

Longfellow, likewise, used them often as touches of enrichment. The Academy on the Hill of Science, in the *Poet's Tale*, has a belfry crowned with a 'vane of brass;' the village church spire, in *The Children of the Lord's Supper*, is tipped with a vane of metal; Paul Revere 'saw the gilded weather-cock swim in the moonlight' when he galloped into Lexington; sunsets gilded the vanes on the chimneys in the little village of Grand Pré; and on the farm-buildings of Benedict Bellefontaine, over the thatched roofs and the corn-lofts and the dovecots, 'in the variant breezes numberless noisy weather-cocks rattled and sang of mutation.' And it would be easy to lengthen this list from the pages of other poets. The cock is regarded as a representative of the one that crowed on the morning that Peter denied his Master, by those who find types in all architectural features. The instrument of martyrdom of the patron saints of some churches are chosen for vanes, as in the case of the gridiron of St Lawrence at Bishopstone Church, Herefordshire. Heraldic devices are still more frequent, especially on old manor-houses. Banner-shaped vanes are also very general. These are survivals of the old custom of displaying the heraldry of a proprietor on the banner that he unfurled on his topmost tower, or rather an application of the same mode of proclaiming his proprietorship, as many of them are perforated with crests and monograms. Looking up at them from the ground, no one would give them the credit of their dimensions and weight, which are really very considerable. They are often made of gun-metal, and weigh several hundredweights. A copper vane on West Vale Church, Halifax, weighs, with its cardinal points, twelve hundredweight, and the cock measures between two and three feet from beak to tail; and this is by no means an unusual size.

In a few instances there may be seen, standing out shadowless against the sky, on the roofs of ancient castles, stone figures of men, life-sized, hurling down stones, or discharging arrows, or in other ways taking part in the defence of the fortress. These are thought to have been placed there to give an appearance of a good strong garrison, and to confuse besiegers when taking aim at such of the beleaguered as manned the walls. They are to be seen both in England and Scotland, and they have been noted as well on ancient town-gateways. There are a score or more of these stone warriors on the roofs of the towers of Alnwick Castle. Some of them stand on the coping of the battlemented parapets; and they stood there, looking down into the courtyards, or baileys, when three Plantagenet kings successively rode under the deep-ribbed archways of the entrance gateways, and, dismounting, strode into the thick-walled chambers of the keep of the ancient Percies; for they are of great antiquity. They are not only on such of the towers as are easily approached, but upon those defending the innermost courtyard. Some carry shields; some have crossbows; some have lifted large stones shoulder-high; others appear to be merely watching. No two of these are alike, as in the case of gargoyles.

The outlines of the gables of some roofs, instead of being two slanting lines forming an angle more or less acute, are made in steps. This form is called step-gabled in England, and corbie-gabled in Scotland; and it possesses an old-fashioned charm, combining movement, dignity, and a pleasant air as of salutation and welcome. There are several good examples in Norfolk. The real home of the

corbie-steps, however, is in Scotland, where it may be considered a national feature. Argyll House, Stirling, owes as much to the corbie-stepped gables as to the high cone-shaped roofs on its staircase towers for its quaint effect. The corbelled-out bartisans of such edifices as Elcho Castle, Perth, would lose much of their indescribable character if associated with gables finished in a less characteristic manner. Thousands of brave Scots in distant lands, recalling and picturing to themselves the auld house at home, amidst their foreign surroundings, think of them with indelible delight. The first view Waverley had of Tully-Veolan manor-house, it will be remembered, consisted of steep roofs and narrow gables with lines indented with steps; and on further acquaintance he saw, projecting from the roof among the bartisans and turrets, gargoyles in the form of the bears which were so lavishly used to decorate the building. And, although this is not a sketch of any particular mansion, Sir Walter Scott tells us he has incorporated in it the peculiarities of various old Scottish seats, and especially features to be found in the ancient houses of Warrender upon Bruntsfield Links, Old Ravelston, Dean near Edinburgh, Grandtully, and perhaps Traquair. The great word-painter has not omitted to mention there was a gilded bear there, too, 'by way of vane.'

So far, we have glanced only at the old-world relics upon our roofs. Over and above these we have various presentments of our own progress. On some roofs we may see anemometers, with their balls 'swimming in the moonlight' like the vane Paul Revere saw as he galloped into Lexington, or languidly poised in the golden sunshine, or tearing round and round in tempests; on others we may see lightning-conductors. There is an anemometer, for instance, on the summit of the highest tower of the keep of Alnwick Castle, high above the heads of the stone warriors mentioned as guarding the roofs of many of the lower towers around it, as well as a lightning-conductor. There are long lines of telegraph wires, the gossamers of modern invention, stretched across the roofs of thousands of our houses; and telephone and electric lighting wires are becoming equally general.

Just as there is 'a soul above the soul of each which yet to each belongs,' as the poet has it, so there is above our streets and above our roof-tops, frequented only by the birds of the air, a strange city of gargoyles, vanes, statues, lightning-conductors, fire-escapes, ventilators, advertisements, signboards, and miles and miles of wires, crossing and recrossing, veiled in 'the curling smoke' of chimneys, with legends and traditions and poetry of its own.

JUST AN EPISODE.

By Florence Eugénie Davidson.

CHAPTER I.

I TRIED not to show it, but I certainly was irritated: my breakfast lost its flavour, and I could not endure to see Mimsy, just outside the dining-room window, revelling in the sunshine which lapped her around as though it loved her, while she fed the pigeons and coo-cooed to them in their own soft tones.

And there was my sister Priscilla, seated opposite me, stabbing me again and again, pitilessly, mercilessly, though unconsciously, until it was a relief to hear the crunch of horses' hoofs on the gravel, and know that I could leave home-vexations behind for a time as I flew along to visit my patients.

On one point I was absolutely determined: I would not marry Mimsy. That is to say, I would not ask *her* to marry *me*. That should at last be settled beyond alteration. I had been working up to this conclusion for a long time. Since I became her guardian, when she came to me twelve years ago, a dainty little maiden of six, the young monkey had woven herself into my life until she was a part of it. And as she grew from childhood into womanhood, tall and slim and fair, brightening the house with her sunniness and making everyone love her, I became conscious that some day, perhaps before long, she would assuredly be wooed and won.

And now the blows that I anticipated were beginning to fall: this was the first; there would be a series. And I—under whose care she lived, who loved every tone of her happy voice, every touch of her soft hand, loved her as I felt sure no other man, however worthy and ardent, could ever love her—would not even try to win her love in return. And why? Well, the long string of letters after my name represented many years of hard work, and made me realise that I was forty—just to think of it!—while Mimsy was only eighteen. Then I stood in the relation of a father to her. It could not be otherwise, in spite of all the little tender caresses of which she was so prodigal. They meant nothing more than a child's gratitude and appreciation of kindnesses received.

And now, what was it that Priscilla said that took the flavour from my coffee and made eating a pretence? Her words rang in my ears as I was borne along.

'Yes, Mimsy is certainly very attractive and

sweet, and no wonder Harry has lost his heart to her. Do you know, John, the boy came to me last night in a very diffident way and asked me to speak to you?'

Knowing me to be a man of few words, Priscilla did not appear to expect any comment. If she could have seen the big thump that my heart gave at that moment, she might not have continued so placidly:

'You see, John, Harry has confided to me that he loves Mimsy. He said: "Auntie, I believe I have always loved her. I cannot remember the time, since she lived with you, when it was not a pleasure to be with her, to run and fetch and carry for her, and to be her slave. No other woman has ever for one moment come before her. I think she cares for me too. Will you speak to uncle? I feel just a little afraid that he will not think me worthy of her. And yet, if he would give his consent to an engagement, I would prove myself worthy. I would work, and rise in my profession, and make a name that you should all be proud to hear." Harry has the greatest admiration for you, John'——

It was at this precise moment of Priscilla's discourse that I formed a desperate and sudden resolution. I would not only allow but would help on this affair. If Mimsy cared for Harry, she should marry him if she would. I got up from the table, and composed myself sufficiently to say:

'Harry is a fine young fellow, Priscilla; tell him he may try his luck.'

In came Mimsy through the open window, and, seeing that I was just going, darted across the room and linked her hands over my arm:

'What! going already, Guardy? Bother the patients; they are always taking you away from us.'

And then she put her soft lips to my hand and gave it a series of little kisses. I remonstrated:

'My dear child, you are getting too old for this sort of thing. You really must not behave so foolishly.'

But she only laughed.

'You dear, sweet, good man, there is no one like you in the whole world. *I'll* see you into the carriage.' Which she did, standing on the step to have a parting word. 'I want to consult you, darling, particularly.' Then she jumped lightly to the ground and waved her hand as I disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

I WAS much disturbed by Priscilla's announcement; but when the carriage stopped I resolutely put all thoughts of it away, giving to my day's work the attention I loved to bestow. It was always pleasant to me to see the brightening of a weary face when I entered a sick-room, or to give relief when a delicate case of surgery demanded all my care and skill.

That morning I had a large number of patients to visit, and it was past the usual time when I turned into the drive of my own house, to see those who, I knew, would be awaiting me there.

Arrived in the consulting-room, I glanced down the list which my man had put on the table. The first name on it was that of General Miller. I rang the bell for him to be shown in.

A few moments later and Harris's quiet step crossed the hall; but instead of announcing the General, whom I rose to receive, he said: 'Miss Miriam, sir,' and retired.

And there before me, in defiance of my strict rule prohibiting members of my household from intruding on my professional time, stood Mimsy, in all the glory of full riding-costume, her face flushed with the consciousness of her wrong-doing, and her eyes sparkling with mischief.

'Sure, thin, docther darlint,' she said, with a fine Irish brogue put on for the occasion, 'it's myself that's very ill. An' will ye be prescribin' for me now?'

Then, catching sight of my face as I stood silent, severely displeased, she changed her tone:

'Oh, yes, I know. But it's all right. I listened for the bell, and pounced on Harris, and *made* him show me in.'

Then she tried coaxing.

'I *do* want a few moments of your time, Guardy. And you can make me pay for it, you know. Send in your bill, as you do to your other patients.'

I took no notice of this intense rudeness. People who live in constant daily intercourse with you sometimes permit themselves to say things which the less intimate would not say. It is the contempt following familiarity.

'Well, make haste,' I said, with more asperity than I felt, withdrawing my hand, which she had seized in her slim fingers; 'I have a roomful of people to see, and my time is precious.'

'I hate patients!' she exclaimed emphatically. 'If I married a doctor I would offend them all. Everything has to give way to them—horrid things!'

I made a gesture of impatience.

'I wonder if you will ever grow up, Miriam,' I said. How very young she was!

Suddenly she went to the point.

'You see, Guardy, it's just this. Harry asked last night if he might ride with me this morning; and Priscilla says I must ask you if you approve of so much scampering over the country with Harry, and so—and so'—— lamely. 'Well, that's all, Guardy.'

All, indeed! I restrained a desire to take her by the shoulders and put her out of the room. Wasting my time for this! And yet, after all, it was right that she should come to me; right, if Harry loved her, that he should have a chance of telling her so. And why not now? Harry was twenty-four, a fine, honest, straightforward young

soldier, likely to rise in his profession, as he said, and devoted to Miriam.

'The question is, Do you like Harry to ride with you?' I asked nervously, vaguely wondering, the while, why I was nervous. I had made up my mind that morning, most decidedly, that Miriam was not for me; therefore she might be for Harry if they both so chose.

'Oh yes, darling,' frankly. 'I am so fond of Harry. He is so bright and cheerful and full of fun. And we tear along at such a pace that poor old Jenkins gets quite puffed. A gallop with Harry is a perfect delight, Guardy.'

Yes, that was it—'so bright and cheerful and full of fun;' just suited to one another, in fact.

'Very well, then, off you go with Harry,' I said, with as much grace as I could command; for well I knew that, with my consent, conveyed to him through Priscilla, Harry would lose no time in coming to the point. I felt instinctively that this morning's ride would decide Mimsy's fate—and mine. Yet why mine? I had given up all thought of winning her myself, much as I loved her. I was not going to ask her to love an old fogey like me other than as she did already—as a child would love its father. Had I not settled it once for all? And my time being wasted like this, too! I must get rid of her at once. And yet, as she stood there before me, in all the flush of her youth and beauty, I would have given worlds to have kept her my little child-ward for ever. But it could not be. ('Stifle down your regrets, you medical man of middle-age! Think of marrying some one who will love your patients for the money they represent, and rule your house with the wisdom of the world!')

I took my courage in both hands. I drove Mimsy from the room and shut the door upon her, and I rang the bell for General Miller with unaccustomed violence—I who loved quietness and repose, and impressed the practice of those virtues upon my household!

General Miller was suffering from a poisoned finger; and as it had been necessary for me to perform a slight operation, he came now to have the wound dressed. I turned my whole attention to the matter in hand as soon as he entered the room. I would not allow myself to think of anything else. And when the horses came round, past my window, and I heard Mimsy's voice saying, 'No, Harry; Jenkins will put me up,' I bent over the poor discoloured finger before me, and touched it very tenderly. But, though I would not look up, I could not shut my ears to the chatter going on at the hall-door, and I was glad when the sounds grew fainter and fainter, until at last, in the distance, they gradually died away.

(To be continued.)

SHIPS' NAMES.

SOME time ago, when warships' names were under consideration, a suggestion was made that those chosen should be fairly familiar to sailors knowing 'little Latin and less Greek.' Hardy toilers of the sea decline to delve among classic roots. This fact did not escape the notice of Dean Trench, who indicated the tendency of British sailors to Anglicise all ships' names. Thus *Bellerophon* becomes 'Billy Roughen' in the nautical vernacular; *Terpsichore* lives again as 'Tapsikoar;' while *Eurydice* and *Calliope*, or even *Penelope*, would be utterly unintelligible to their fair owners could they revisit our planet from the shades. Anson, Benbow, Collingwood, Nelson, and Rodney are names to conjure with to-day. Not every admiral, however, has been blessed with a name suitable for pious perpetuation in this way. Shovel and Mings would scarcely be satisfactory, although those sterling seamen illuminate the pages of modern history. Such expressive terms as *Retribution*, *Powerful*, *Terrible*, *Vengeance*, *Magnificent*, and *Thunderer* appeal powerfully to our jolly jack-tars. The *'Saucy' Arethusa!* What old-time memories that combination of letters brings vividly back to sea-folk! Hence the name of a warship famed in song and story is quite naturally handed down from generation to generation as a precious heirloom. Occasionally, however, a brand-new name is introduced, as, for example, the *Shah*, allotted to a ship launched during a visit of that Persian potentate to our shores. Frequently the name of a warship will afford an approximate indication as to her magnitude. Thus it might safely be predicted that the *Goliath* is a big ship, and the *Pigmy* a relatively small one.

In the Merchant Navy, also, some regard is paid to the appropriateness of names applied to ships. Owners adopt some special system, or have their vessels christened after mountain, dale, river, lake, or other distinctive feature of the land to which they belong or whither they trade. Prior to 1871 the name of a British ship might not legally be changed, though a vessel bought from a foreign flag was free from such restriction. Now, after compliance with certain conditions, reputed safeguards against fraud, and advertising the proposed change in the shipping journals, a ship may assume a name other than that she received on launching. An unseaworthy ship cannot defy detection by an alias, inasmuch as her original appellation, and any other she may subsequently have borne, will be found in the Mercantile Navy List and Lloyd's Register of Shipping. An owner, deeming *The Devil* somewhat unflattering, changed the name of his purchase to *The Printer's Boy*, apparently in a jocular

mood, to express the same thing more euphoniously. Another vessel, the *Weasel*, bought by a Scotch firm, forthwith became the *Scotia*. Changing again to English owners, she was named *Exmouth*, to agree with other vessels of her new firm, bearing the names of Devonshire worthies, such as *Grenville*, *Northcote*, and *Raleigh*. A Nova Scotia craft, once the *Pet*, is now the *Virago*. Perhaps she did not justify the high opinion held of her while yet untried. The *Viking* has become the *Czarina*. Here we have a change from masculine to feminine, though both relate to northern dynasties. It must not be forgotten that a ship, whatever her name, is always referred to by seafarers as if of the gentler sex.

With the exception of fishing-vessels, yachts, and craft on inland waters, every British ship must have her name well in evidence on each bow, the letters not less than four inches in height, of a light colour on a dark ground, and dark on a light ground. Her stern is embellished with her name and her port of registry. The most cursory glance at the names of British ships is sufficient to show how true it is that the sun never sets on the British flag. There are *Ben Seng Heng* of Singapore, *Bhownugger* of Bombay, *Beata Virgine del Carmelo* of Malta, *Boule d'Or* of Quebec, *Ysidora Rionda* of New Providence, *Bricks Bergen* of Bermuda, *Josefita* of Belize, *Nijverheid* of Cape Town, *Jeane Antoinette Rose* of Mauritius, and other examples too numerous to mention. Probably the longest name on record is that of a vessel belonging to Colombo, the *Wesakan Seria Kentadewy Kerre Amina*. This must cover a large portion of her hull if properly painted. A story, which, if not true, is not badly told, runs to the effect that while the barque *Cape City* was at Hong Kong a Chinaman was engaged to paint the necessary name on each bow. He produced on one bow the legend CAPECITY, without a space between the two words. Then he noted that the 'Y' was nearest to the ship's stern; and remembering this fact, he afforded an excellent example of how severely logical his race can be, for in a little while he had painted on the other bow the striking permutation YTICEPAC, to his own delight and the crew's amazement.

Humorous and sentimental elements are not wanting in ships' names. *What's that to you?* would be a rather saucy reply to the friendly hail across the waters, 'What ship is that?' *Go ask her* may have a hidden meaning, and the *Why not?* is suggestive. An apparently apologetic owner names his craft *Can't help it*, and the Mark Tapleys are represented by *Happy-go-lucky* and *Jolly Dogs*. Several small vessels are named *Try*, and an equal number *Try again*, which implies previous failure. A few less emphatic prefer *I'll try*. Probably the latter have invested hard-earned capital, and will try to woo fickle fortune on the salt sea. *Lead on*, *Go ahead*, *I'll away*, and *Fear not* indicate the dashing owner; but there is room for speculation as to the significance of the name *Just in time*. Newfoundland has a vessel named *X.10.U.8*, perhaps gleaned from the puzzle column of a local paper, for Extenuate; *XL.* may stand for Excel or for Forty; and *X.X.X.* smacks of the pothouse treble X.

Managers of large shipping firms do not unbend in this way when allotting names to their ships. The Peninsular and Oriental and the British India generally affect names of Indian places. Over twenty-five steamers belonging to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company take their names solely from home and foreign rivers, such as Tamar, Nile, and Tagus. The New Zealand Shipping Company and Shaw Savill Company have a number of fine steamships and sailing-vessels named after rivers, towns, and mountains in New Zealand. Ships of the Aberdeen White Star Line all have classical names except, perhaps, one, the *Samuel Plimsoll*, named after that seaman's friend as a tribute to the esteem in which he is held by the firm. Their famous *Thermopylæ*, no longer under the White Star flag, made some remarkably rapid passages under canvas when a new ship. Messrs Lamport & Holt have a large steam fleet bearing the names of men distinguished in literature, in science, and in art—such as Caxton, Euclid, Mozart, and Archimedes, to wit. Another Liverpool firm, the Ocean Steamship Company, has ransacked Homer and Greek literature; and the heroes whose praises are sung there, and the poets who sang them, live again in the *Ajax*, *Agamemnon*, *Æschylus*, and others. Names of Cunard steamers end in 'ia,' as the *Lucania;* those of the White Star in 'ic,' as the *Majestic*. Harrison Line steamers bear class names, such as *Editor*, *Astronomer*, and *Explorer*. None but birds' names are conferred on vessels of the General Steam Navigation Company, and the list of the ships belonging to Messrs G. & J. Burns reads like an inventory of a zoological garden. Counties, cities, dukes, princes, lords, and similar items form the basis of classification differentiated for various lines. Among ships' names will be found the latest hero of the drama, the latest battle, the winner of the Derby, and the most famous statesmen.

For many years the christening of a vessel has been accomplished by breaking a bottle of wine on her bow as she glides into the water from the place where she is built. An improvement on this has been made in two of the United States of America, Delaware and Maine. There the wine is dispensed with; and in lieu thereof young ladies, tastefully dressed, throw flowers at the bow and the stern of the vessel as she strikes the water. The Japanese use neither wine nor flowers. A pasteboard cage, containing several birds, is suspended over the ship's stern, and immediately the vessel is afloat a man pulls a string which opens the cage-door, and the birds fly away. Not infrequently the large number of feathered songsters make the air alive with music and the whir of wings. It is said that underlying this curious custom is the belief of the Japanese that the singing birds welcome the ship as she commences her career, a thing endowed with motion. In olden times ships were fewer and names more poetical as a general rule than at present.

IN COMMAND OF A COMPANY.

AN EPISODE OF THE TURCO-GREEK WAR.

By THEODORE THEARLE.

'I IMPLORE you, Sophia, to listen to reason and come with me at once; every moment's delay is increasing our peril.'

'And be a coward!' she interrupted, with such withering scorn in the last word that a flush rose to my cheeks.

'Precaution is not cowardice but wisdom,' I retorted, somewhat nettled; 'while to remain here another hour is simply madness. Look yonder; there are the Turkish camp-fires not four miles distant; while, from what I could learn this afternoon, the Greeks are retreating, and have changed their line of defence, so that there is actually at this present moment not a man between us and the enemy, and we may expect a visit from some of their scouts at any instant. Such a house as this will not long escape their ravenous gaze.'

'Don't dare to tell me, Jack, that the Greeks are retreating. It is a downright lie, and I scorn its teller.' With that she stamped her little foot so vehemently that I started at the wild, patriotic passion that fired this flashing-eyed Thessalian maid; and, angry and annoyed though I was at her stubborn resistance to my wish, my admiration and love for her was only inflamed a hundred-fold by her unselfish and reckless heroism.

'Come, like a good girl, and talk sensibly,' I replied in a coaxing manner, trying at the same time to take hold of one of her hands, which, however, she indignantly withdrew. 'There is no denying we are between two fires at present. To-morrow, more than likely, there will be a battle, and your father's house here is sure to be seized by the Turks; and what will become of you then, Sophia?' and I shrugged my shoulders by way of warning.

'No, Jack; I shall stick to my post,' she answered persistently. 'If there is a battle, all the greater need for me to be here to tend the wounded. Who knows but that my father or brothers may be carried in here, and shall I be less brave than they? Besides, I have no fear for the Greeks; they will soon drive the Turks out of this helter-skelter. As soon as it is daylight I shall hoist the Greek flag, so that they may know where I am.'

'For heaven's sake don't do that, Sophia; it will bring a horde of Turks down on you at once. What a fool I have been to remain here so long, or let you stay either! It was my love for you, Sophia,' I added in tenderest tones, 'that made me consent to your wilful delay.'

'You might have been better occupied fighting for dear old Greece. I was quite competent to look after myself,' was the cool rejoinder.

'Precious little use I would be to them. I always find people can manage their own affairs much better without the fussing help of outside individuals. You see, I am not a boaster, like some others I know.'

'You mean Captain Xenides by your cowardly sarcasm. It little becomes *you* to miscall a brave man who is fighting nobly for his country, while you, who profess love for me, are hanging round, with your hands in your pockets, doing nothing.'

'Except risking my head every moment I wait here, which is more than that penniless adventurer would dare to do for you. You know well that the Turks have good cause to hate me. My love for you, Sophia, has led me to spend more money than was either safe or prudent in helping to arm your thankless nation.'

The deep flush of anger that heightened the colour on cheek and forehead of this handsome, high-blooded girl warned me that my jealous frenzy at the name of a dreaded rival had overstepped the mark.

'Ah, you English! you are all alike a race of shopkeepers. It is always money, money, with you. You boast and brag of it as if it should buy everything. In your arrogance and conceit, no doubt, you think you have a right to me, being the richest bidder. How I do pity your poor English girls! But it is time you learned a lesson; and I am glad I am here to teach you there is something your money can't buy, and that is a Greek girl's heart. That can only be won by the brave man who dares to fight for his country.'

'Now, look here, Sophia, before this wretched, foolish war broke out, and that mealy-mouthed Xenides put such stuff and nonsense into your head, you were really a sensible girl; and I think, Sophia, you cared a little for me.'

'Sensible! Thank you for your complimentary condescension. I suppose "sensible" girls in England fetch higher prices. As for caring for you then, why, that was before your courage had been tested'——

'And you had seen the smart uniform and dashing bearing of Captain Xenides,' I added, with slight scorn.

Then, as I thought a moment, a resolution formed itself to go over to the Greek lines, and by representing her danger to the commander, prevail upon him, for her father's sake—a well-known colonel—to send a small contingent to rescue her from her peril; for my heart sickened

at the thought of such a beautiful girl falling into the hands of the Turks.

'Now, Sophia, time is precious. Not caring to lose my head as you have done, only in a different way, I am determined to put some miles between myself and these swarthy rascals over there,' I said, pointing to an irregular line of flickering flames that now seemed brighter in the gathering dusk. 'If you will not come, then I must say good-bye—perhaps—for ever.'

My faltering tones suddenly seemed to touch the deeper passionate nature of the girl, and there, in the darkness, she took my hand:

'You have been a kind friend to me, Jack, and should we never meet again you will sometimes think of me, Jack, won't you? My duty will not let me go with you. If I do fall into the hands of the Turks, and if they are as bad as report makes them out to be, do not fear on my account. See'—and she opened the bosom of her dress and took out a small revolver, whose cold, polished steel muzzle glistened in the darkness—'that will rob them of their prey. Good-bye.' Then she lifted her beautiful face to mine, and in a moment my lips were pressed against hers in one long, passionate kiss, until she gently pushed me back, and, turning round, vanished into the house, leaving me standing in the garden alone.

My first impulse was to dash after her and avow my intention of standing by her and defending her to the last; but a moment's reflection showed me the folly of such an idea. What could one man do against a multitude of armed soldiers? Besides, if I could possibly reach the Greek lines I might succeed in getting a company to come to her rescue.

This last thought determined my movements at once. Taking a glance at the dim glare that marked the position of the Greek camp-fires, I started off at a brisk pace in that direction.

The stillness as of foreboding death reigned over the land, and above the darkness one by one the stars peeped out, like the distant camp-fires of a heavenly host gathered on the eve of battle to witness the scene of carnage.

But there was little time to think of the beauty of the night. If one has ever tried to cross a vine-growing country, especially at night, he will know and appreciate the difficulties that faced me; the high walls to scale and deep ditches to jump tested temper and patience.

I had just reached a little stone-paved path, winding in and out amongst the vineyards and olive groves, when I heard the clatter of horses' hoofs behind. A lemon-tree grew near at hand, and in a few seconds I had climbed into its branches, hiding myself as best I could amid its leaves.

A group of horsemen presently appeared, approaching at a walking pace, and the Turkish fez and tunic soon indicated their nationality.

I held my breath as they passed beneath, and catching a few of their words which happened to be intelligible, I guessed that they were in search of some one.

I had scarcely descended and gone a few steps to the left through a vineyard, when I was arrested by talking just in front, and almost walked into another Turkish patrol. Things were looking exceedingly unpleasant, and I bitterly repented having waited so long with such a foolhardy girl.

Slowly I groped my way back to seek the kindly shelter of the lemon-tree, and as I did so I became aware of stealthy footsteps following. With the sudden impulse of flight I quickened my pace, but the cat-like tread followed hard behind. I had certainly been noticed, and yet I wondered at this mysterious mode of tracking. Why did they not challenge me at once to stand? There was something suggestive of hidden devilry in its slyness; and all the stories of Turkish atrocities that have been circulating so freely amongst the Greeks flashed through my mind and made my nerves tingle with a strange dread.

However, I kept stumbling on my way, ever conscious that my pursuer, with sinister purpose, never allowed me to escape his sight. If there had just been one I might have risked an encounter, but with so many Turkish soldiers round, such a proceeding would be absurd; my only chance was in trying to discover some place of concealment.

On arriving at the middle of a rather dense grove, I was on the point of turning round to see if my silent pursuer was near at hand, when I felt a sudden grasp on my throat, and I was borne to the ground by a powerful arm, as a voice whispered in broken Turkish:

'Not a word or you are a dead man!' while the gleam of cold steel, in the shape of a dagger held aloft, enforced this strange command.

Knowing that in war threats are most summarily carried out, and that one dead man more or less matters little, I prudently held my peace, and a peculiar instinct restrained me from struggling.

For a while he held me motionless until the tramp of horses' hoofs on a neighbouring road died away, and then, a weird curiosity overcoming my patience, I managed to gasp:

'What do you want?'

'Your clothes,' came the muffled answer.

'Was the man mad?' I wondered; for what could he want with clothes, seeing that he was resplendent in officer's uniform? 'Ah! most likely a deserter,' I thought, 'and wants an exchange of garments. Well, perhaps after all it might not be so bad for me; a uniform might help me to pass the Turkish lines easier.'

'Is that all?' I asked again with whispered breath, for which now I seemed to understand the reason.

'Yes, an exchange.'

'All right; there is my word of honour for it.'

He relaxed his hold, and silently, in the stillness and gloom of the clump of trees, we each divested ourselves of our respective garments and made a fair exchange.

'Your name?' he whispered.

'James Henry Nuttall of Liverpool.'

I was going to ask his by way of return, when he suddenly vanished as stealthily as he came. It was not until I had fastened the last buckle of my uniform that the awful truth dawned on me that he was a Greek officer, a spy most likely, sorely pressed by the enemy's scouts. I hastily glanced at my clothes; and, dark though it was, I soon recognised the Greek uniform, though I could not yet distinguish the colour. That accounted for the strange Turkish accent of my assailant, which at first I had imagined was due to whispering and my own ignorance.

My already evil plight had thus become vastly worse, for it was evident I personated the man for whom the soldiers were in search. Possibly he had been challenged and made off, with the Turks in pursuit, and in his desperation had crossed my path, when his quick wit suggested a chance of escape. Altogether I smiled grimly as I thought my name would not extract much leniency from the Turk, for, owing to the silly love affair and my devotion to a headstrong girl, I had made myself most obnoxious to the Turkish authorities, and was regarded as partly responsible for the war by supplying money for arms and ammunition to freebooters.

Once more I heard footsteps and voices approaching. I seemed to be in a veritable nest of the enemy. In despair I gazed wildly round, looking in vain for some hiding-place. There was none. Two Turks were already in sight, and a shrill 'Who goes there?' sounded in my ears, and I caught the glimpse of a raised rifle. With one bound I cleared a small mound of earth in front of me, and leaping over another wall, took to my heels as fast as my legs could carry me, while the swift 'ping' of a bullet sped through the air close to my ear.

When a boy my only prizes at school had been for races, and in a moment I seemed to have recovered my old agility. As in that wild steeplechase for life I sprang over the succession of mud walls that surrounded the numerous vineyards, the commands of the old drill-sergeant kept ever recurring: 'Feet well together! Chest expanded!'

Fortunately I had taken a direction impossible for horsemen, so, save for the bullets that whistled past, I was unfollowed. My last leap, however, ended with an unexpected blow, as down I fell some twelve feet on the opposite side of the dike, and lay stunned on a heap of stones.

When I awoke to consciousness day had dawned, and the earth seemed actually to be trembling with the noise of battle. Away to my right an incessant roar of artillery showed that the war-cloud had burst, while every now and then a sharp, crackling fusillade told of hotter and closer engagements; and suddenly I would start at the sound of a loud whir as a shell passed overhead.

Putting my hand into the breast-pocket of my tunic, I discovered a small flask of brandy, which quite refreshed me; and, starting to my feet, I followed the bed of a little river towards where a small party of Greeks were gallantly defending a grassy knoll. Partly covered by the banks of the stream, I managed to arrive at the spot with little danger, and had barely reached the top, when I was accosted in a loud voice by a heated and smoke-begrimed-looking major on horseback.

'Hollo, captain! Mighty glad to see you, wherever you have dropped from. Have you a command?'

'No,' I gasped half-breathlessly. And then, before I could utter a word of explanation, he exclaimed:

'Here, then, take charge of this company. Both the other fellows are hit. Hold this mound at all hazards. I'll be back shortly;' and setting spurs to his horse, he galloped away till lost in the clouds of smoke that hung deep and heavy over the scene of conflict.

'Well, that's cool!' I murmured, as, taking out my white-silk handkerchief, to which I had clung in the exchange, I wiped the perspiration and dust from my brow. I, James Henry Nuttall, banker, of Liverpool, and manager of the Anglo-Greek Heritable Trust, Limited, in command of a company! I know that most of my acquaintances would be likely to say, 'Pity the company!'

It was impossible to follow the major and explain, even if in the confusion of battle he could understand. To slink off was alike most hazardous; the excited soldiery would at once suspect cowardice and soon make an end of me.

Looking round, I noticed with satisfaction that the men seemed to understand their work thoroughly. At present it consisted merely in exchanging shots with a skirmishing party of the enemy, who, I was delighted to observe, were in retreat, having evidently just been repulsed.

The battle seemed to roll far to the right, and we were on the extreme left, and so as time went on we soon had little to do.

Not a mile away, a little to our left, stood Sophia's home, nestling sweetly amid its orange and olive groves. The extremes of the Turkish right wing seemed to be within about half a mile of it, though as yet I could discern no soldiers near.

Suddenly an inspiration seized me. Why not rescue her with this company that had fallen to my command?

I called the wizened, grizzly-looking sergeant who was standing near, and telling him I was one of the English volunteer officers serving with the Greeks, and therefore slightly unfamiliar with the words of command, I said I should leave the issuing of orders to him.

'There are some prisoners in yonder house,' I

said, 'whom we have to rescue. Now is our time. There do not seem to be many of the enemy about there. Advance in open order.'

In a few moments 'my' company were hurrying across the intervening country in grand style.

'I think they are signalling your instant return, sir,' said the sergeant, saluting.

'Never you mind, sergeant. Obey my orders for the present;' and I uncased the revolver at my belt in a threatening manner.

Ere long an aide-de-camp came galloping up.

'The colonel wants to know what you are about, sir, and commands your retreat at once.'

'Tell the colonel to mind his own business; and if he wants to know what I am doing he shall see directly,' I replied hotly, for a sudden movement of the Turks towards Sophia's house increased my fears for her safety and roused me to a state of fierce excitement.

She had evidently noticed our coming, for suddenly from the centre of the flat-roofed house the Greek flag unfurled itself to the breeze.

At that sight my men could not restrain a cheer, and in my heart I blessed the courageous girl.

The Turks saw, and came rushing to intercept.

'Forward, lads!' I cried, springing in front, as with drawn sword I led them in my frenzy against the opposing Turks. I felt the bullets whistling past, but heeded not. Next moment we were close at hand, and I had the vision of a big, burly fellow aiming a blow at me. Instinctively I raised my sword to parry, but in vain. Down I went with a crash to the ground under that stunning blow, and my eyes were blind with blood as I staggered to my feet again.

'Bravo, sir!' cried the sergeant at my heel, as he stopped for a moment to examine my wound. 'Only the cheek slit, sir. Yes, I will tie it roughly up with the handkerchief,' he said as I held its silken folds out to him. And he certainly did it in a most business-like way.

Our charge had swept the Turks back, and in a few seconds I was once more in the house which I had left the previous night.

'Oh captain,' cried Sophia, coming to me and not recognising my bandaged, blood-stained face, 'do, do, for mercy's sake! do push on but to yonder grove and save a young Englishman whom the Turks are about to shoot! They just caught him a short time ago, and are going to kill him. Oh, do!' and her tear-stained eyes looked up to me with a most piteous expression.

'You love him?' I asked in a mumbled voice; and as a faint crimson blush warmed the deathly-pale cheeks, she exclaimed passionately:

'Yes, with all my soul and'——

But she got no farther, for, to her dismay, I caught her to my breast.

It took me some moments to convince her that the grimy, martial figure who held her in his arms was 'her Jack,' but soon it was all explained.

I despatched, however, some men to rescue what turned out to be my Greek assailant of the previous night.

Meanwhile the Greek general signalled to remain where we were until reinforcements came, as our sudden dash had turned the flank of the enemy and saved Greece a disastrous day.

I need hardly say that ere the sun set I returned my sword to its lawful owner, and, loaded with the thanks of all, carried my promised bride far from the sound and smoke of battle.

HEALING BY OXYGEN.

IT is somewhat humiliating to our pride of civilisation to observe in how many cases we have been indebted to uncivilised peoples for very valuable knowledge bearing directly on life and health. A very conspicuous illustration of this is afforded in an entirely new system of healing wounds which has lately been attracting a good deal of attention, and which certainly appears to have achieved some very remarkable results.

This new system is known as the oxygen treatment, and appears to have been suggested by a practice of the Zulus. During the Zulu war it was observed that these dusky warriors were accustomed to carry their wounded as far as they could up the nearest mountain as a means of facilitating recovery. They, of course, knew nothing about the science of the matter; all they knew was that it was the immemorial practice of their tribe, and that as a matter of fact a wound healed sooner high up on a mountain-side than it did on the plains below. That was the experience of the Zulus; and in the light of the teaching of recent bacteriological science, it looked to be not at all improbable that it should be so.

Modern science has shown that in all surgical matters micro-organisms play an all-important part. Wherever there are wounds or sores, living things, microscopically small and amazingly numerous, soon begin to show themselves; and, under certain very common conditions, they bring about inflammatory and putrefactive complications. Lord Lister's great discovery consisted in the recognition of the troublesome action of these micro-organisms, and in the devising of means of getting rid of them. They are constantly present in the atmosphere, and wherever there is a wound or a sore exposed they are ready to fasten on it. Lord Lister discovered this, and he devised the 'anti-

septic treatment' of wounds as a means of keeping out these mischievous agents. Only exclude these troublesome disturbers from a wound made by the surgeon's knife, and, generally speaking, the healthy forces of nature will heal that wound quickly and easily. The truth of this theory and the splendid practical success that has attended its adoption are known to all the world.

Experiments in the oxygen treatment of wounds have, however, suggested some modifications of the theory upon which Lord Lister has based his great and beneficent revolution in surgical practice. 'Listerism,' as it is conveniently called, assumes that all micro-organisms in wounds are bad, and that success in healing depends very greatly on their being destroyed altogether. According to the newer theory this is not quite true. There are good bacteria as well as bad. Just as there are good fairies and bad, just as in the world around us there are moral influences that corrupt and deteriorate and destroy, while there are others whose tendency is all to purify and strengthen and improve, so, it seems, in this tiny physical world of micro-organisms there are some that work for death and destruction and others for life and health. And just as in the universe at large there is a spirit of goodness, a power that makes for righteousness, discouraging and suppressing the bad and helping and fostering the good, so it is said to have been found that oxygen-gas kills out these mischievous and destructive micro-organisms — *Streptococci*, *Bacillus fluorescens*, *Bacillus fœtidus*, rod bacteria, and so on, as bacteriologists have learned to call them— while it invigorates and encourages the growth and development of those that tend to build sound and healthy flesh — such as *Staphylococcus albus*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Staphylococcus citreus*.

It does not, it will be seen, come into conflict with Lord Lister's teaching, or in any way detract from his splendid discovery; it supplements and develops it. It is true, as he assumes, that Nature is the great healer; it is true, as he said, that the difficulty of healing very commonly arises from the intrusion of mischievous micro-organisms; and it is quite true that by excluding and destroying these organisms by the 'antiseptic treatment'— the anti-putrefactive treatment, that is to say— the natural process of healing is immensely facilitated. The oxygen treatment is a method of warding off the corruptive power of these pernicious bacteria. What the Zulu practice appears to show, and what recent experiments are said very powerfully to confirm, is that the best of all antiseptics is to be found in pure air and plenty of oxygen. They not only kill out mischievous living organisms, but at the same time actually foster and encourage others that are working for the repair of the injury. To supply pure air and oxygen by artificial means, and thus to give Nature the best possible opportunity of doing her beneficent work of healing, is the object of the new system.

Nothing can be much simpler than the system pursued in dealing with wounds, ulcers, burns, scalds, eczema, lesions, and other injuries and affections of legs and arms and hands, backs and heads and faces, eyes and ears and noses. We will suppose that a patient has an ulcerated leg. The limb is merely washed in warm water and laid in a box with a glass side to it, permitting of its being examined from time to time without disturbance, enclosure being effected by means of an elastic covering fitting over the end of the box and round the leg of the patient. Into this glass-sided receptacle a mixture of oxygen gas and air that has been purified by passing through lime-water and Condy's fluid is now gently poured from a mackintosh gas-bag fitted with taps and tubes. That is practically the whole business. There are minor details of management and some variations of treatment that experience has suggested and that circumstances necessitate—a wound may be on the head, and a specially-devised cap will be substituted for the box; or extensive wounds or sores may be on the trunk, and then a sort of jacket will be requisite. But whatever the details may be, the essential matter is that the flesh to be healed shall be exposed to a mixture of pure air and oxygen in proportions depending on the nature of the affection to be dealt with. What is regarded as the 'standard strength' is a mixture of half oxygen and half air.

The results of this treatment, it seems hardly possible to question, are in a very large proportion of cases very remarkable. It would be scarcely reasonable to expect invariable success. There are some unfortunate mortals whose bodily systems are in so thoroughly corrupt and unhealthy a condition that nothing short of the miraculous could heal them. 'Nature' has no chance with them, and cannot build up sound flesh out of their unsound material. And it would seem that there are sometimes other causes of failure. But where there is any sort of constitution to work upon, the effects of this treatment look to be very surprising. Among the first experiences is the assuaging and cessation of pain. The patients find that from the time the oxygen begins to take effect pain begins to subside, and, generally speaking, within a couple of days or so it entirely dies out—assuming that the case is one amenable to its treatment. All unpleasant smells are similarly obviated, and the most frightful-looking sores and wounds soon begin to put on what surgeons recognise as the signs of healthy flesh formation. Maladies that have resisted all kinds of treatment for years, and in some cases for the greater part of a lifetime, have in the course of a few weeks or months been entirely, and it is believed permanently, healed—so at least it is claimed; and a hospital has been established in London under royal patronage for the treatment of patients upon the new method.

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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CURLING-STONE.

By T. DYKES ('Rockwood'), Author of *Stories of Scottish Sports.*

'SO you want me to tell the history of my life, do you? Well, it is far from being eventful; but you are welcome to it. As it is with human beings, I may tell, so is it with stones—some get it hot like chimney-jambs, some cold; it has been my lot to have it cold, as you can understand.' It was the skip's second stone which spoke—the one with which he often saved the game—and was familiarly alluded to by him as his Old Reliable. Even had we not known it, there was something about him which denoted that he was the property of a laird and Highland chieftain; whilst the others on his own rink were handled by tenants and clansmen; those of the opponents again betokening in everything the shrewd, canny Lowland farmer from the south side of the Forth. His dignified and reserved manner, his high polish, his anxiety to cross at all times the dreaded boundary of hogs and move in the inner circles, the jaunty way in which he gyrated in behind the guards like a ruling-elder to the rear of a kirk plate, readily enough indicated superiority, without his silver-mounted handle inlaid with a rich cairngorm.

We were on Carsebreck Royal Pond at the time, and the curlers of the North and the curlers of the South of the river Forth were fighting hard, rink against rink, for supremacy in the annual bonspiel of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club. Snow lay all around, the ice was strong enough to bear a luggage train above, or defy a volcanic eruption from beneath; and, though the east wind blew cold and keen, one might have imagined, from the casting of coats and the up-furling of shirt sleeves, that there was being held a great national garden-party, were it not that the roaring sound of the stones in their passage, and the loud shouts of 'Soop him up,' 'Bring him on,' or 'Weel curled, sir,' rather created the impression that a great Highland foray was being fought out hand-to-hand. And so it was, though the broom-besom had taken the place of the claymore, and the curling-stone the targe of bull-hide. At our particular corner hostilities had been suspended for a few minutes, with a view to the dispensation of hospitalities in a truly good old Scottish curling fashion. Conveniently on the unswept part of the ice stood a large brazier, the flames from the red coals of which kissed and lapped lovingly the round sides of a huge kail-pot or cauldron. From this rose a misty gray steam, the succulent odour of which pierced one to the pit of the stomach, for the interior of the pot was alternately decked and double-decked with good Loch Fyne herrings and smiling murphies which grinned from ear to ear. To the contents the curlers eagerly applied themselves; and, whilst so engaged, I was able to have a few words with Old Reliable.

'Yes, it has been my lot to have it cold, as I have told you, though at the outset I had some warm passages in my career, as I shall relate. To begin, then, at the beginning. I am come of a good old Scottish Lowland family—not Highland, as you might be led to think, for nearly all the stones here are from the Lowlands. I may say I am of the Hones of Ailsa Craig, sometimes called the Red Hones, from the colour of our "striking" or "fighting belts." Our pedigree is of the most ancient; the Loudons of Loudon Hill in Ayrshire and the Basses of Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth, I have heard it said, came into the world on the same day. There are a good many here to-day from Ailsa Craig; but these are mostly of the commoner sort, natives all of that part of the rock which lies close down to the sea; whereas the Hones, which are of a harder and keener grit, belong to the higher strata. Of my early years I recollect very little, save that a puffin—or patey, as they call them in these parts—every year built its nest upon me. One day I recollect I heard a loud noise, and

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woke up to find myself being roughly handled and hammered by rude-looking men who used to shoot the wild goats which playfully skipped about in summer-time.

'Soon after this I was with many others placed on board the large, brown-sailed yawl, *Maggie Sinclair*, which once a week came across from Girvan with letters and provisions. It was blowing a stiff breeze when we bade adieu to our good old home at Ailsa, with its pateycocks, its kittiwakes, its gulls, solan geese, and wild goats; and as the boat heeled to the stronger blasts the water washed over me just as it sometimes now does at the time of a thaw. We were not allowed to stay long at Girvan, which is a pretty little town on the Ayrshire coast, but were immediately put into a train and forwarded to Mauchline, another little Ayrshire place, where once lived Robert Burns, a great friend of a once-famous curler and sportsman, one Tam Samson of Kilmarnock. Arrived at Mauchline, we were all piled up together in long rows to await the issue of events. Nearly one-half of our mixed company in that Mauchline yard were from Ailsa, the commoner stones being a little more numerous than ourselves. The others comprised blue Burnock Waters, such as are opposing us now, scarcely so keen as the Hones; and Crawfordjohns from Lanarkshire, wearing shepherd tartan plaids a little darker in shade than our own; a few Carsphairns from the Dumfriesshire border; and perhaps twice as many more than of the latter from many quarters, some being all the way from Italy. After we had lain idle for a considerable time, Mr Kay, the master of the yard, came out and selected half-a-dozen of us, saying, "These will do nicely after a little hammering." Glad was I indeed of a change, but little did I dream of the rough usage which was in store for me. After knocking off all the rough corners with a hammer, nothing would satisfy them but that they should drill a hole right through my centre, possibly to see if I was quite sound at the core. That at any rate was what I thought at the time. Notwithstanding all this, I was still seemingly to the heavy side, for, horror of horrors! they held me up against a huge monster in the shape of a red grindstone, which as it tore round and round threatened to grind me into sand altogether. When I had lost a pound and a half in weight, and felt quite worn and wasted, I thought my troubles were over, but alas! they were only beginning. I was still, it seems, what they chose to call "a rough customer." From the grindingstone I was taken to a strange machine called the turning-lathe, another huge monster, which made as much noise as a flock of puffins newly home from the herring fishing. This machine was fitted with a number of round boxes, each just big enough to hold one of us comfortably. I have done a lot of curling in my day, and with anything like fair twist can come in easily three feet in twelve when a winning draw has to be executed; but "elbow out" or "elbow in," never have I done anything like what I did the four hours I was in that box. You may not believe it, but I curled round on my own proper curling centre at the rate of a thousand revolutions a minute. Light and handsome as I fancied I was, they were not done with me; but removing me to what they called the finishing machine, they held me against two revolving discs, which, as they spun round at an extraordinary rate of speed, burnished me on both sides till I was as smooth as the sea under Ailsa Craig on a calm summer day. After a few touches by the chisel to my striking belt, a beautiful handle was fitted into my centre, and my early troubles were over. "He is a lovely stone," said the artist who had superintended all my preparations; "*he now wants but ice.*"

'Before I could find ice my master therefore had to find a customer for me, which he did in Lord Lochnagar, and with his lordship I still remain. I gave satisfaction from the first, and have played as skip since my opening day. Have I curled anywhere but in Scotland? Oh yes, I have crossed the seas and curled in Canada, where nearly all the stones are from Ailsa Craig. They are beautiful curlers there I can tell you, far more scientific than they are here. But, oh, you lack these grand Highland hills, and miss these loud cheery shouts of approval and exultation. Indeed, sir, you may believe me, curling is "Scotland's ain game" in everything. Yes, and I have curled also in the English glaciariums under glass roofs on a summer day; but I care little for it. Give me the clear sky overhead, the snow-clad hills around, and the burly, cheery sons of Old Scotland, and leave indoor curling to the Englishmen, with their straw hats, their white waistcoats, their flowers in their button-holes, and their iced drinks. Good-morning, sir. You are welcome to my yarn, but you might be able to get a better from our opponents. We are leading just now; but it is a long time yet till the closing-gun is fired.'

I had little difficulty in finding his chief opponent, a sturdy-looking old chiel in a bluish plaid, which seemed knotted together by a well-worn wooden handle. In good broad Ayrshire Scotch he said: 'And what may be your wull, sir?' We explained to him the object of our mission, which did not at first seem to please him; but he warmed up and became more communicative afterwards. 'Man,' he says, 'it's jist this. I'm no' a talker, I'm a curler; and as the auld chalk nest-egg said to its neebors, "though Providence has destined that I, the verra centre o' the maternal breast, am to be neither a crawer nor a cackler, I'll be safe in the middle here when a' your necks are twistit." However, you are welcome. My memory then, you maun hear, carries me back to the old Watter o' Burnock in

Ochiltree pairish in Ayrshire, on a bricht simmer day, when the linties were singin' in the broom and the watter-wagtail was twitterin' aboon ma heid as licht as that snaw-flake there. There was a gran' big troot used to lie below me, and to guddle this big troot there cam oot frae Ochiltree a young mason's apprentice. The troot and me were gey slippery customers; and after we had gien him a guid game o' hide-and-seek, nothing would do him but, as I thought out of sheer spite, he would have me hame. Then I kenned what life was in earnest. He hammered at me and worked at me nicht and day for weeks, then wi' some bits o' stanes he sharped his knife wi', and another auld curlin'-stane he rubbit the last possible gumboil oot o' me, as he said. 'Deed, I never had ony peace till one Sunday he sharped his razor on me, set me up as a lookin'-glass, and shaved himsel' wi' me, then placed me in front of the fire till I was burnin' wi' rage, and ironed his shirt wi' me; though I had a wee bit satisfaction in reddin' aff the buttons as they had been cranreuch on the white ice. Then cam' the day he tried me on the real ice. Eh, man, but that was a day o' sweet revenge; for monie a time in the spring had the ice aboon me comin' doun Burnock Watter sairly scratched my poor heid. Ay, and it was real Ayrshire muirland curlin', wi' guid broom cowes cut frae the knowes, and dare-deevil soopin' an' shoutin' frae mornin' till nicht. Ay, man, but my pleasures didna last lang. Ae nicht when the frost was liftin' and the sun was drappin' red in the west, my auld maister, wi' me at his foot, tumbles through. He got grippit at the oxters and was pulled back again, but down I went curlin' to the bottom.

'Hoo mony years I lay there I canna tell; it was a cheerless exile and no mistake, for there wasna a trout in the place. At the bottom it was jist a muckle bog. I had forgotten the Burnock Watter, the curlin', and everything a'thegither, when ae day I got a sudden jag as if wi' the chisel lang syne. It fairly put me in a swelterin' sweat till I heard a voice saying, "Deil kens what this can be, but it has fairly knockit the neb aff my guid new scythe." The voice was familiar, but what could I mak' oot o' it? Jist then a big horny hand grips me by the handle in a way I hadna forgot, and draws me richt up into the daylicht again. "Bless me," was the remark, "if this is no' my faither's auld curlin'-stane that has been at the bottom noo for sic a lang, lang while. I hae his twin brither at the barn-door cheek at hame." This talk and mair let me ken that the loch had been drained for hay-growin' purposes, and the mowin' of the first crop had brocht me back to life again. Weel, hame they carries me, and richt glad was I to see my old curlin' neebor, I can tell ye. But, oh, I little kenned what was in store for me. When we got to the door, says the guidwife, "Oh John, this ane and its neebor will do gran' for stickin' on the tap o' a chessat-lid to squeeze the whey oot." Was there ever sic a degradation in this world? Squeezin' whey oot o' a cheese-vat to mak' skim-milk cheese for hungry ploomen and Paddies at the shearin'! It was enough to break the heart o' ony curlin'-stane.

'The winter that year, as it happened, proved a saft ane throughout, and when the cheese-makin' was done we lay idle till the spring-time. Then to our horror we were stuck on the top o' the harrows to make their teeth act more upon the furrows by reason o' oor wecht, and draggit up and doon ower the ground by horses, without a soop frae ae friendly besom. You may imagine the feelin's o' a curlin'-stane at that sort o' usage. The sowin' season ower, there was ither wark aye to be done, even to sittin' on the lid o' an auld corn-bin to haud in a clockin' hen. Waur than degradation was to follow—the involuntary assistance in dishonesty, positive dishonesty. There was, ye see, on the farm a crop o' potatoes every year which had to be sold by the hundredwecht, and there were only twa imperial wechts about the place, ane o' 56 lb., and another of 14 lb. Noo, I weigh three stane, or 42 lb. exactly, and the 14 lb. stane and me placed in front o' the dealer jist as exactly balanced the 56 lb. wecht, so that we a' made up a hundredwecht. Weel, my neebor's like me in everything except that he is four pounds lichter; and in the nicht-time, somewhat unaccountably, he took my place at the wechts, and I went back to the barn-door. I'll neither hint nor say ony mair; but if you are ony way up in farmin' you'll ken that four pounds o' potatoes at the sellin' is worth twice as much as a peck o' guano at the plantin'. After siclike wark I have nae doubt you say we well deserved hangin', and hung we were, ma neebor and mysel', ower the riggin' o' an out-house for young cattle, to keep down the thatch o' the roof, and this for six months and mair. Indeed, if it hadna been for the curlin' we micht hae been hangin' there still. Even that scarcely saved us; for the mornin' the ice was strong enough to carry, the east wind blew terribly severe, and a snowstorm was promised. Waur than a', the guidwife was deid against curlin', and wild at oor bein' cut down.

'As we left for the pond, "Me wish ye ill?" says she, in reply to the guidman, as she wiped an angry tear frae her e'e wi' her apron, "na, na, it's the ither way aboot, guidman. I'm wishin' indeed that when a' you curlers are gethered into the ill place, a kind Providence will lift the thatch aff the roof and let in the snaw and the east wind on ye jist as ye have done on my puir young queys this day." Weel, to mak' a lang story short, sic folks couldna thrive; they were roupit oot, and wi' some odds and ends I became the property o' my present maister, who has promised to pension me if I win the

day, that's to say when my curlin' days are ower.'

As I had to follow him up and down to catch him when idle at the ends of the rinks, I could well notice that the game was being very closely contested. When the sun began to sink in the west the frost commenced to nip more keenly, causing much greater caution in the delivery of the stone. Old Reliable, the better to act, had shifted to his duller side, and several times just saved his rink by twisting in easily and gently long after he seemed dead beyond all assistance from the brooms. His scientific skill apparently annoyed as well as puzzled our friend from Burnock, who would not admit his superiority, but at the same time declared that he was 'a wonderfully good curler, *that is to say for a nobleman and gentleman ye ken.*' During all this time the curling storm raged loudly with the roar of passing stones, the plying of brooms, the bell-like echoes of congratulatory cheers, and the sharp notes of complaint. It was now coming near the close of the bonspiel, and all rinks were anxious. Would Ailsa Craig gain the day, or Burnock Water win his pension? I determined to wait and see the result. Both sides were par when starting on what promised to be the last head when the gun fired, and the victor at the end of the last head, when stones were counted, was of course the winner of the day.

Anxious moments these were for all, and in the occasional lulls, when skips were puzzled and pondering, one could mark the soft Gaelic of the Northmen against the hard Galloway, the dour Dumfriesshire, and the broad Ayrshire accents of the South, with now and then the short-clippit words of the men of Aberdeenshire. Far up on the hillside to the east the finishing gun was loaded, primed, and waiting for the last tick of the expiring period of play.

What promised to be the last end between the rinks between Ailsa Hone and Burnock was contested stone for stone and inch for inch. Still, when the two skips went down to the clamps, Ailsa was lying one shot with a big Crawfordjohn of the third-hand player. To this, Old Reliable, with a beautiful 'elbow in' shot added another, and with the barest glimpse of the winner visible through the only port left, old Burnock's chances of success seemed almost hopeless. To draw gently to it was of little use, as the second stone must still be left, and one only was wanted. If he could catch what was free of it sharply and firmly, the second stone slightly in its right wake would go also, and with both removed Burnock had the victory. I could almost hear the old fellow growling and groaning to be free. At last he was off like a greyhound from the slips, roaring—at least to me this was quite distinct—'Jock Crawford, I have got ye!' Through the port he went scatheless, though close enough to have jammed a snowflake in the passage. There was a rude *rock* and *shock*, followed by a wild southern shout of exultation which readily enough proclaimed that Burnock's barn-door pension was secure. Another moment, and a flash of light was reflected from the snow-clad hills. It was the gun. As its echoes resounded through the distant glens brooms were tossed high in air, and loud cheers told of the joy of the victors. The great bonspiel of the year was over, and soon we found on the shore, when the lists were made up, that the men of the South, like tried Old Burnock, had proved victorious.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER X.—OF MY VOYAGE TO THE LOW COUNTRIES.

WE were aboard on the next morning by a little after daybreak, for the captain had forewarned me the night before that he purposed to catch the morning tide. To one inland-bred the harbour of Leith was a sight to whet the curiosity. There were vessels of all kinds and sizes—little fishing smacks with brown, home-made sails from Fife or the Lothian coast towns, great sea-going ships, many with strange foreign names on their sides, and full of a great bustle of lading and unlading. There was such a concourse of men, too, as made the place like a continuous horse-fair. Half-a-dozen different tongues jabbered in my ear, of which I knew not one word, save of the French, which I could make a fair shape to speak, having learned it from Tam Todd along with much else of good and bad. There were men in red cowls like Ayrshire weavers, and men in fur hats from the North, and dark-skinned fellows, too, from the Indies; and all this motley crew would be running up and down jabbering and shrilling like a pack of hounds. And every now and then across the uproar would come the deep voice of a Scots skipper, swearing and hectoring as if the world and all that is in it were his peculiar possession.

But when we had cleared the Roads of Leith, and were making fair way down the firth with a good north-westerly breeze behind us, then there was a sight worth the seeing. For behind lay Leith with its black masts and tall houses, and at the back again Edinburgh, with its Castle looming up grim and solemn, and farther still the Pentlands, ridged like a saw, running far to

the westward. In front I marked the low shore of Fife with the twin Lomonds, which you can see by climbing Caerdon or Dollar Law, or any one of the high Tweedside hills. The channel was blue as a summer sky, with a wintry clearness and a swell which was scarce great enough to break into billows. The *Kern*, for so the vessel was called, had all her sail set, and bounded gallantly on her way. It was a cheerful sight, what with the sails filling to the wind and men passing hither and thither at work with the cordage, and the racing seas keeping pace with the vessel. The morning fires were being lit in the little villages of Fife, and I could see the smoke curling upwards in a haze from every bay and neuk.

But soon the firth was behind us, and we passed between the Bass Rock and the May out into the open sea. This I scarcely found so much to my liking. I was inland-bred and somewhat delicate in my senses, so soon I came to loathe the odour of fish and cookery and sea-water, which was everywhere in the vessel. Then the breeze increased to a stiff wind, and the *Kern* leaped and rocked among great, rolling billows. At first the movement was almost pleasing, being like the motion of a horse's gallop in a smooth field. And this leads me to think that if the boat were but small enough so as to be more proportionate to the body of man, the rocking of it would be as pleasing as the rise and fall of a horse's stride. But in a great cumbrous ship, where man is but a little creature, it soon grows wearisome. We stood well out to sea, so I could but mark the bolder features of the land. Even these I soon lost sight of, for the whole earth and air began to dance wofully before my eyes. I felt a dreadful sinking, and a cold sweat began to break on my brows. I had heard of the sea-sickness, but I could not believe that it was this. This was something ten times worse, some deadly plague which Heaven had sent to stay me on my wanderings.

Nicol Plenderleith had disappeared almost as soon as he came aboard, and I saw him deep in converse with the sailors. When we had cleared the Forth he came back to me, as I leaned disconsolately against the bulwarks, and asked me how I did. His lean, brown face was not a whit changed by the rocking of the ship; indeed, if he had been astraddle the Saddleback in a gale he would not have been perturbed. When he saw my plight he ran below and brought brandy.

'Here, sir, tak' some o' this. It's tasty at a' times, but it's mair than tasty the noo—it's halesome.'

'Nicol,' I groaned, 'if I never get home again, I look to you to tell the folk in Tweeddale. It's terrible to die here of this villainous sickness, for I shall certainly die if it continues. Will it never cease?'

'I've been speirin' at the captain, and by a' accounts we're no' at the warst o't. He says it's juist like the backs o' Leith. If ye win by the Fisherraw ye'll meet your death i' the Kettle Wynd, and if by ony chance ye're no' killed there, ye'll be dune for i' the Walk. He was speaking o' the stinks o' the place and no' the folk, for they're peaceable eneuch, puir bodies. "Weel," says he, "it's the same here. It's ill for some folk to win by the Forth, but it's waur i' the open sea; and when it comes to the Dutch waters it's fair awfu'." I wis, Laird, ye maunna dee.'

'This was poor consolation; and had I not formed some guess of my servant's manners I should have been downhearted enough; but there was a roguish twinkle in his eye, and even as he spoke his mouth broadened to a grin.

But, sure enough, the captain's prophecy did not come true. For in a little the waves grew calmer, and my sickness left me. 'Tis true that soon we entered troubled waters once more; but I was fortified with experience and some measure of brandy, and so could laugh defiance at the powers of the sea.

The wind throughout our course was fair in our favour, so we made the journey in shorter time than I had dared to hope for. On the morning of the third day a dense mist shut us in, so that the captain was much confused and angered. But on the wind's rising the fog rolled back, and we went on our way once more. Early in the afternoon we sighted the mouth of the Maas and the tall lines of shipping which told of the entrance to Rotterdam. You may imagine that all this was very strange to me, I who had lived only among hills and rough woods, and had seen the sea but once, and that afar off. 'Twas a perpetual wonder to me to see the great sails moved up and down according to the airt of the wind, and the little helm guiding the great ship. As I have said, I soon got over all sickness, and was as hale as ever, so that on the last two days of the voyage I ever look back as upon a time of great pleasure.

But if my wonder was great in the open seas, 'twas still greater once we had entered the Dutch river. It was all so unlike my own land that the home-sickness which travellers tell of had almost taken hold of me. There were all manner of ships, some little coasting vessels, others huge merchantmen which brought home the wares of the Indies and the Americas. There was such a jabbering, too, in Dutch, of which tongue I knew nought, that I longed to hear one good, intelligible word of Scotch, for which cause I kept my servant near me. By-and-by we neared the quay and saw the merchants' great red storehouses standing in long line, and the streets of the city running back from the river. Here we came to an anchor. Our journey was over, and I had to bid farewell to captain and vessel, and go ashore.

One thing I noted was that the air was somewhat soft and damp, lacking, to my mind, the

acrid strength of the air of Tweeddale, or even of the Lothians. But all the streets were clean swept and orderly; the folk well-groomed and well-looking; and the trees by the river-side gave a pleasant surprise to one accustomed to the grim, gray, narrow streets of the North. I made my way by the help of an inquisitive Scots tongue and the French language to a decent hostelry in the Groote Markt, just opposite the statue (but lately erected) of the great Erasmus. This pleased me much, for to be near even the poor bronze figure of so great a man seemed to lend to the place an air of learning. I employed myself profitably in reading the Latin inscriptions; the others I could make no more of than the rudest ploughboy in Scotland.

Both Nicol and I were up betimes in the morning, that we might get the coach for Leyden, which started almost from the door of our inn. I solemnly set down my testimony that the ale in that same house is the most villainous in the world, for it made us both dismal and oppressed, a trouble which did not leave us till we had taken our seats in the diligence and the horses were starting.

Of the events of that day's journey how shall I tell? Leyden is a day's length from Rotterdam to the north, through a land flat as a girdle-cake. The horses were lumbering, sleepy brutes, and the driver scarce any better, for every now and again he would let them come to the walk for long distances, and then, suddenly awakening to the fact that he must get to his destination before night, get up and shout wildly and feebly flick their backs with his whip. I had much ado to keep Nicol from trying to take the reins from his hands; and certainly if that firebrand had once taken them we should have awakened the quiet countryside, and, God helping us, might even have awakened the driver. I knew nothing of the country, and heard but vaguely the names shouted out by the guard of the coach; yet somehow or other the name of Ryswick clung to my memory, and I remembered it well when, long after, at that place the treaty was signed which closed the war. But at that time the great Duke was plain Master Churchill, and there was no thought of war between our land and France.

It was late in the afternoon when we came to Leyden and rattled down the rough street to the market-place, which was the stopping-place of the coach. This was a town more comely and conformable to my eye than the greater city of Rotterdam; for here the streets were not so even, the houses not so trim, and the whole showing a greater semblance of age. There were many streams and canals, crossed by broad, low bridges. It was a time of great mildness for the season of the year.

It was my first concern to secure lodgings, since I purposed to spend no little portion of my time here for the next two years; and as I had been directed by my kinsman, Doctor Gilbert Burnet, I sought the house of one Cornelius Vanderdecker, who abode in a little alley off the Breedestraat. Arrived there I found that the said Cornelius had been in a better world for some fifteen months, but that his widow, a tranquil Dutchwoman, with a temper as long as a Dutch canal, was most willing to lodge me and treat me to the best which the house could afford. We speedily made a bargain in bad French, and Nicol and I were installed in rooms in the back part of the house, overlooking a long garden which ended in one of the streams of water which I have spoken of. It was somewhat desolate at that time, but I could see that in summer, when the straight trees were in leaf, the trim flower-beds and the close-cropped lawn would make the place exceeding pretty. I was glad of it, for I am country-bred and dearly I love greenery and the sight of flowers.

I delayed till the next morning, when I had got the soil of travel from my clothes, and myself once more into some semblance of sprightliness, ere I went to the college to present my letters and begin my schooling. So after the morning meal I attired myself in befitting dress, and put Nicol into raiment suiting his rank and company, and set out with a light heart to that great and imposing institution which has been the star of Europe in philosophy and all matters of learning. I own that it was with feelings of some trepidation that I approached the place. Here had dwelt Grotius and Salmasius and the incomparable Scaliger. Here they had studied and written their immortal books; the very place was still redolent of their memories. Here, too, unless my memory deceived me, had dwelt the Frenchman, Renatus Descartes, who had first opened a way for me from the chaos of the schoolmen to the rectitude of true philosophy. I scarcely dared to enroll my unworthy name in the halls of such illustrious spirits. But I thought on my name and race, and plucked up heart thereupon to knock stoutly at the gates. A short, stout man opened to me, clad in a porter's gown, not unlike the bedellus in the far-away College of Glasgow, but carrying in his hand a black staff, and at his belt a large bunch of keys. It came upon me to address him in French, but remembering that this was a place of learning I concluded that Latin was the more fitting tongue, so in Latin I spoke.

'I am a stranger,' I said, 'from Scotland, bearing letters for Master Sandvoort and Master Quellinus of this place. I pray you to see if they can grant me an audience.'

He faced round sharply, as if this were the most ordinary errand in his life, and went limping across the inner courtyard till he disappeared from view behind a massive column.

The man returned and delivered his message in a very tolerable imitation of the language of Cæsar.

'Their worships Master Sandvoort and Master

Quellinus are free from business for the present, and will see you in their chambers.'

So, bidding Nicol stay in the courtyard, lest he should shame me before these grave seniors (though 'twas unlikely enough, seeing they knew no Scots), I followed the hobbling porter through the broad quadrangle, up a long staircase adorned with many statues set in niches in the wall, to a landing whence opened many doors.

At one of them my guide knocked softly, and a harsh voice bade us enter.

'This is Master Sandvoort,' he whispered in my ear; 'and I trust he be not in one of his tantrums. See ye speak him fair, sir.'

I found myself in a high-panelled room, filled with books, and with a table in front of a fireplace, whereat a man sat writing. He wore a skull-cap of purple velvet and the ordinary black gown of the doctor. His face was thin and hard, with lines across the brow, and the heaviness below the eyes which all have who study overmuch. His hair was turning to gray, but his short, pointed beard was still black. He had very shaggy eyebrows, under which his sharp eyes shone like the points of a needle. Such was Master Herman Sandvoort, professor of the Latin language in the ancient College of Leyden.

His first question to me was in the Latin:

'What tongue do you speak?'

I answered that I was conversant with the English, the French, and the Latin.

'Your letters, pray,' he asked in French; and I took them from my pocket and gave them to him.

'Ah,' he cried, reading aloud, 'you desire to study in this University, and improve your acquaintance with certain branches of letters and philosophy. So be it. My fee is five crowns for attendance at my lectures. I will not abate one tittle of it. I will have no more poor students come cringing and begging to be let off with two. So you understand my terms, Master Burnette.'

I was both angry and surprised. Who was this man to address me thus?

'I pray you to finish the letter,' I said curtly.

He read on for a little while; then he lifted his head and looked at me with so comical an expression that I had almost laughed. Before, his face had been greedy and cold; now it was worse, for the greed was still there but the coldness had vanished and left in its place a sickly look of servility.

'Pardon me, pardon me, good Master Burnette; I was in a great mistake. I had thought that you were some commoner from the North; and, God knows, we have plenty of them. I pray you forget my words. The college is most honoured by your presence—the nephew, or is it the son, of the famous Doctor Burnette. Ah, where were my eyes—— The lord of much land, so says the letter, in the valley of the Tweed. Be sure, sir, that you can command all the poor learning that I have at my disposal; and if you have not already found lodging, why, if you will come to my house, my wife and daughters will welcome you.'

I thanked him coldly for his invitation, but refused it on the ground that I had already found an abode. Indeed I had no wish to form the acquaintance of Frau Sandvoort and her estimable daughters. He gave me much information about the hours of the lectures, the subject which he proposed to treat of, and the method of treatment; nor would he let me depart before I had promised to dine at his house.

Outside the door I found the porter waiting for me. He led me across the hall to another door, the room of Master Quellinus, the professor of Greek.

Here I found a different reception. A rosy-cheeked little man with a paunch as great as a well-fed ox, was sitting on a high chair, so that his feet barely touched the ground. He was whistling some ditty and busily mending his finger-nails with a little knife.

'Why, who have we here?' he cried out when he saw me. 'Another scholar and a great one. Why, man, what do you at the trade, when you might be carrying a musket or leading a troop of pikemen?'

I was tempted to answer him in his own way.

'And what do you,' I asked, 'at the trade, when you might be the chief cook to the French king, with power to poison the whole nobility?'

He laughed long and loudly. 'Ah, you have me there, more's the pity. But what though I love my dinner? Did not Jacob the patriarch, and Esau—the mighty Esau—though I have little credit by the example? But come, tell me your name, for I begin to love thee. You have a shrewd wit, and, what is more, a pleasing presence. You may go far.'

I gave him my letters, and when he had read them he came down from his perch and shook me by the hand.

'You are a Scot,' he said. 'I never knew any Scot but one, and he was hanged on a tree for robbing the Burgomaster's coach. I was a lad at school, and I mind me 'twas rare sport. So I have a kindly feeling for your nation, though may God send you a better fate than that one. But what do you seek to learn? Greek! Faugh, there is no Greek worth straw save Anacreon, and he is not a patch upon our moderns, on François Villon of Paris, whose soul God rest! and our brave Desportes. Philosophy! Bah! 'Tis all a monstrous fraud. I have sounded all the depths of it, and found them but shallows. Theology! Tush, you will learn more theology in an inn in the Morschstraat than in all the schools. Such are my beliefs. But God has compelled me, for

my sins, to teach the Hellenic tongue to a perverse generation at the small sum of five crowns. We study the *Republic* of Plato, and I trust you may find some profit. You will dine with me. Nay, I will take no denial. To-night in my house I will show you how a quail should be dressed. I have the very devil of a cook, a man who could dress a dry goatskin to your taste. And wine! I have the best that ever came from the Rhineside and escaped the maw of a swinish Teuton. You will come?'

I could only escape by promising, which I did with a good grace; for if there was little profit in Master Quellinus's company, there was much pleasure. But I was come prepared to find much that was strange, so I looked forward to their lectures without distaste.

(To be continued.)

A RAMBLE IN MUSCAT.*

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER.

I AM writing this in mid-winter, though the thermometer registers 92 degrees in the shade. I am in the flimsiest of pyjamas, and a long drink in a long glass stands at my elbow. I feel every pore in my body perspiring, not streamingly or uncomfortably, but producing the sensation of a hot dew. And I am sitting on the deck of a steamer, with the heaviest of awnings overhead, and look as through a window from a darkened room on a glare that aches the eyes. There is a pulsing, hot breeze that makes me stretch my arm for a long gulp at the long glass.

It is a warm afternoon, and passengers are sprawling in hammock-chairs. Every one is armed with a book; but all books are lying face downwards on their owners' knees. Heads are thrown back; hats are pulled forward. I do believe everybody is sleeping. Certainly a lady missionary, going home for a rest, is doing what no lady missionary should ever do—she is snoring.

I would like to toss this pen aside, and stick these uninked sheets of paper in my case. After lunch it is delightful to slip into the luxury of being lazy till tea and biscuits and toast and cake are brought round by the mummy-faced Portuguese steward. But there is a Spartan heroism in keeping awake on such a day, when dropping to sleep would be so agreeable. I know I am writing only to keep awake. Just this moment I caught myself trying to write three words between every snore of the missionary, and became cognisant there was a contest by the discovery I was lagging behind.

We are lying off the coast of Arabia, in the shelter of grim rocks that run into the sea like jinn's arms, and in the cove, piled in a heap, like a mound of promiscuous bandboxes, are the white houses of Muscat. To look at them is as hard as gazing at a looking-glass which is doing its best to crack. They seem about ninety million miles nearer the sun than they have any right to be. To gaze at the dazzling whiteness is to provoke a headache.

The big white house, with the big green shutters and the maroon-painted balcony and the birdcage smoking-room on the top, is the Palace of the Sultan. I think myself clever at most things; but I would never have taken that barn for a palace had I not been told and had pointed out to me a flipping, flapping strip of red cotton serving the duty of flag. There are other flags. The Tricolour is rather limp; the Union Jack flutters and drowses and then flutters again as though it were uneasy about something; the Stars and Stripes is positively frisky, dancing away in some particular breeze of its own.

Muscat is a difficult place to reach. But having reached it, your next solicitude is to get from it. It is much heard of but seldom seen, stuck on the fierce scorching Arabian coast, and crouching where the rocks—high, jagged, and wolf-toothed—surround and protect it. If you are a wild Bedouin from the desert, coming with slender but deadly musket in your hand and plunder in your heart, you must crawl through a narrow, black defile. If you are a Londoner who just drops into Muscat for breakfast, on your way from anywhere to somewhere else, you must pass within those jinn's arms that are covered with towers like horrible warts. This morning I counted twenty-two of them. One, a little the worse for wear, stands close to the sea, and was built in the year fifteen hundred and something by the hardy, venturesome Portuguese. Half-a-dozen towers are up on the rocks, hanging close to the edge, showing how near they can get without toppling over. Narrow precipitous steps cling to the hillside on their way to the fortresses. The fortresses are formidable enough, and might do damage were piratical dhows to sweep into the harbour of those devils' arms, to carry off the gold in the sultan's treasury or the treasures in the sultan's harem.

The sea is deep and bluish-green, and ships can lie close to the rocks. This afternoon the water is bobbing and heaving, and the crests of the

* The author of this article started from London in April 1896 on a bicycle tour round the world. This records his experience of Muscat.

waves are breaking into silvery fringe. Native boats are curtseying in the harbour—curious-shaped things, resembling a pea-shell, and as sea-worthy. They are long and shallow, and the billows throw them about in ungentle fashion. Unless you are a heedless wretch your heart and your throat play cup and ball every time there is a lurch. You shut your eyes anticipating the drowning of six men, and open them expostulatingly on understanding there is to be no drowning.

Only a few of these boatmen are Arabs, swarthy-skinned, keen-featured, quick-eyed. Most of them are negroes, captured in slave-dhows on the Zanzibar coast. There were three men in the pea-shell that took me ashore and brought me back again. I sat on the floor, while the negroes sang crooningly as they swished the boat from wave to wave. They used paddles of bamboo, with a round piece of wood like the top of a barrel at one end. The man who was perched in the stern steering with his paddle sang through his yellow, evil teeth. There was as much play of feature in his countenance as you notice in a rhinoceros. He was naked, save for an orange-coloured cloth around his loins, and his skin was scorched and baked and cracked, and baked again, till it had really the resemblance of rhinoceros-hide. His lips were an inch thick and the lower jaw hung. A jaundiced, sullen eye stared ahead with never a quiver of the lids, blood-streaked, lacking vitality, but with an infinity of despondence and kismetic gloom in its depths. A loathsome scar stretched from the ear over the cheek-bone to the lips, telling of a fearful sword-slash. Three deep furrows lined his brow. He struck me as a curious animal. He was, indeed, little more than an animal. When I paid him he never said a word.

I think there can be no stout men in Muscat. When I walked through the streets with my hands in my pockets my elbows scraped either wall. Had I been a particularly tall man I would have rubbed the sides of my hat, for the buildings leaned over with an evident intention of meeting. But they thought better of it. In all my Eastern travels I have never seen such narrow ways. They look all the narrower because the houses are so tremendously high, and the sky is a streak of blue resting on the house-tops. The consequence is, there is no sunny side to the street; it is all shady. Twenty feet up latticed balconies overhang. All the doors are heavy and formidable, and iron-studded and iron-barred.

Here, in Muscat, I saw the pure-bred Arab man, sinewy but not tall, a domineering, swaggering nobleness in his glance, and a brace of daggers in his waist. When I recognised a beautiful haft or noticed a slender inlaid native gun or singular shield, I offered to buy. But nothing would induce them to sell. 'Sahib,' said one man, 'I killed my deadliest foe with this blade, right through his black heart! You see this dint in my shield. Ah! that dint was caused by a spear. The shield saved my life; shall I, then, sell it for money? My gun? No, sahib! I am an Arab, and my gun is my other self. How could I be an Arab if I had no gun? This sword—it belonged to my grandfather. It has killed forty men. By Mahomet! it is true. These marks, sahib—you see these marks—only one of these marks is put there when a man is killed.' I offered three times the value. The answer always was, 'No, sahib, I will not; I cannot.'

Everybody, from the frolicsome boy of eight to the tottering imbecile of eighty, carried a weapon. The old men had rusty swords that reminded me of the unwieldy double-bladed monsters that Richard Cœur de Lion and his knights swung in the face of the Saracens. These Muscat swords are four feet six inches long, the blades three inches wide, and the handles provide room for both fists to grasp. Law is an unknown quantity in Eastern Arabia. It is a case of every man for himself. A month or two back the wild tribes of the desert, armed literally to the teeth, entered Muscat, ostensibly to sell dates. At a signal they made a dash at the bazaars and ransacked them from end to end. The Muscatees showed fight, and a good deal of blood was spilt at the street-corners. The invaders were victorious; and the sultan, taking shelter in one of the forts, had to ransom his life and his capital. The nomads enjoyed a great feast; and then, firing their guns in the air, sprang into their saddles and sped over the hot sand towards the interior. The sultan is a young man of thirty, practically a protégé of the Indian government, from whom he receives £6000 a year on the understanding that he does not interfere with Zanzibar. From all I hear he is an illiterate ninny, with no higher ambition than adding to his crowd of wives. The only way to do business with the sultan is, first of all, to present him with a couple of pretty girls.

Yesterday and to-day I have been rambling through the maze of rickety shanties called the bazaar. It is labyrinthine; you dive down dark alleys, not knowing where they lead you. Sometimes they lead into another alley; sometimes they lead to a blind wall. Every shop is an alcove piled up with dusty wares. Plenty of people are about, but there is little business. The hues of the men's robes are wonderfully gorgeous, of purple satin, canary satin, green silk; and the turbans are marvels of snowy whiteness. There is a flabbiness about the merchants by no means Arab-like. They have sensuous, slothful eyes. As I passed along they gave no sign of curiosity; but they held their nostrils tight, that the smell of an infidel dog might not disturb their complacent self-sufficiency. They are convinced they are the ornaments of the universe; they will not believe any city surpasses Muscat in magnificence; their sultan is the greatest monarch on earth. If you

think you can alter their ideas by demonstration you know little of the workings of the Eastern mind.

The women wear a garb which is distinctive from that of other Easterns in general effect though not in detail. Whilst the men don brilliant robes, the women put on brilliant trousers, a sort of compromise between knickerbockers and breeches, and above is a loose waistcoat of velvet with big buttons; but in the streets this is often hid by a long enshrouding black shawl. They do not cover their faces entirely as the Persian women do, nor do they hide the lower part of the countenance according to the custom of the Egyptians. They obey the Koran law of hiding the features, but the hiding is perfunctory. Around the head, and, consequently, stretched over the face, is a black cloth with holes cut to see through, another to breathe through, and a fourth, if necessary, to sneeze through. These holes are frequently quite large; and, instead of the woman being a mystery, I could always tell at a glance whether she was young or old, ugly or beautiful. Around their ankles are big silver bangles; other bangles jingle on their wrists; heavy-loaded weights shake from the lobes of their ears, and from their noses dangle rings.

Certainly, as I strolled from spot to spot, and got lost, and found myself again, I was struck with the gaudy, turbulent scene—the sleek merchants, the bold and armed nomads, the naked negroes carrying assegais, little boys staggering under the weight of heavy swords, the women balancing jars upon their heads, the throng of importuning beggars, the story-tellers, the rows of blinking loungers squatting along the wall-sides—a scene singularly fascinating, not only because it was curious, but because it was a spot of the world about which the rest of the world knew little.

Muscat is very much like a boy when he has outgrown his clothes and long pieces of him stick out at the sleeves and trouser-legs. Muscat has outgrown its boundaries, and through the city gates pieces of it protrude. Houses are not much of a necessity. Indeed, I don't think I saw a house outside the gates. What did duty was a sort of matting roof, enough to keep off the sun's rays, and beneath this the family lie. Some sort of privacy is obtained by a rude kind of rush palings fixed around. But it is primitive.

I walked beyond the town and up the rocky gorge, the only entrance from the desert to the town, and, reaching the mouth and looking beyond, I saw an entrancing sight. It was evening, and there was a mellow haze in the air, and the sky was flushed with orange and purple, so that nature wrapped the picture in a shimmer of romance. It did not look real. I had seen it all before, but only in my mind's eye, as a youngster reading with heated imagination the trials of Robinson Crusoe or poring over the marvels of *Treasure Island*. Immediately in front spread a small sandy plain dotted with stunted huts and lofty palms. Beyond was a creek edged with verdant luxuriance, and great masses of deep-toned trees climbed up the opposite slope. But it was the creek that riveted my eye. I fancied myself in some far-off South Sea island. Had a canoe filled with painted savages slipped along, and had they landed and lit a fire and cooked an enemy on it, and then eaten him, I should not have been surprised.

On my way back I came across six little nigger boys sitting in a row. They were mischievous rascals, shaven-headed and scantily clad. They were all one size, so I inquired where they came from. A few months ago the British gunboat *Sphinx* was prowling down the Zanzibar coast, and captured a couple of dhows packed with slaves. Among the slaves were forty boys, all about eight years of age, and these were brought to Muscat, and most of them placed under the protection of the consulates.

Phew! it is terribly hot as I sit here writing, with Muscat half a mile away quivering in the heat. The missionary lady has ceased her snoring, and I see she is gazing at me curiously. Perhaps she is wondering what makes me write during the scorching hours of the afternoon. And really I wonder too.

Any way, I have finished my long drink in the long glass. And here comes the mummy-faced Portuguese with tea.

JUST AN EPISODE.

CHAPTER III.

I DID not see Mimsy at lunch, though I heard her come back. Harry was not with her, and the dismounting was performed in silence. I could not spare time to go into the dining-room, so Harris brought some food into my private room, and I snatched a mouthful when I could. After that I had to go to the hospital, and it was not until dinner was served that I saw her again, and then her expression conveyed nothing to me. She was very quiet, of course. A young person receiving an offer of marriage for the first time might naturally be subdued, whether she had accepted it or not. She toyed with her soup, and barely tasted the daintiest morsel of grouse I could find to send her. Once,

when I caught her eyes for a moment, I saw an expression of pain in their blue depths, but the meaning of it I could not fathom. Dinner over, she wandered through the window on to the terrace, as she had done in the morning; but then she had been bathed in sunshine, now the shadows were falling across her. I could not help making the comparison, and a pang went through me. Was this prophetic? What ages ago it seemed since she stood there feeding the pigeons!

She crossed the terrace and sat perfectly still on the balustrade, leaning against one of the stone pillars, her head slightly bent, her hands hanging listlessly down. The despondency of her attitude touched me painfully; and, instead of leaving her to tell me what she would in her own time, as I had intended, I went out and joined her, standing quite unheeded close by her side. Only this morning and she would have jumped up to meet me, or turned and seized my hand, or leaned against me with a mute caress. Now she remained apart, quite still. This was the beginning of the change, then; and I must confess that, in spite of my resolution to give her to Harry, I did not relish having our old relations upset in this way. Perhaps she too felt this.

'John,' she said at last, without looking at me, 'how much money have I of my very own?'

She had accepted him, then, and now business must be discussed.

'You have eight hundred a year.'

'And is it settled on me?'

'Yes, settled on you absolutely.'

'So that, if I like, I can set up a house of my own and live all by myself?'

'Yes, when you are of age.'

'Who settled this money on me, John?'

'I did.'

'Why?'

'Because, in the event of your marriage, I considered it well that you should have complete control of your money affairs.'

'You seemed to be quite sure I should marry?'

I nodded.

'I thought it possible.'

Mimsy was silent for a long time. Then she And: 'Does Priscilla know?'

'Yes; Priscilla agreed with me.'

'Does Priscilla want to get rid of me too?'

'I don't understand you, dear child; no one wants to "get rid" of you.'

Another pause. Then:

'John.'

Now it was coming. Prepare yourself, John Travers, for a stinging blow. I braced myself up.

'Yes, Mimsy.'

'This morning Harry asked me to marry him.'

'And——?'

'And I said I couldn't. And then I was miserable, because I hated to hurt Harry, and he looked so unhappy. And then he said *you* would be glad if I married him'—(the deuce he did! Harry had taken a great deal too much for granted there)—'and that made me more miserable.'

'Why did it make you miserable, Miriam?'

'It hurt me to think you would be glad to get rid of me.'

'I could never be *glad* to lose you, little one.'

'Then why did Harry say that?'

'I think I can explain it. Harry obtained my consent to speak to you of his love (and I believe he loves you very dearly); and, having gained that consent, he naturally supposed it given with a certain amount of pleasure.'

'Which it was not?'

'Which it most decidedly was not.'

She gave a sigh of relief.

'I 'm glad of that. It hurt me dreadfully, John, like a sharp stab would do.'

'Why, sweetheart,' I said emphatically, 'you cannot suppose for one instant that it would be a *pleasure* to me—and to Priscilla' (I thought I had better put that in)—'to know that our nestling might choose to fly away, perhaps to India, with Harry, and take all the sunshine from our home, leaving it desolate without her. Life would never be the same again'—— Then I checked myself; it seemed to me I might go too far.

'And how did it end?' I went on, as she made no comment.

'It ended like this: Harry asked me if I cared for any one else, and I said yes.'

Good gracious, the child! She closed one wound only to open another. Who was this man for whom she cared? That she had many admirers I knew, but it had always seemed to me that she treated them all alike, as comrades and friends.

'And this man, Mimsy; does he care for you at all?'

'Yes,' wistfully; 'he cares for me. He does not love me.'

'How do you know that?'

'Because, if he did, *he* would have asked me to marry *him*.'

Very young, amateur reasoning that.

'And if he did ask you, would you marry him?'

'Yes, to-morrow.'

'With all the love on your side?'

'Yes; I love *him;* that is sufficient. I told Harry so.'

I was a little bit disappointed in Mimsy. I had thought her so different. And here she was, ready, at a moment's notice, to throw herself at the head or into the arms of a man who, she confessed, did not love her. And telling Harry, too! I could only gasp: 'You told Harry?'

'Yes; and I told him who it was.'

Worse and worse!

'My dear child, you shouldn't have done that. What did he say?'

'He looked very much surprised, and said, "Then I haven't the ghost of a chance. I won't bother you any more, Mimsy." And then he went home, and I came on with Jenkins.'

Here was a pretty kettle of fish! Poor Harry! It was bad enough to have to bear a refusal and the dashing of all his bright hopes to the ground; it was harder still to be calmly told of a rival, not only preferred before him, but loved, it seemed. I had felt sorry for Harry before, now I felt more sorry; I had a fellow-feeling for him. And poor Mimsy! This, then, was the cause of her depression. To care for a person who does not return your love, that is hard too. Ought I to invite her confidence further? I was sorely perplexed. Not for worlds would I have hurt the child, or made her trouble any worse to bear than it was already. And yet, if I knew more, I might be able to help her. Here she was, loving a man who perhaps had no intention of asking her to be his wife. I was gradually working myself up into a perfect fury of rage against this unappreciative loved one, when Mimsy slowly rose, and stood, for a moment, looking away into the west, where, across the valley of the town as far as we could see, the earth-line was slowly rising above the sun. Not once had she made a movement towards me, she whose nature was so affectionate, who had always been so lavish of her caresses. I missed them now. I scarcely dared to think of what life would be to me without them. Ah, yes, since the morning, how she had changed! Then she was a child; now she had crossed the boundary-line, and the old, free affection could never be ours again. A sudden mad desire came over me to take her in my arms and hold her so that never should the breath of other love come near her. Was it the pent-up longing of years breaking loose at last? But between us there glided the shadow of that other man, the man whom Mimsy loved, and my half-outstretched arms fell down. And still she stood there apart from me, her eyes travelling among the familiar objects around us and lingering on them with a pathetic sadness, as if she were taking a last leave. I could bear it no longer.

'Mimsy,' I said, as calmly as I could—for my heart was beating rapidly, sending the blood tingling through my veins—'tell me, who is this man who is taking your love from us?'

As she turned and looked into my face, I saw in her eyes the glistening of tears. They glistened, but they were bravely kept back. The sight maddened me.

'Quick, Mimsy; tell me.'

'I cannot tell you,' she said very softly, 'but you shall see his photograph. I always carry it with me.' Here she took from her pocket a little, thin, well-worn leather case, which she placed in my hands. 'I am going indoors now,' she continued, 'and I want you not to open it until you are quite alone. And when you have seen the face, it will be good-bye between us for ever, dear, dear Guardy, for I can never, after that, continue to live with you here.'

I sat down and watched her move slowly over the grass, a pathetic figure passing gently from me into the unknown future. At the window she turned and waved her hand. I am not ashamed to say that in my eyes the tears were swimming. I still held the little leather case tightly grasped in my hand, and as she disappeared I nerved myself to a final effort. I opened it, and as I looked I sprang to my feet. There before me was an old and faded photograph of—myself.

CHAPTER IV.



REACHED Mimsy before she crossed the hall. I drew her into the consulting-room—that room from whence, only that morning, I had driven her to Harry. I took her in my arms and kissed her again and again on her soft hair, for her face was hidden on my breast. I thought with a smile of my morning's resolution, and in imagination I snapped my fingers at it.

'Mimsy,' I whispered, 'will you marry me, and stay with me always, the one dear, sweet love of my life? You whose every tone is music to me, whose every footfall makes my heart rejoice. Listen. I have tried hard to give you up. I have shrunk from asking you to bind your fresh young life to a man old enough to be your father. I knew Harry loved you, and when I sent you to him this morning, it was with an ache at my heart that has refused all day to be stilled. I could not dare to think that you cared for me otherwise than as your friend and guardian. Now that I know, I will not part with you to any man living. You shall be mine irrevocably, irretrievably if you will. Will you, Mimsy?'

I sat down in my own particular chair—the chair from whose majestic proportions I daily (I hope) impressed my patients with a sense of my profound knowledge and skill; and Mimsy nestled in my arms, holding one of my hands tightly in both her own.

'I am ever so willing, Guardy; but I cannot realise my happiness yet. It has come so suddenly, just when I had made up my mind to go away and leave you.'

'That wasn't kind, Mimsy.'

'No; but I never thought of that then.'

We talked until sounds of a tray being carried into the drawing-room reminded us of something we had both forgotten.

'That is the coffee going in,' said Mimsy, springing up. 'I had forgotten Priscilla.'

I rose and took her hand.

'Come, we will go and tell her.'

Priscilla was knitting by the fire. She looked at us keenly as we entered, her eyes resting first on me, and then on Mimsy, who, clinging fast to my hand, hung back shyly. Then Priscilla darted at me.

'John, you don't mean?'—— she began.

'Yes, I do, Priscilla. I mean that Mimsy and I are tired of being guardian and ward, so we are changing the relationship, and are going to be husband and wife instead.'

Priscilla drew my face down to hers, and, as she had often done when I was a boy, pressed her lips to my forehead in a long, loving kiss. Then she turned to Mimsy, and folded her in her arms. 'Oh, my darling, I am so glad, so glad!' she murmured, as she cooed over her; 'it is what I have longed and prayed for, and now it is really come. John, I saw how it was with you, and I was afraid you would not speak; I feared that your grand quixotic notions would keep you from your happiness, while all the time this child was eating out her heart for you, and you did not see it, and I could say nothing. You have given me many an anxious moment, especially when this morning I thought you were willing that Harry should take her away. But, there, it's all settled now, so let us have some coffee. I am sure we need something after all this excitement.'

CHAPTER V.

EARLY the next morning I heard Mimsy's voice from the garden singing:

'John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquaint,'

and I knew that she had recovered her usual spirits. When I joined her a short time after, she was flitting from bush to bush gathering roses—for the consulting-room, she said; and then added, with a furtive glance into my face: 'I am not going to hate the patients any more now; I can even afford to respect them.'

When the basket was full she suggested: 'Don't you think, darling, we might find Jenkins and tell him? He seems to belong to me somehow.'

So we wended our way to the stables, Mimsy, with all her old gaiety and light-heartedness restored, dancing along by my side.

Jenkins was an old soldier. He had served under Mimsy's grandfather. He was with her father when he died of sunstroke in India, when Mimsy was born. He brought her mother home to England, and when she died a few years later he came to me with the little one, her devoted servant and slave. He was in the act of wringing out a leather from a pail of water when we appeared, and when he caught sight of us he drew himself up sharply to attention, his hand to his cap.

'I'm going to be married, Jenkins,' announced Mimsy without preamble.

'Well, to be sure, Miss,' replied Jenkins, looking inquiringly at me; 'well, to be sure.'

'Yes, Jenkins; and to the very best man in all the world.'

'Yes, Miss, yes;' and again he glanced at me.

'There he stands before you, Jenkins; and just think of it, I'm going to be Mrs Travers, and never, never going away from the dear old home.'

'I'm very glad, sir, that I am. I knowed Miss Miriam she worshipped the very ground you trod on, sir—and you deserve it, sir; and I knowed what store you set by her, sir. And now I'm as glad as ever I can be.'

'John, darling,' said Mimsy as we strolled back to breakfast, 'I've been thinking of lots of things since yesterday, and I do hope Priscilla will live here with us, always.'

'No, sweetheart. Priscilla confided to me last night, when you had gone to bed, that she would like to carry out a project she has always had in her mind in case I married. She would like to have a little house near, and see us often, and yet be quite quiet and independent.'

'But need we let her go, John? I want to keep her.'

'I know, little one; but Priscilla thinks you ought to rule here with an undivided sway—be a sort of queen, in fact. She has nothing but praise for you, Mimsy, and thinks you will make an excellent housekeeper. Priscilla is a wise woman; and, somehow, I fancy we shall do well to be guided by her.'

We stood for a few moments on the terrace, and the pigeons came and cooed around Mimsy as she apostrophised the garden and its belongings: 'You dear old garden! And you sweet flowers and trees and grassy walks and shadows and sunshine! I said good-bye to you all yesterday, and you would not respond. And now I know why: you never *meant* me to leave you.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE NEW ADMIRALTY HARBOUR.

A WORK of national importance is about to be commenced at Dover in the construction of a harbour, with an area of more than 600 acres, sufficient to afford protection for the whole of the vessels comprised in the Channel Squadron. This necessary enterprise has been under consideration for many years, and as long ago as 1844 a royal commission reported in its favour. But we all know that such recommendations generally remain a dead letter for an indefinite period. This was certainly the case in this instance, for nothing was done to act upon the report until in 1886 a bill was introduced to construct a national harbour at Dover at a cost of two millions. With some modifications this scheme is now to be adopted; but the estimated cost is now three and a half millions. It need hardly be said that the works are of a most extensive kind.

They comprise an extension of the existing Admiralty Pier; the construction of a somewhat similar pier to the eastward; a breakwater more than 4000 feet long, forming the southern wall of the harbour; and the building of a sea-wall of nearly the same length. The works to be constructed will represent in the aggregate a length of more thon 2½ miles; they will be of enormous strength, and will consist mostly of concrete blocks, faced with granite, of a weight of from thirty to forty tons each. Measured from base to parapet, the walls of this harbour will be ninety feet in height, nearly seventy feet being below water at spring-tides. It is expected that the new harbour—the centre of which will be just under Dover Castle—will be completed in about ten years.

A RAILWAY-TICKET PRINTER.

Few railway travellers give thought to the enormous amount of clerical work involved in the distribution and checking of tickets, the consumption of which by a big company amounts to about a million per week. A clever machine has lately been adopted by the French railways, and is now being introduced to British notice, which does much to simplify this work, and at once dispenses with the help of the usual central office from which tickets are now issued. The machine is under the care of the booking-clerk, and prints, dates, and numbers the tickets as they are applied for by the passengers. The principal feature of the machine is a wheel, on the circumference of which is engraved the names of the various stations; and when this is turned until the name of the required place comes opposite to a pointer, the touch of a certain lever will print the ticket. If the lever be held down, tickets of the same denomination, serially numbered, will be thrown out at the rate of 100 per minute. At the same time a record of every ticket printed will be made on a slip of paper, automatically, which is contained within the machine, and can only be got at by the official entrusted with the key. There is thus a constant check upon the booking-clerk, whose receipts can at the end of the day be compared with the registration slip. The machine is said to require no attention beyond the daily change in the date-stamp, inking of the rollers, and occasional renewal of the rolls of cardboard from which the tickets are cut.

A NOVEL RAILWAY SCHEME.

At a time when the relative advantages of steam and electricity as motive-power for railways is being much discussed, a method of propulsion which dispenses with either is certainly of interest. In Halford's patent railway the force of gravity is the sole motive-power employed, assisted by hydraulic rams. In the model which has been made, and which works very well, the railway is in sections, the rails being raised on columns, and the cars suspended on either side below them. At the junctions the sections are hinged together, and at these points can be raised by hydraulic rams. This raising of the track with a train upon it forms a gradient down which the cars rush until the train arrives at the next junction, when the same raising process is effected with like results, and so on until the terminus is reached. It remains to be seen whether such a system can be worked satisfactorily on a larger scale, and whether it will prove more economical than existing methods of propulsion.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

We have all read with pride of the brave Highlander who, at the action at Dargai, continued to play his pipes although he had been shot through the legs. A correspondent of the *Times* points out that a similar incident, recorded in *The Life and Exploits of His Grace the Duke of Wellington*, occurred at the battle of Vimiero about ninety years ago. It is thus described: 'An incident occurred in this battle so highly characteristic of Highland courage that we cannot refrain from quoting it. It is very common for the wounded to cheer their more fortunate comrades as they pass on to the attack. A man named Stewart, the piper of the 71st Regiment, was wounded in the thigh very severely at a very early period of the action, and refused to be removed. He sat upon a bank playing martial airs during the remainder of the battle. He was heard to address his comrades thus: "Weel, my bra' lads, I can gang nae langer wi' ye fechtin, but de'il burn my saul if ye want music." For this the Highland Society justly voted him a handsome set of pipes, with a flattering inscription engraved upon them.'

WHALE-FISHING.

The whale-fishing at Newfoundland during the past season has not been very successful, for only one animal was secured by the five Dundee vessels engaged in the enterprise. On the other hand, the capture of the walrus—the hide of which has lately been marketable—was prosecuted with better results. The best catch of the season was that of the ship *Balæna*, which secured 600, and other vessels killed from seventy to eighty each. The three vessels which proceeded from Dundee to Davis Strait did far better as regards the whale-fishing, for they secured among them no fewer than eight whales, against three killed during the preceding season. At present quotations the bone secured will realise about £12,000, and the oil about £2000, estimating the latter at £20 per tun.

AFRICAN COFFEE.

The results of working a coffee estate in British Central Africa have lately been published for the benefit of those wishing to embark in that

industry. This takes the form of a balance-sheet of the plantation belonging to Mr S. Israel, who arrived in that country in June 1894. Five hundred acres of land cost him £175, to which must be added £2000 spent during the three years in the erection of buildings, planting of shade trees, &c. Sixty acres planted with coffee brought a return for one year of nearly £1500, and a valuation of the estate shows it to be worth £4500. For the next year the estimated return is over £2000, with an expenditure of little more than a quarter that sum; and for 1899, when many more acres will come into bearing, Mr Israel reckons on a revenue of £3000 with the same outlay as in the previous year. Very few new planters have made their appearance during the past year, owing to reports—which are greatly exaggerated—as to the unhealthiness of the country.

THE DANGER OF 'FIREPROOF' BUILDINGS.

The recent great fire in London, which laid so many houses low, has done good service in calling attention to the utterly false security promised by so-called 'fireproof' buildings. The buildings are so far fireproof that the materials used in their construction—iron and concrete—will not take fire. But what happens when such a structure is stored with highly-inflammable goods should such goods become ignited? The building acts like a fireplace, its numerous staircases, lift-shafts, and windows acting as flues, until its interior is one mass of glowing heat. Then the heat acts upon the iron girders, causing them to lengthen by several inches and to exert an outward thrust upon the walls, which speedily brings them down. Good, strong, old-fashioned oaken beams are far safer, for they take a long time to burn through, and they do not elongate by the action of heat. It is obvious that there is room for great improvement in our methods of building construction in view of risk from fire.

STEAM FROM ELECTRICITY.

A demonstration was recently given at Birmingham by the Electric Steam Syndicate of a system patented by Major J. H. Dunn for converting electricity into steam. So far as we can gather from the published accounts of this demonstration, it would seem that the tubes of a steam boiler have passed through them wires which are made white-hot by their resistance to the passage of an electric current. We read that at first the patentee made use of platinum for this purpose; but as that metal is nearly as costly as gold, it is obviously out of the question, and he has since 'discovered a metal which is only fifteenpence a pound, which answers the purpose.' We confess that we do not see how such a system could be worked except at ruinous loss, unless Major Dunn has discovered, as well as the new metal, an unprecedentedly cheap method of generating an electric current. For the most economical method at present available—with the exception of a natural head of water as at Niagara—is steam power. And to attempt to make a current so generated produce more steam than that which gave it origin is very like trying to get a quart of liquid out of a pint pot.

ARTIFICIAL STONE.

The Owen Stone Company of Scotland are now manufacturing an artificial stone which is said to stand every test, and to be impervious to all vagaries of the weather. The process is a simple one, and the ingredients of the stone, chiefly lime and sand, are not expensive commodities, so that it is believed that the artificial product will be able to compete with the real. The lime and sand, having been thoroughly incorporated, are passed into moulding boxes, which may be of any convenient size or shape, and these are placed within the converter. Water at high pressure, and having a high temperature, is then pumped into the converter to cause the necessary chemical union between the lime and sand, and the moulding boxes are also submitted to a temperature of about 400° Fahrenheit by the action of superheated steam. In about thirty hours the surplus water is run off, but the heat is continued, in order to remove moisture from the moulding boxes, for another fifteen hours. The boxes are then removed from the converter, and the stone within them is practically ready for use. Experiments are now in progress, from which it is hoped that other products of nature's laboratory, such as slate and marble, will presently be successfully imitated.

COOKING BY VAPORISED PARAFFIN.

The gas-cooker is now such a very popular piece of kitchen apparatus that any invention which seeks to displace it must be very good indeed; and it is hard to believe that anything which burns oil can supplant it either in cheapness or efficiency. But this is what the Darby Oil-gas Burner essays to do, and the demonstration given lately in London of its working was certainly satisfactory so far as it went. The oil used is ordinary paraffin; the burner employs no wick, so that there is entire absence of trimming or smoke, and the liquid is vaporised before it does its work. The main feature of the burner is an asbestos cap, upon which the oil drops from a coiled pipe, the pipe leading from the tank or other receptacle, which may be at some distance from the point of combustion. A few drops of the liquid having fallen, a match is applied, and the coiled pipe is speedily heated, so that the oil is vaporised. The burner will fit into any ordinary cooking-range, and will heat the entire system, oven and all, as efficiently as with a coal fire. The consumption of oil is said to average

one gallon in nine hours, which would indicate a cost of about one penny an hour.

USEFUL X-RAYS.

It is very satisfactory and interesting to know that the Röntgen rays, which at first promised to be only a nine days' wonder, are doing such splendid work in the hands of the surgeons. Every big hospital has now its long roll of cases in which the surgeons have been guided in their work by the revelations of the X-ray tube; and now, from the distant Indian frontier, we hear how the wounded are receiving benefit from this method of diagnosis. In one instance a Sepoy had been struck by a bullet, which made a flesh wound across his chest, and apparently had found its exit at his arm. The case was not an extraordinary one, but the surgeons were puzzled by the inflammatory symptoms which manifested themselves, and for which there was no apparent cause. Recourse was had to the Röntgen apparatus, which at once showed that some shadow-casting foreign bodies were lodged in the man's chest. Operation showed that these were pieces of lead, the remains of a bullet which seems to have broken up after impact with the bones.

FIRE INSURANCE BADGES.

An able article in the *Daily Mail* recently called attention to the leaden medallions or badges of the different fire-offices which may be observed on numerous old houses in London. In past times it was the custom when a householder insured his premises to nail up in a conspicuous place — usually on the brickwork between the first-floor windows — one of these badges, which bore the device of the office from which it emanated. When the insurance ceased by non-payment of premiums the device was at once removed; but this custom gradually became abandoned, and many of the badges remain to this day. In the old times each fire-office kept its own extinguishing apparatus, but would on no account use it for any houses but those of its own customers, and these badges were the distinguishing marks—many bearing the device of the 'Sun,' others that of the 'Royal' (a crown), and so forth. It is amusing to note that the 'Sun' badge has in certain foreign countries been mistaken occasionally for a religious emblem, and the natives have been seen kneeling before it. The first fire-office in London seems to have been founded during the year which followed the great fire—1667.

PROGRESS IN HORSELESS VEHICLES.

Little more than twelve months ago the restrictions with regard to the use of locomotives on common roads having been modified, the event was signalised by a procession of horseless vehicles from London to Brighton. The exhibition was not an unqualified success, but some of the new-fangled contrivances did succeed in carrying out the programme arranged. The second of these annual displays has just taken place; and, although, it must be admitted, the distance covered was far less than on the former occasion, the whole affair showed distinct progress. About forty motor-cars took part in the procession, and most of these were driven by oil, one was propelled by steam, and there were a few to represent electricity in rivalry with horseflesh. Among the vehicles was a new one, which has already covered more than two thousand miles on common roads, including a journey from John o' Groat's to Land's End, Cornwall. The proceedings were carried out under the auspices of the Motor-Car Club, who declare, through their president, that the horseless vehicle system is, for journeys under twenty miles, far more expeditious than railway travelling, for the carriage goes from door to door, and there is no waiting at railway stations for dilatory trains. We might mention in connection with this matter that the electrically-propelled cabs, which have now been running in London for some time, are a distinct success. They are so constantly in request that it is quite an exceptional circumstance to see one unoccupied.

AN OLD FAMILY PORTRAIT.

If you could think, if you could speak,
I wonder how your voice would sound!
And what opinion you would hold
Of those who idly crowd around!

Why are your eyes, with passive gaze,
Fixed on us as we laugh or weep,
As though you seemed to stand aloof
And mystic self-communion keep?

Can all we say, and all we do,
And all we are or might have been,
Be nought to you, as though we were
Unknown, uncared for, and unseen?

'Tis ages since the artist's brush
Upon a snowy canvas drew
Your features; then revered and loved,
Now only known by name to few.

It may be ages since you left
To enter on your endless trance;
But day by day we love to build
Around your face some fresh romance.

H. N. M.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

'LINDA.

A TALE OF THE KLONDYKE GOLDFIELDS.

By W. CARTER PLATTS,
AUTHOR OF 'THE TUTTLEBURY TALES;' 'PHIL'S PARD;' 'ANGLING DONE HERE,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE SCHOOL-MARM.

THERE was no prettier building in Oloville than the little log schoolhouse, that in turn, as the summer waxed and waned, was aglow with the blossoms of the fragrant honeysuckle and the clematis, the yellow rings of the love-vine, and the warm, tender blaze of the woodbine which, outside, clung about the lumber walls and gables, and kissed the topmost shingles of the roof. But the roses and the violets bloomed inside on the cheeks and under the lashes of the school-marm. And there was no prettier woman in all Kansas than little 'Linda—no, nor one-half so pretty, Jim Vickerson vowed to himself a hundred times a day.

It was an afternoon in May—a warm, sunny afternoon. The hum of bees from without and the hum of children from within met on the sill of the open window of the schoolhouse, and mingled and mingled until it seemed to the impatient idler, loafing round the building, that the bees were learning the multiplication table and the children were gathering the honey, for to him all was honey that fell from the lips of the dainty school-marm. A creamy whorl of honeysuckle peeped in at the open window, and Jim Vickerson—'Honest Jim' they called him in Oloville—peeped in at the open door.

Jim was a big, strapping hunk of good nature, that never had done, and never would do, a dirty trick—not even to save his life. Clear six feet he stood in his socks, healthy and handsome, with broad, square shoulders, brawny arms, and a well-cut, bronzed face with short brown beard. And through his fearless, clear blue eyes you could see that he was just as clean within. He was honest to the core; but he had one fault—he thought everybody else was honest too, and that was what was the matter with Jim. His heart was too big. 'Linda said it was, and 'Linda ought to know, for she had had it in her keeping ever since she came to teach school in Oloville in the fall of '93. This failing had stood seriously in the way of Jim's prosperity. He had tried his hand at raising wheat, at growing sorghum cane, at breeding stock, and always with the same result—Jim did all the work, and, somehow, somebody else invariably scooped in all the profits. And now the resources of Oloville were exhausted, and the modest little pile of dollars his father had left him, and which he had striven so zealously to increase, had dwindled pitifully.

The hum within the log building ceased. School was out, and little Sukey Sanders gathered up her own and her brother Johnnie's spelling-books into the school-bag, and shouldered it; and picked up the dinner-basket with the empty pie-dish in, to carry home. For Sukey loved her big, handsome brother so that it was a pleasure to her to be his slave and carry his things; and Johnnie wasn't mean enough to deprive her of a trifling treat like that. As the handful of scholars tumbled noisily out of the schoolhouse Jim crept in. 'Linda was just shutting up the children's copybooks in her desk. With her big white pinafore that she always wore in school, and her soft, curly locks that had burst restraint and shaken themselves down in a dusky shower upon her shoulders, she looked like a child herself—a roguish, impulsive, heart-captivating child. Dropping the desk-lid, she sprang lightly upon a low bench, made Jim a mock curtsy, and,

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clasping her hands behind her, began to recite in a sing-song voice:

"'Linda had a great big bear—
They called it Jim, you know;
And everywhere that 'Linda went
That bear was sure to go.

'It followed her to school one day,
And'——

'Guess I feel pesky like one jest now, anyhow,' Jim interrupted gravely.

'Like a what?' asked 'Linda sharply, with a startled look. All sign of the roguish child vanished from her as she stepped down from the bench, and it was a woman that stood before him—a timid, shrinking woman, crouching under the blow that, somehow, she instinctively knew was about to fall on her.

'Like a b'ar,' he went on slowly, ''cos I'm afeared I'm a-going to hurt you with what I've got to tell you.'

It was so hard to get the words out that the perspiration stood upon his forehead, and he sat down on the form and mopped his face with his handkerchief.

'Pore 'Linda—pore little 'Linda,' he continued with an effort, taking one of her hands in his, and stroking it tenderly, if clumsily, as though to soften the shock. 'I guess your b'ar won't follow you to school no more fur a spell.'

'Linda gave him one quick, frightened glance.

'There's—there's nothing come betwixt you and me, Jim?' she queried tremulously.

And Jim only looked back into her eyes with a grave, confident smile that reassured her more than words could have done.

'Then I don't fear anything in the whole wide world! And now, Jim, I'm ready for all the hard things you've got to tell me,' she rattled on recklessly.

''Linda,' he said gravely, 'I'm afeerd I've jest got to quit Oloville and—and *you* fur a spell.'

'Linda's face blanched in spite of her recent boast.

'On'y fur a spell,' he went on quickly, in order to reassure her, 'mebbe fur a couple o' years; and then, of co'se, please God, I'll come back and—and my little 'Linda shan't hev to teach spellin'-school.'

'*Must* you go—*must* you leave me?'

'Yas. It's powerful hard, 'Linda—powerful hard; but, you know, I've tried here to git a home fit fur the purtiest gal in all Kansas, and—and—— Wall,' he went on solemnly, 'I'm strong, and Lord knows I'm willin', and I ain't going to hev it said of me, "He set right here in Oloville fur thirty years, and—*busted!*"'

'Jim,' she whispered, almost timidly, 'if only my salary were a little bigger, we might perhaps be able—with what you have—to manage without you going away until something turned up.'

Unselfish little 'Linda! Like wee, little Sukey Sanders, she loved her big, handsome boy so much that she would gladly have borne all his burdens for him, if she could, and have been proud to do it.

'No, 'Linda,' Jim returned; 'I couldn't do it. I'd feel I was far too mean a skunk fur my own comp'ny, ef I was jest loafing around while my wife earned the bread to put into my mouth. I reckon there's two things lef' open to me—cow-punching in Texas or Arizony, which ain't an occupation calkerlated to providing a home fur the sweetest flower of Kansas, onless, of co'se, you run a ranche on yer own account, and I ain't enough business in me to keep a cat outer a pasture lot, not to mention running a ranche.'

'No, Jim, I wouldn't like you to try that.'

'Wall, then,' he went on hurriedly—after the manner of a man with a pill, who, after shirking the task of taking it as long as possible, and having at last got it between his teeth, is only anxious now to bolt it whole and get the job over as speedily as possible—'the point's right here: I've read in the *Topeka Straight Talk* there's an Alaska trading steamer fitting out at Seattle fur Juneau to unload parties fur the new goldfields on the Yukon; an' I reckon, 'Linda, my chance is jest awaiting fur me to take holt of it, fur there's gold there fur any feller who ain't afeered of hunching hisself and going into some real hard work baldheaded.'

'And when must you go, Jim, *if* you go?'

'To-night. I kin git on the cars as the express comes through at two in the morning.'

'*To-night!*—so soon?' 'Linda gasped faintly.

'Yes. There ain't any time to be lost ef I git by this trip, and a powerful deal depends on gitting there airly on in the season.'

'And if you *were* lucky, and *did* find plenty of gold, perhaps you'd get robbed?' urged 'Linda timorously.

For answer Jim drew himself up to his full height, and glanced down at his own athletic figure confidently.

'No, no; I didn't mean *that* way,' she went on hastily. 'I mean that—that—I mean—you know, Jim, you're too kind-hearted—you're too good, and there's such a lot of plausible, smooth-tongued'——

'Yas, I reckon I git yo'r meaning, 'Linda,' he said, with a quiet smile of self-confidence; 'but, s'pose I *did* strike it rich, I'd jest say—ef any temptation come anigh me to hand over any of my pile into another feller's keeping—I'd jest say, "No, Jim Vickerson, 'twouldn't be honest—'twould be downright thieving. Thet gold ain't yo'rn—you ain't no property in it. It jest belongs right away to little 'Linda—ev'ry cent of it—and you ain't any excuse to start fooling with anybody's dollars that don't belong to you."'

Then 'Linda's spirit awoke, and lashed her breast inwardly with her conscience. Springing back-

ward, with the tears flashing in her eyes, she stamped her little foot determinedly and cried:

'I'm a mean, selfish wretch to try to spoil all your plans—to thwart all your ambitions, just because I want to see you every day. Go, Jim—go! And God be good to you and bring you back to me again! Go—go—go! Go, before my love overpowers my reason, and I bid you never—*never* leave me. Go—but stop! Give me one kiss. Now go, brave heart!' And, flushed and trembling with emotion, she sank helplessly upon a seat, as Jim, with wavering step and many a backward glance, left the schoolhouse.

In the dark hours of the early morning one solitary light burned in the gable-window of Eben Hutchin's frame-house, where the school-marm boarded. And, as Jim Vickerson strode past the building on his way to the depôt, a graceful, muffled figure stole out from Eben Hutchin's porch and slid five soft white fingers into the man's rough palm. And so, silently, the two passed on together to the depôt. And soon the Western express dashed alongside the platform. The conductor sang out 'All aboard!' the engineer rang his bell; the cars swung out into the darkness. All that could be seen of them was the red tail-light, growing less, and less, and less in the pitchy blackness of the night; and little 'Linda's figure was left alone upon the deserted platform. But 'Linda's heart had gone out in the cars over the rolling prairie.

. . . . . .

William J. Klippins had a pretty big store on Maine Street, Seattle, and a distant cousin at Oloville. William J. had prospered exceedingly in the things of this world; and, as for the next, he was a deacon at the neighbouring Methodist Church. Consequently, the distant cousin at Oloville had not failed to sound the praises of his well-to-do relative at Seattle—and had sounded them, too, with the loud pedal on, so to speak. It was not surprising, then, that, after Jim Vickerson had secured his berth on board the *Flaming Occident*, he should inquire the locality of Klippins's store, and proceed thither for the purpose of procuring his outfit. As he entered, the deacon was haggling with a customer over the price of some steel pickaxe points, or, rather, the customer was doing the haggling, while the other beamed upon him with a benevolent smile that would have melted all but the hardest-hearted wretch into the soothing belief that he, William J., in allowing him to purchase the tools at all, was laying him under a debt of gratitude that mere, cold, unsympathetic dollars could never possibly repay.

The customer, however, must have had a heart of stone, for he was armour-proof against all the deacon's blandishments. Deliberately taking off his big slouch hat, he swept it slowly round, and remarked sarcastically:

'It 'pears to me, Cap., you air a *leetle* slow at gitting my drift. It's steel p'ints I'm after—not the flotation price of your hull durned store.'

He was a striking, if uninviting, personage, this obdurate customer. His bald head shone like the summer sea between two ragged, knobby islands of grisly hair, under the lee of which sheltered one whole ear and the remnant—about half—of another. Beneath one shaggy brow peered out a piercing, shifting, restless eye, slightly bloodshot from a long and familiar acquaintance with cheap 'pisen'—'forty-rod' whisky—which had not yet completely conquered the iron constitution of the man; while under the other eyebrow the orbless eye-socket, left vacant by the accomplished fingers of a Mexican 'gouger' in a 'Frisco gambling-saloon, meandered off into a long, deep scar, dividing the cheek-bone from the temple, so that it was difficult to say where the scar ended and the eye-socket began. His cheeks and chin were covered with long, light-gray, tangled whiskers, while his upper lip bore a white, bristly moustache, the growth of one-half of which the eccentric healing of a deep cut had turned in an upward direction, which, together with the empty, elongated eye-socket, lent a terrifying, lopsided fierceness to his face that made women shudder to look at him, and frightened children. For the rest, he was of medium height, with broad, somewhat rounded shoulders, and a supreme indifference to such mere trifles as religion and morality. His father being one of the now historic ''forty-niners,' he had been taken out West at a tender age, and had had the first elements of profanity and nineteenth-century heathenism instilled into him in a Californian gulch. Since then he had himself assisted to rush the Cariboo goldfield, had worked in the mines and smelted ore in Nevada, worked up and down the coast in a trading schooner—in short, had tried his hand at a score of rough-and-tumble trades, and, lastly, had quitted rounding up beef in Colorado, attracted, like 'Honest Jim,' to the gold-strewn basin of the Yukon.

'I re-gret I can't take a single cent less for the points,' replied Klippins blandly, smiling the sweet smile of a universal benefactor. 'What I ask you is pre-cisely one cent each more than I gave for them, and out of that cent I have to pro-vide for the freight and rent of'——

'Cheese it, Cap.—cheese it.'

'Pre-cisely'——

What the deacon was about to add did not transpire, for at that moment his eye lighted upon Jim as the latter entered the store, and his quick business instinct at once scented a tractable customer. Leaving the old adventurer to be attended to by a clerk, he turned to the new-comer. In a few brief words Jim explained that he was starting for the Yukon goldfields, and required an outfit; and in a few brief minutes he was selecting—or, rather, he *thought* he was selecting, but, in reality, the seductive storekeeper was insidiously selecting for him, as the conjurer forces

upon the unwitting spectator the cards he wishes —a miscellaneous assortment of *un*necessaries that he would have only been too glad to throw away before he reached his goal.

The adventurer—'Twilight Ben' was his latest sobriquet, bestowed upon him on account of the semi-darkness of his vision—pricked his ear and a-half, and took a critical glance at Jim.

'Humph!' was his mental conclusion, 'young Eastern jay gitting plucked ready fur roasting. Blamed ef he'll hev a durned feather left ef I don't jest chip in an' stop the circus! The innercent 's ez powerful ez a Arizony mule without the kick, an'll turn out mighty hefty at digging dirt. Gosh! but I've struck a streak this trip! I reckon he 's jest the galoot I'm wanting. This yer is a purty business, and I'm on it. Labour on the Yukon, they *dew* say, ain't to be had. This yer innercent and me is going to be pards—work and share alike; and ef we *should* strike it rich, and ef the young jay *should* git accidentally laid out with lead-pisening through prospecting up the bar'l of a derringer, or the sides of the flume caving in, wall, of co'se, I'm his pard, and I jest take keer of his pile fur him—skursely!'

Then he quietly strode over to Jim, touched him on the arm and inquired:

'Say, stranger, it ain't no funeral of mine, but *air* you going to run a church-fair with these yer flim-flams? 'Cos thar ain't no call fur sech on the Yukon. I ain't been through the Cariboo rush and the San Jonquil boom without knowing what's trumps, you bet; and it gravels me to see a young innercent bluffed.'

Jim turned quickly round to Twilight Ben and gave him a searching look. In an instant his lack of business instinct and his inexperience protruded themselves painfully before him. Here was luck indeed—here was the experienced, guiding hand that he lacked. Providence had been kind to him.

'Ef you *would* jest help me select things I 'd take it real kind of you,' he returned gratefully.

The deacon frowned and expostulated, so that Jim felt as if he were performing a contemptibly mean action in not purchasing a lot of useless rubbish; but the thought of 'Linda held him fast, and he steadfastly insisted upon relying upon the judgment of the stranger who had come to his aid in time of need. As for Twilight Ben, he accepted his new position of adviser with cheerful serenity.

'You air a tenderfoot,' he observed confidentially to Jim. 'I calkerlate *your* best lay is jest to freeze to me till yer hoofs git toughened, and I'll run this yer circus fur yer.—Now, Cap.,' turning to Klippins, 'I'm stakin' out this yer innercent's claim fur him, so I reckon you 'd better jest stow thet chin-music o' yourn, and trot out some gum-boots an' strong woollen jumpers!'

In the end, much to the storekeeper's chagrin, Jim was provided with a really serviceable outfit at a reasonable price, and as he left the store in company with the grisly old digger, the deacon followed him sorrowfully with his eyes, and sighed sadly to himself:

'I fear the Lord has delivered that worthy young man into the hand of the Philistine.'

HOW OUR SHORES ARE PROTECTED.

A WONDERFUL SYSTEM OF LINKED DEFENCE.

THE safety of our homes in time of war depends upon the defences of the rockbound coasts of the United Kingdom. Though it is a question of concern to every man, ten years ago we slept quite peacefully in our beds when our shores were without any adequate defence, and the navy was so weak as to be quite unable to cope with any alliance of powers if they had desired to land troops on our coasts or had determined to shell such seaside towns as Grimsby, Portland, Falmouth, or Liverpool. It is impossible to foresee what dire calamity might not have happened, for our weakness against attack by sea was not a matter of opinion, but a great pregnant fact which all statesmen admitted as soon as their attention was drawn to the matter. During the intervening ten years the work of preparing for any possible foe has been pushed forward, and very soon we shall be able to boast a system of defence as perfect as human ingenuity can make it.

A royal commission has been at work planning a complete system of coast communication, and unlike most royal commissions it has done a great deal. It has girdled these islands round with the electric wire, with branch-wires shooting off to out-of-the-way coastguard stations; so that wherever an enemy may appear news of his approach will be telegraphed in the twinkling of an eye to the naval authorities in London. Under these circumstances any enemy would have to be very wide-awake to elude the marine telescopes that from each of the several hundred coastguard stations are daily directed over the sea watching every passing ship. Once these many telescopes had little significance; now, thanks to the telegraph or telephone wires that bring these distant stations within speaking distance of Whitehall, they are the many eyes of the ubiquitous 'Com-

missioners for Executing the Office of Lord High Admiral,' always peering out seawards on the chance of seeing any ship intent on doing mischief. These coastguard stations are no longer isolated spots unconnected with the world and unsupported by soldiers or sailors, but belong to one great intercommunicating system. Every coastguardsman may cherish the feeling that behind him is all the might of England—a navy of 100,000 men and 450 warships, a home army of 150,000 regulars, besides 415,000 officers and men of the militia, yeomanry, and volunteers—on which the British taxpayers are spending over forty-four million pounds every year.

This is a great change compared with ten years ago, when there was no electric wire to carry the faintest warning of danger from John o' Groat's to London or the Land's End, when the navy was weak, and the army badly organised.

In these ten years Great Britain has awakened to a realisation of her defenceless position, and the sight of the mother-country buckling on her armour has stirred the enthusiasm of the colonies and far-off dependencies, and there is now no whisper from Canada, Australia, or South Africa of a claim for independence; because every colonist is proud to belong to an empire so strong and so well protected.

But more than this has been accomplished. At Sheerness, Portsmouth, Portland, Southampton, and Plymouth—the ports nearest to the French coast—large sums have been spent in recent years in mounting the most modern guns to command the entrances to these harbours and sweep the seas for many miles. Where these far-reaching guns have been mounted there are searchlights, so that in the darkest night the gunners will be able to watch every object that moves on the water, and check with a hailstorm of shells any marauding boat of an enemy. Recent experiments have shown, however, that these searchlights are not so efficient as the authorities once believed. It has been proved that an enemy's torpedo-boat destroyer could creep quickly past these penetrating beams into the arsenals and ports they are intended to protect. Of course this defect will have to be remedied, so that these ports may be rendered impregnable by night as well as by day.

Other important links in this chain of defences are the booms that have just been constructed to protect the entrances to the great harbours that would be the targets of a foe. As far back as the reign of the Edwards, ports that were then regarded as vulnerable were protected by a great iron chain drawn across the entrances to the harbours at night, being suspended from fortified towers on either bank. Many of these towers remain to this day as picturesque ruins. The people of Fowey, the little town on the Cornish coast that the novelist 'Q.' has made famous, have preserved some links of the old boom-chain that was once suspended from two toy-like forts built at the entrance to the harbour, one on each side, where soldiers were on the alert to raise the alarm in case of an attack.

This old method of defence is now being revived; but the booms are not merely chains, which any modern ship could break, but elaborately constructed obstacles that render the harbours practically impregnable. They have already been made for Sheerness, Portsmouth, Southampton, Portland, and Plymouth, and others are to be constructed for the old postal-packet port of Falmouth, and for Berehaven and Lough Swilly—the harbours that are considered by the defence authorities most open to attack. The character of these boom-defences differs. In some instances each boom consists of a net of interwoven cables, supported at the rear by gunboats manned and ready for action. At other ports the boom consists of a series of pontoons, made of hard and heavy timber bound together with strong wire cables, and on the sea-side offering an enemy's ship a number of ugly steel spikes, like the bayonets of an army of soldiers, if it persists in seeking to force an entrance; and behind these pontoons will be a number of specially-fitted gunboats holding them in position and capable of teaching an enemy many lessons, which the guns of the neighbouring forts would assist in driving home.

Add to this chain of defences the many ships of the 'A' division of the Fleet Reserve at Sheerness, Portsmouth, and Devonport, ready at forty hours' notice to put to sea and teach a foe the good manners of staying at home until he receives an invitation to our shores. Lastly, there are the powerful ships that are stationed round our coasts—her Majesty's ships *Galatea* at Hull, *Mersey* at Harwich, *Australia* at Southampton, *Alexandra* at Portland, *Colossus* at Holyhead, *Rodney* at Queensferry, *Benbow* at Greenock, *Collingwood* at Bantry, and *Melampus* at Kingstown. Besides these warships there are many smaller cruisers, satellites of the coastguard ships, and there are what are known as coastguard watch vessels at Walton Creek, Yantlett Creek, Stangate, East Swale, Cliffe Creek, and Roach River. All these vessels, and many others dotted up and down our coasts, serve as eyes to the Lords of the Admiralty at Whitehall.

It can no longer be said that Great Britain is unprotected. The coast defences were never more complete or efficient. Right round our shores stretch these many defences, not isolated and therefore of little account, but forming a linked protection, with the telegraph or telephone at hand to respond at the naval headquarters in London to the slightest warning; and from Whitehall there branch off private wires to the great arsenals of Portsmouth, Devonport, Chatham, and Sheerness. A few words from any point on the coast, be it an isolated coastguard station or a lonely guardship, may in an hour or two have led

to orders of national import being flashed over sleeping towns and villages to the naval commanders-in-chief at the coast, and before the outside world knows of impending danger all the machinery of defence will be in readiness for any emergency. That this is no exaggeration those may judge who remember the hasty commissioning of the Particular Service Squadron in January 1896, when the German emperor's ill-judged telegram to President Kruger set England ablaze with anger. Before even the *Times* announced the decision of the government to form this new squadron, 'to do anything and go anywhere,' as Mr Goschen explained, the telegraph instruments at Whitehall had been vigorously ticking, and unknown to the public the admirals at Chatham, Portsmouth, and Devonport had had their orders. By the time the world was awake the preparations for commissioning the ships had commenced, and in a few days a squadron of powerful modern vessels was fitted out and ready for any task. When the necessity arises no less promptly will the machinery of defence be again put to the test, possibly on a more extensive scale.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XI.—I VISIT MASTER PETER WISHART.

THE life at the College of Leyden was the most curious that one could well conceive; yet ere I had been there a week I had begun heartily to like it. The students were drawn from the four corners of Europe—Swedes, great men with shaggy beards and invincible courage; neat-coated Germans; Dutchmen by the score; and not a few Frenchmen, who were the dandies of the place. We all gathered of a morning in the dusky lecture-hall, where hung the portraits of the great scholars of the past, and where in the cobwebbed rafters there abode such a weight of dust that a breeze coming through the high windows would stir it and make the place all but dark. Nor had I fault to find with the worthy professors, for I found soon that Master Sandvoort, though a miserly churl, had vast store of Latin, and would expound the works of Cornelius Tacitus in a fashion which I could not sufficiently admire. His colleague, too, who was the best of good fellows in the seclusion of his house, in his lecture-room was dignified and severe in deportment. You never saw such a change in a man. I went on the first morning expecting to find little but buffoonery; and lo! to my surprise, in walks my gentleman in a stately gown holding his head like an archduke's; and when he began to speak it was with the gravest accents of precision. And I roundly affirm that no man ever made more good matter come out of Plato. In truth, I got a great wealth of good scholarship and sound philosophy from my squire of bottle and pasty.

I was not the only Scot in Leyden, as I soon discovered; for forbye that I had letters to Master Peter Wishart, who taught philosophy in the college, there abode in the town Sir James Dalrymple, afterwards my Lord Stair, the great lawyer, and sometime a professor in my old college, whose nephew I had so cruelly beaten before I bade farewell to Glasgow. He was a man of a grave deportment, somewhat bent with study, and with the look of exceeding weight on his face, which comes to one who has shared the counsel of princes.

As I have said, forbye attending the two classes of Greek and Latin, I resorted to the lectures of Master Wishart, who hailed from Fife. He was well acquainted with my family, so what does he do but bid me to his house at Alphen one Saturday, in the front of March. For he did not abide in Leyden, never having loved the ways of a town, but in the little village of Alphen, some seven miles to the north-east.

I accepted his bidding, for I had come there for no other cause than to meet and converse with men of learning and wisdom, so I bade Nicol have ready the two horses which I had bought at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

It was a clear mild day when we set out, with no trace of frost and but little cold. The roads were dry underfoot, and the horses stepped merrily, for they were fresh from long living indoors. The fields on either side were still bleak; but the sowers were abroad, scattering the seeds of the future harvest. The waters that we passed were alive with wildfowl, who had wintered in the sea-marshes and were now coming up to breed among the flags and rushes of the inland lakes. The tender green was sprouting on the trees, the early lark sang above the furrows, and the whole earth was full of the earnest of spring.

Alphen is a straggling line of houses by a canal. They are all well-sized and even with some pretension to gentility, with long gardens sloping to the water, and shady coverts of trees. Master Wishart's stood in the extreme end, apart from the rest, low-built, with a doorway with stuccoed pilasters. It was a place very pleasant to look upon, and save for its flatness I could have found it in my heart to choose it for a

habitation. Master Wishart dwelt here since he had ever a passion for the growing of rare flowers, and could indulge it better here than in the town of Leyden. He was used to drive in every second day in his great coach, for he lectured but three times a week.

In a handsome arbour, at the side of which flowered the winter-jasmine, and around the door of which—so mild was the day—some half-dozen men were sitting.

I found my host, Master Wishart, a short, spare man, with a long face adorned with a well-trimmed beard. His eyes twinkled merrily when he spoke; and but for his great forehead no one might have guessed that he stood in the presence of one of the most noted of our schoolmen.

He rose and greeted me heartily, bidding me all welcome to Alphen, saying that he loved to see the sight of a Scots face, for was he not an exile here like the Jews by the waters of Babylon? 'This is Master John Burnet of Barns,' said he, presenting me to a very grave and comely man some ten years my senior, 'who has come all the way from Tweedside to drink at our' Pierian spring.' The other greeted me, looked kindly at me for a second, and then asked me some question of my family; and finding that a second cousin of his own on his mother's side had once married one of our race, immediately became very gracious and condescended to tell me his opinions of the land, which were none so good. He was, as I did not know till later, Sir William Crichtoun of Bourhope, that Sir William who in after times was slain in the rout at Cromdale when the forces of Buchan and Cannon were caught unawares on the hill-side.

I had leisure now to look around me at the others, and a motley group they were. There was Quentin Markelboch, the famous physician of Leyden, who had been pointed out to me in the street some days before, a little round-bellied man with an eye of wondrous shrewdness. There was likewise Master Jardinius, who had lectured on philosophy at one time in the college, but had now grown too old for aught save sitting in the sun and drinking Schiedam—which, as some said, was no great pity. But the one I most marked was a little, fiery-eyed nervous man, Pieter van Mieris by name, own cousin to the painter, and one who lived for nothing else than to fight abstruse metaphysical quarrels in defence of religion, which he believed to be in great peril from men of learning, and but for his exertions on its behalf to be unable to exist. It was he who first addressed me.

'I have heard that the true religion is wondrous pure in your land, Master Burnet, and that men yet worship God in simple fashion and believe in Him without subtleties. Is that so, may I beg of you to tell me?'

'Ay,' I answered. 'We folk in Scotland keep to our own ways, and like little to import aught foreign, be it heresy or strong ale.'

'Then,' said my inquisitor triumphantly, 'you are not yet tainted with that most vile and pernicious heresy of all, with which one Baruch Spinoza, of accursed memory, has tainted this land?'

I had no time to answer, for just at this moment all thoughts of philosophy and philosophers were banished from my mind by the sudden arrival of a new guest, no other than the worthy professor of Greek, Master Quellinus.

He greeted the rest with great joviality. 'A good day to you, my masters,' he cried, 'and God send you the ease which you love. Here have I been bearing the heat and burden of the day, all in order that lazy folk should have carp to eat when they wish it. Gad, I am tired and wet and dirty, this last beyond expression. For heaven's sake, Master Wishart, take me where I may clean myself.'

The host led the fisherman away, and soon he returned, spruce and smiling once more. He sat down heavily on a seat beside me. 'Now, Master Burnet,' says he, 'you must not think it unworthy of a learned Grecian to follow the sport of the angle, for did not the most famous of their writers praise it, not to speak of the example of the Apostles?'

I tried hard to think if this were true.

'Homer, at any rate,' I urged, 'had no great opinion of fish and their catchers; though that was the worse for Homer, for I am an angler myself and can understand your likings.'

'Then I will have your hand on it,' said he, 'and may Homer go to the devil. But Theocritus and Oppian, ay even Plato, mention it without disrespect, and does not Horace himself say "Piscemur"? Surely we have authority.'

But this was all the taste I had of my preceptor's conversation, for he had been walking all day in miry ways, and his limbs were tired; nor was I surprised to see his head soon sink forward on his breast, and in a trice he was sleeping the sleep of the just and labouring man.

And now we were joined by a new-comer, no less than Mistress Kate Wishart, as pretty a lass as you will see in a day's journey. She had been nurtured by her father amid an aroma of learning; and truly, for a maid, she was wondrous learned, and would dispute and cite instances with a fine grace and a skill which astonished all. Her father brought me to her and presented me, which she acknowledged with a courtesy which became her mightily; but I spoke not two words to her, for the old man led me away down one of the alleys among the trees.

'Kate 'll look after thae auld dotterels,' said he, speaking in the broadest Scots. 'I brocht her out that I micht get a word wi' ye my lane, for I'm fair deein' for news frae the auld country. First of a', how is Saunders Blackett at Peebles?

Him and me were aince weel acquant.' And when I had told him he ran off into a string of inquiries about many folk whom I knew and whom he once had known, which I answered according to my ability.

'And now,' he says, 'I've bidden twa-three o' the officers o' the Scots brigade to supper the nicht, so ye'll see some guid Scots physiogs after thae fosy Dutchmen. Ye'll maybe ken some o' them.'

I thanked him for his consideration; and after I had answered his many questions we returned to the others, whom I found busily arguing some point in divinity, with Mistress Kate, very disgusted, in their midst.

CHAPTER XII.—THE STORY OF A SUPPER-PARTY.

MY first thought on entering the supper-room was one of amazement. The owner of the house, whom I had taken to be a man of simple tastes, here proved himself to be a very caliph for magnificence. Many choice paintings looked down at us from the sides, richly framed and fitting into recesses in the panelled walls. The floor was laid with bright-dyed rugs and carpets of Venetian stuff, and the chairs and couches were of finely-carved wood. The whole was lit with a long line of waxen candles in silver sconces, which disputed the sovereignty with the departing daylight. But the choicest sight was the table which was laden —nay, heaped—with rich dishes and rare meats; while in the glass and metal flagons the wine danced and flamed.

Those who had not been present in the garden were gathered at the lower end of the room, whither the master of the place betook himself to greet them. There were also some of the officers in the Scots regiment, at least of that portion of it which was then lying at Leyden. Their dress was sober compared with the richness of such soldiery as I had seen in my own land, but against the attire of the citizens it was gaudiness itself.

I found myself sitting close to the head of the table on the right hand of my host, betwixt a portly Doctor of Laws and my worthy Master Quellinus. This latter was now all but recovered from his fatigue, having slept soundly in the arbour. He was in a high good-humour at the sight of the many varied dishes before him, and cried out their merits to me in a loud, excited tone which made my cheeks burn.

I paid little heed, however, to Master Quellinus's conversation, or to that of my left-hand neighbour, whose mouth was too full for words. But I found great entertainment in watching the faces and listening to the speech of some of the other guests. The table was wide and the light dim, so that I had much ado to make out clearly those opposite me. I marked Mistress Kate, very daintily dressed, talking gaily to some one at her side.

'Well, to tell you the truth, my dear Mistress Kate, this land of yours is not very much to my liking. To be sure, a soldier is contented wherever his duty calls him; but there is no fighting to be done, and the sport is not what I have found elsewhere. I am in such a strict place that—Gad—I cannot have a game with a fat citizen without having to listen to a rigmarole of half-an-hour's duration on the next morning. There is so much psalm-singing in the place that an honest gentleman can scarcely raise a merry song without having his voice stopped by half-a-dozen sour-faced knaves. 'Faith, I wish I were back in my own land, where there is some work for a cavalier. There is but one thing that I should except,' and he bowed low to his neighbour, 'the women, who are as beautiful as the menfolk are hideous. Though in truth I believe that the most lovely of them all is a countrywoman of my own;' and again he made her a fine bow.

The voice and the tone were strangely familiar, but for the life of me I could not give them a name. I could only note that the man was a big, squarely-made fellow, and that he seemed to be in a mind to make love to his host's daughter. She made some blushing reply to his compliments, and then, as luck would have it, a servant set a light between us, and the faces of both were revealed clearly to me.

I sat bolt upright in my chair with sheer astonishment, for there, dressed in the habiliments of the Scots regiment, and bearing himself with all his old braggadocio, sat my cousin Gilbert.

Then I remembered how I had heard that he had gone abroad to some foreign service, partly to escape the consequences of some scrapes into which he had fallen, partly to get rid of his many debts. And here he was, coming to the one place in Europe to which I had chosen to go, and meeting me at the one table which I had chosen to frequent. In that moment I felt as if the man before me were bound up in some sinister way with my own life.

Almost at the same instant he turned his eyes upon me, and we stared in each other's face. I saw him start, bend his head towards his companion, and ask some question. I judged it to be some query about my name and doings, for the next moment he looked over to me and accosted me with a great semblance of hilarity.

'What,' he cries, 'do I see my cousin John? I had not dared to hope for such a welcome meeting. How came you here?' And he asked me a string of questions.

I answered shortly and with no great cordiality, for I still remembered the doings in Tweeddale, and my heart was still sore in the matter of my father's death. Forbye this, Gilbert spoke with

not a little covert scorn in his tone, which I, who knew his ways well, was not slow to detect. It nettled me to think that I was once more to be made to endure the pleasantries of my cousin.

'And how goes all in Tweeddale, my dear cousin?' said he. 'I condole with you on your father's death. Ah! he was a good man indeed, and there are few like him nowadays. And how does Tam Todd, my friend, who has such a thick skull and merciless arm? And oh, I forgot! Pray forgive my neglect. How is fair Mistress Marjory, the coy maid who would have none of my courtesies?'

The amazing impudence of the fellow staggered me. It almost passed belief that he should speak thus of my father, whose death had lain so heavily at his door. This I might have pardoned; but that at a public table he should talk thus of my love irritated me beyond measure. I acted as I do always when thus angered—I gave him a short answer and fell into a state of moody disquietude.

Meanwhile my cousin, with all the gallantry in the world, kept whispering his flatteries into the pretty ears of Mistress Kate.

As I sat and watched these twain I had no eyes for any other. The very sight of Gilbert brought back to me all my boyhood in Tweedside, and a crowd of memories came surging in upon me. I fancied, too, that there was something of Marjory in the little graceful head at my cousin's elbow, and the musical, quick speech. I felt wretchedly jealous of him, God knows why; for the sight of him revived any old fragments which had long lain lurking in the corners of my mind; and as he chatted gaily to the girl at his side, I had mind of that evening at Barns when I, just returned from Glasgow College, first felt the joy of possession. I sat and moodily sipped my wine. Why had I ever left my own land, and suffered my lady to be exposed to manifold perils? For with the first dawnings of jealousy and anger came a gnawing anxiety. I had never felt such a sickness for home before, and I cursed the man who had come to ruin my peace of mind. Yet my feeling toward my cousin was not that of hatred; indeed, I could not refrain from a certain pity for the man, for I discerned in him much noble quality; and was he not of our own blood?

'Come now,' I heard Mistress Kate simper, 'I do not believe that tale of any one, and above all of him, for a soberer does not live. Fie, fie, Master Gilbert, I took you for a more generous man!'

'On my faith, my dear, it is true,' replied my cousin. 'For all his docile looks he is as fond of a game as the rest of us.'

Now I guessed that my cousin had been traducing me to the fair Kate, and I grew not a little hot. But his next word changed my heat into fierce anger; for my cousin continued:

'What saith the Latin poet?'—and he quoted a couplet from Martial—a jest at the usual amusements of the seemingly-decent man.

I know not where he had got hold of it, for he was no scholar; but it was full of the exceeding grossness which is scarcely to be found outside that poet. He thought, I could guess, that the girl understood no Latin; but, as I knew, she had a special proficiency in that tongue. She understood the jest only too well. A deep blush grew over her face from her delicate throat to the very borders of her hair. 'Twas just in such a way that Marjory had looked when I first told her my love. 'Twas in such a fashion she had bade me farewell. The thought of her raised a great storm of passion in my heart against any one who would dare thus to put a woman to shame. I strove hard to curb it, but I felt with each second that it would overmaster me.

'Well, John, what think you of my Latinity?' asked my cousin from over the table.

'I think — I think,' I cried, 'that you are a mean, scurrilous fellow, a paillard, a hound. 'Fore God, Gilbert, I will make you smart for this;' and ere I well knew what I did I had seized my glass and hurled it at his head.

It struck him on the cheek, scratching the skin, but doing little hurt.

In a trice he was on his feet, with his hand at his sword. One-half the table rose and stared at the two of us, while Master Wishart left the head and came rushing to the back of my chair. As for myself, I felt such desperate shame at my conduct that I knew not what to do. I had now made a fool of myself in downright earnest. I felt my cheek tingling and flaming; but I could do nought but look before me.

Then my cousin did a thing which gave him great honour and completed my shame; for, bridling his anger, as I saw, with a mighty effort, he said calmly, though his arms were quivering with excitement:

'I would ask you to be more careful in your use of glasses. See, yours has flown right over to me and played havoc with my cheek. Faith, it is no light duty to sup opposite you, *mon ami*. But indeed, gentlemen'—and he bowed to the company—''twas but an unfortunate mischance.'

At this all sat down again, and scarce five minutes after Gilbert rose to leave, and with him the other gentlemen of his regiment. Master Wishart bade him sit down again, for the night was yet young, but my cousin would not be persuaded. He nodded carelessly to me, kissed his hand to pretty Mistress Kate, and swaggered out.

I sat dazed and meditative. I was raw to many things, but I knew well that Gilbert was not the man to sit down under such an affront. He had shielded me for his own reasons, of which I guessed that family pride was not the least; but he would seek a meeting with all despatch. And in truth I was not averse to it, for I had many accounts to settle with my dear cousin. I fell to

thinking about the details of the matter. In all likelihood he would come on the Monday, for the Sabbath was a day of too strict propriety in this land, as in my own, to allow of the settling of any such business. Well, come when he might, I should be ready; and I rose from the table, for the sooner I was back in Leyden the better.

I took farewell of my host, and he could not refrain from whispering in my ear at parting, 'Jock, Jock, my man, you've made a bonny mess o't. Ye'll ha'e to fecht for it, and see ye dae't weel.'

Nicol was waiting at the gate with the horses, and together we turned on our homeward way.

A TRANSVAAL LOTOSLAND.

IN the extreme north-easterly corner of the Transvaal lies one of the least-known portions of South Africa—a spot so unlike the rest of the Republic that the few travellers who strike it invariably grow enthusiastic over its charms. Nature has done its best to preserve intact from the invasion of the white man the solitudes of this verdant district. It is difficult of access, the roads being mere ox-tracks that the first rain of summer effaces altogether or ploughs into the bed of a torrent. Deadly malaria lurks in the valleys and along the banks of the Limpopo, that forms its northern boundary; the tsetse-fly kills off the horses of the traveller, whom the natives are not eager to befriend or assist—for the late chief, Magato, inoculated his subjects with a virus of suspicion which renders them proof against the overtures of the concession-hunting gold-prospector, in whom they see only a dangerous and subtle enemy of the country.

Although under the protection of the Transvaal government, the natives of this district are practically as independent as in the days before the voortrekker had been seen. They have never been conquered by the Boers, and the independence of the nation has been solidified by the late chief, Magato, as diplomatic and able a monarch as ever occupied a king's kraal. It has passed into history how he defied the Boer commandant, the redoubtable General Joubert, when he was sent to collect arrears of hut-tax.

'You are not Paul Kruger,' he said; 'you are only his servant. If he wants to talk to me, let your master come himself;' and the hut-tax has remained uncollected to this day, for the Boers have always shirked an encounter with the Magatese, whom they consider impregnable in their native fastnesses. Thus it comes that Magato's country has lain in undisturbed serenity, known perhaps to not more than a couple of hundred white men, including a handful of traders and recluses who, like the voyagers to the islands of the Lotos-eaters, have fallen under the peculiar spell of this delightful earthly paradise. Having by some strange fortune survived its climatic dangers, they live lives of languid indolence, well content to forswear the overrated charms of civilisation for the leisured ease of this primitive existence. Among them are men of good birth and education, who have tasted the supposititious sweets of the advanced intellectual culture of the older world, yet choose to remain in this land of black skins and sunny skies, where a strange white face appears with the erratic and transient uncertainty of a meteor, and the faint echoes of the surge of the cities are borne by a tardy newspaper or a rarer letter at intervals reckoned by moons.

Of the circumstances that led these dwellers in the solitudes to forego their share of the heritage of the ages many strange stories might be written; but it would be easier to raise the hidden gold that is said to abound in the country than to extract the story of their past from some of these hermits. One or two have taken to the life as the outcome of a spirit of true philosophy or in disgust at the world for which they were originally intended. Others strayed thither after aimless wandering over the Continent, and settled down to the full enjoyment of a life of peaceful rest that amply compensates for the trials of bygone years. A few, attracted by the possibilities of speedily acquiring wealth by supplying the wants of the natives, have opened stores by the pleasure and will of the paramount chief—without which no white man can occupy land. Having made money in the course of years, they are now unable to shake off the habits and tastes that time has engrafted; so they remain, lords of as much of the earth as they wish to possess, having unconsciously learned that true happiness consists in contentment. It is perhaps impossible to convey to one who has not felt the strange spell of this subtropical climate any idea of its peculiar potency. A land where summer and winter are only distinguishable by greater heat and fewer cool breezes; by a period of heat and heavy rains, and followed by one of cool nights and brilliant days; a land where everything that the soil can produce has only to be planted and left to itself; where the orange, grape, pine, banana, and tomato grow wild, and increase under cultivation in a ratio that results in wicked waste, for the nearest market is as accessible as the north pole.

Such labour as may be required costs but the price of the least valued article in the store; but the native pays his employer in English gold for

the axe or spade with which he performs his labour. In a country where the necessities of life are obtainable with the minimum of effort it is not surprising to find the white inhabitants the victims of a mental and physical indolence hard for one fresh from scenes of activity to appreciate. It is difficult to realise the frame of mind of such a one who, though ardently curious to see the electric light, of which he has only read, shirks the three hundred mile journey to Johannesburg because it will interrupt his daily habits. There are educated white men residing among these Spelonkin solitudes to whom the wonders of the city of the Rand are as strange as to the Kaffir who visits it for the first time. One member of a historical Scottish family has never yet set eyes on a bicycle, and knows only of the South African railways by report. Yet it is not want of means or leisure that prevents him gratifying his sight by a glimpse of the progress that has taken place in the world since the far-off days when he settled down in his mountain home. He owns the finest 'salted' horses in the country, a 'spider' of the best American make, and sufficient oxen to carry his possessions to Capetown. But desire is dead; the spirit of lethargy has taken possession of him, and he is content to hear of these wonders from the far-off South while he lounges on his shady veranda, smokes his home-grown tobacco, and sips the coffee raised for him by the Kaffirs who reside upon his farm in a condition of easy vassalage.

It may not be the highest form of either physical or mental existence, but its votaries appear to have attained as near to Nirvana as is possible for a European. Nor is it surprising that an unambitious nature should fail to see anything ignoble in seizing the chance to escape the toil and moil inseparable from the struggle for existence, and spend his days amid surroundings that have much to please and gratify certain temperaments. Perpetual sunshine, with no necessity for physical effort, has at all times produced a race of potential Lotos-eaters. Here—in the drowsy calm of this lovely mountain region, where every prospect pleases, where a man may live the natural life in its most engaging simplicity, its occasional ruggedness ameliorated by many aids to civilised luxury—it would be unreasonable to expect aught else than a sluggish effort to avoid irksome exertion.

Even the task of money-making calls for no more energy than is requisite to take down from the shelf the wire or blanket required by the Kaffir customer, and once a year to go for a fresh consignment of stock to Pretoria or Johannesburg. It is more than likely, though, that the task will be entrusted to an agent, and personal effort spared by the payment of a commission. A well-regulated and rigorous monopoly assures profits such as would excite the surprise or scepticism of the trader in less-favoured regions, and the acquisition of more than a competency is as inevitable as the budding of the peach-tree in spring. Set off against this the fewness of the traders' wants, clothing of the lightest and cheapest material, furniture sufficient to make the veranda the daily lounge and the bedroom a protection from the heat, and everything beyond is superfluous lumber. Does he wish to cultivate the land? He can have as many acres as he can sow for the asking—ay, even for the taking; land that has only to be scratched to yield the best that the soil can anywhere produce. His oxen graze over miles of rich veld, and his gun can always supply game that can be shot from the stoep of the house. He is practically monarch of all he surveys, free from the vexatious restrictions of 'law and order' so long as he keeps peace with the chief and does not offend his white neighbours by any breach of the *lex non scripta* of the scant but prosperous community.

Only one piece of alloy enters into the mass of his pleasures. It sometimes happens that accident or illness beyond alleviation by the family medicine-chest calls for professional aid, and it may be that much suffering is endured ere a doctor can be fetched from the nearest but distant dorp. But this does not arouse any desire to be within closer touch of civilisation. It only enforces the necessity for the maintenance of friendly relations with neighbours; for no one can be independent of each other's assistance.

A contemptuous attitude towards the ways of towns is characteristic of all these dwellers in the solitudes; and if one of them can be spurred up to the degree of energy necessary for conversation, there is no subject on which he grows so eloquently dogmatic as the superiority of barbarism—as he loves to call his life—over civilisation. But with the inconsistency of the faddist, his conduct is often a standing contradiction to his theories. It is rarely that he can throw off the old Adam sufficiently to be superior to the attractions of choice bits of furniture or gaudy apparel for his dusky womenfolk.

If there is no piano, there will be an American organ that awaits the manipulation of the stray visitor. Nor is literature overlooked. The English magazines find their way here in belated bundles, and one old hermit has received and read a North Scottish weekly for twenty-five years. One of the best collections of material for a South African historian is on the book-shelves of an old elephant-hunter who has not seen a town of five hundred inhabitants for more than a quarter of a century. The majority of these recluses are of Scottish origin. The German element is also represented; but the Englishman does not take so kindly to a life of consistent isolation. Every two or three years he pays a visit to the Rand; and one actually journeyed to England, but he

has lost caste and prestige in the eyes of his neighbours in consequence. They said he had brought back notions that would unfit him for the solitary life; and their prophecy is being fulfilled, for, when the chief recently gave a newcomer leave to settle within twenty miles of his place, he showed no resentment, and lent only a languid assent to the protest of the other residents, who see the possibility of their being crowded out by a few more white settlers.

Monotonous though the life may appear, it is not without distractions that would appeal to the most gregarious. Game is abundant, from the pretty springbok to the lordly koodoo and occasional lion and giraffe. The arrival of a party of visitors now and then gives excuse for a gathering of the neighbours and a relapse into the habits of effete civilisation in the shape of much superfluous eating and drinking. In the intervals life is made up of a succession of those minor trifles that prove as all-absorbing to those they concern as they are uninteresting to outsiders. It may be that a petty chief, or, more serious still, a chief's wife, has to be mollified for the depredations of the settler's cattle in her mealie patch; or a party is arranged to shoot down the baboons that have grown too numerous for the welfare of crops. Thrice a year the traders hold a conference for mutual trade protection, which often results in a visit to the chief to forestall some projected opposition or trade rivalry. Permission to trade in Magato's country is not easily obtained, and those in possession of the monopoly spare no pains to preserve it intact. It is to them that the country owes its evil reputation as a fever haunt, and these stories have done as much as the opposition of the chiefs to keep out settlers and gold-seekers. The Boers long since gave up all attempts to combat the native hostility; and there is every reason for believing that this favoured corner of the Transvaal will long remain the blest retreat of its inhabitants, and the one spot in older South Africa where the pristine conditions of native life will remain undisturbed by the advance of civilisation.

A PASSAGE-AT-ARMS.

By W. E. Cule.

THE man from Africa did not think much of the Professor. From his place at little Mrs Arran's right hand he sometimes included the scientist in a casual glance, in which supreme self-satisfaction was slightly tinged with contempt, but that was all. As the lion of the evening he could not afford to waste thought upon that quiet, gray, middle-aged man who had so very little to say.

With the Professor it was otherwise. He looked at the stranger more than once with curious if rather absent eyes, and at last made a remark: 'I seem to know the face.'

'Do you?' asked his friend Barrington, who overheard. 'Where have you seen it before?'

Professor Herne could not remember. He felt sure that he had seen those dark, strongly-marked features before; but he could not make the recollection clear. So, after a moment or two, he shook his head doubtfully and turned once more to his plate.

The man from Africa owned a loud and somewhat penetrating voice. He had been successful at Johannesburg, and possessed a large and seasonable selection of stories. Anecdotes of Rand life had far less interest for the Professor than the pebble inscriptions of prehistoric man; but he could not help observing that the new-comer was monopolising the attention, not only of the other visitors, but of the hostess herself. Somehow the knowledge depressed him, and he bent a little lower over his plate.

'I almost wish,' he said softly, 'that I had not gone away.'

'Eh?' cried Doctor Barrington. 'Why? You were not disappointed, were you?'

'Oh no,' was the reply. 'As a geological expedition ours was entirely successful. I was thinking of something else—a private matter.'

The doctor nodded and was satisfied, while the Professor mentally resolved to keep a better guard upon his tongue. It is perhaps permissible for a gentleman eminent in the 'ologies' to utter occasionally a few unconscious words aloud; but it is just as well that such words should be scientific terms, and altogether unconnected with matters of the heart.

'By the way,' said Barrington a moment later, 'our new friend has some good stories; but he does not tell all. If some reports be true he is not exactly the hero our hostess seems to believe him.'

'Indeed?' was the low remark.

'No. Herries, of the Rifle Police, has heard something of him. He is home on leave, and I met him in town last week. According to his account, our friend here got into trouble, more than once, through his queer method of managing certain obstinate blacks. He did not stop short of'——

Only the Professor heard the final words; and when he heard them his eyes seemed to harden peculiarly, and he gave another glance towards the head of the table.

'Ah!' he said. 'Is that so? By-the-by, what is his name? I have forgetten.'

'Rugman,' replied the doctor. 'I believe he intends to settle down at Hexminster. We shall be little the better for him.'

'Very little,' was the Professor's unusually decisive answer; and when it was spoken he fell into a train of thought from which his companion's remarks could not easily rouse him.

He saw the pleasant face of Mrs Arran turned constantly to that heavy, loud-voiced stranger with an interest and admiration which could not be denied. He had learned to appreciate that look himself, and had used many little arts to evoke it, succeeding so often that he had almost begun to regard it as a possession of his own. He had also learned to regard the seat at the head of the table, nearest to the charming little widow, as his own place.

Then the long vacation had taken him away on an important geological expedition to Iceland, during which his eyes had been partially opened to the value of those things which he had left so lightly. He had returned much more gladly than he had set out, dimly acknowledging now that Mrs Arran's face had more attraction for him than all the mysteries of the Tertiary formation. In short, he had returned with a large number of valuable fossils, a larger number of rosy hopes, and a still larger number of dreams, to his learned duties at the university and to Mrs Arran.

But during his absence the state of affairs had changed. The man from Africa had arrived at the old cathedral city on a visit to a friend, and had created something of a ripple upon those quiet waters. He had gained an entrance into that select circle which made Mrs Arran's table its favoured place of meeting, and had even won his way to the seat of honour. Alas for the Professor! There were whispers already abroad which people had never thought of uttering in connection with himself, for his homage had been too quiet, too obscure, too entirely modest, to be observed of the public eye. He had been supplanted, and the allegiance of the gentle, sweet-faced little woman at the head of the table had been given to another.

So he pondered, sitting almost in silence until the gentlemen moved to the drawing-room. There he found a nook where he was farthest from the sound of the strong and overwhelming voice of his supplanter, and sat down.

Presently he was aroused by a touch upon the sleeve. A rather delicate-looking boy of twelve had approached him unnoticed.

'Why, Jack,' said the Professor, 'I did not see you. How are you?'

Master Jack Arran shook hands, replied to the inquiry, and took his seat upon the arm of the chair.

'I'm glad you are back, sir,' he said heartily.

'Indeed! Thank you,' was the Professor's reply.

'Did you get any fossils, sir? You know you promised me some.'

The geologist smiled. 'Perhaps,' he said. 'You shall come to my rooms to-morrow and see.'

'You're awfully kind,' said Jack gratefully. 'Not like that man over there. He's quite a cad, I think.'

'Hem!' said the Professor warningly. 'Whom do you mean?'

'That Mr Rugman. He's from Africa, and he's never even shot a rhinoceros! He can only talk about Boers, and banks, and stocks, and shares; and he'll hardly talk to me at all.'

The listener smiled. Jack continued, still in a slightly indignant tone:

'You know, sir, you advised mamma not to send me away to school till I am fourteen. Well, Mr Rugman has been talking so much to her about it that I believe she has almost changed her mind.'

The Professor took off his eyeglasses and rubbed them with his handkerchief — an infallible sign that he was troubled. But Jack continued, confidentially:

'I wish you'd speak to her again, sir. She will do anything you say.'

Artful Jack! The Professor flushed, and promised that he would think about it. It was a blow to him that Mrs Arran had been so easily shaken in her resolves, and a long-dormant battle-spirit was beginning to move within.

'He's been talking about schools,' pursued Master Jack. 'He says that I ought to go to his old school —Castlebridge.'

'Eh? Where?' exclaimed the Professor. And his start was so sudden that Jack almost tumbled from his perch.

'Castlebridge,' replied the boy. 'He says he was captain there once, and no end of other things. Oh, there's Doctor Barrington calling me! I'll be back directly, sir.'

The Professor sat back in his chair. He rubbed his eyeglasses once more, and then, glancing across the room, took a long, stern look at the face of the man from Africa. It was a gaze of sudden remembrance.

Mr Rugman stood with his hand upon the back of Mrs Arran's seat. There was self-confidence and satisfaction in his very attitude, and the lady's face was turned to his with that look which the Professor knew so well. It was a popular supposition, he knew, that most women admire masterly men, and Mr Rugman's appearance was decidedly masterly. Yet he thought of what Barrington had said, and the reflection connected itself curiously with a long-past experience in his own life. Then his face darkened. It was a good and pleasant face, and few had seen it under a cloud.

'She does not know,' he murmured. 'If she only knew! Yet all is fair in war—and in—— Hem!'

Mrs Arran and the man from Africa were still speaking of Master Jack. The widow was framing certain faint objections.

'He is so very delicate,' she said.

'School would be just the thing, then,' was the

confident assurance. 'Athletic exercises—regular life—plain, good food—just the thing!'

'But boys are so very rough, are they not?' was the next suggestion.

'Some,' admitted Mr Rugman. 'Such stories are greatly exaggerated. Elder boys in our great schools feel their responsibilities. When I was captain of the clubs at Castlebridge I was very careful'——

'Ah,' sighed Mrs Arran, 'I should feel so safe if Jack could only find a friend such as you must have been to the little ones at your school!'

Mr Rugman smiled contentedly. 'H'm,' he said with modesty. 'There are many boys quite as kind to the youngsters as I was'——

He paused, for a sudden hush had fallen upon a large group sitting near them. And at that moment another voice began, clearly, decisively:

'When I was junior master at a public school'——

His words had been spoken to be heard by all. Mrs Arran looked up to listen, and Mr Rugman turned to see who had interrupted him.

It was the Professor. He had left his corner to join the large group near Mrs Arran. Somehow the same subject had drifted into the discussion here also, and comments had been made upon an episode in public-school life recently reported in the newspapers. The Professor had listened patiently for a while, possibly closing his ears to the strong voice of Mr Rugman close by. Then, in answer to a request of Doctor Barrington's, he had commenced to speak.

'When I was junior master at a public school,' he repeated, 'an incident occurred which seems to bear upon this question. It was a decidedly unpleasant case'——

Everybody was listening now, for the Professor had been known to tell a story well. Mrs Arran waited with awakened curiosity, but the man from Africa looked on with a superior and indulgent smile. Nothing told him that a battle-royal had commenced; no one warned him that this quiet, reserved-looking student was an old-time fighter who had not yet lost all his ancient skill.

'There was a boy in the school whom we may call Smith,' resumed the Professor, apparently unconscious of the general interest. 'He was in the sixth form, tall, strong, and athletic, a leader in all sports, and over eighteen years of age. There was another boy whom I will call Brown. He was a little fellow of twelve, quick and clever, but delicate and shy. He was remarkably good at recitation.'

During the last few words the story-teller had glanced casually at Master Jack, who was now standing beside his mother's chair. Mrs Arran saw the glance, and laid her hand upon the boy's arm. She also wondered at the strange hardness which seemed to underlie the Professor's slow, smoothly-spoken words. It brought to her mind the old simile of the hand of steel in a glove of velvet. She listened more closely then.

'This Smith,' continued the Professor, 'was a very eccentric fellow, and remarkably fond of amusement. His amusement consisted in tormenting his young schoolfellow Brown, and some of his methods were as unique as effectual. He did not stop short of'—the Professor paused to give another glance around; then he concluded the sentence—'red-hot iron!'

Some one gave a little exclamation. It might have been Doctor Barrington. It could not have been the man from Africa, for he was gazing blankly at the Professor's face. The superior and slightly indulgent look had vanished some seconds before.

'Smith,' the story went on, 'would heat a poker in the class-room fire. Then he would follow Brown around the playground, penning him up at last in a corner between two walls. There, holding the poker well advanced, he would compel the boy to recite, with suitable gestures, long passages from Shakespeare. If he proved obstinate the poker was moved forward, and he always gave in. As I have said, he was a shy and delicate boy of twelve.'

The Professor paused again. Doctor Barrington muttered something in his beard, and Mr Rugman seemed to be listening with suspended breath. Mrs Arran had drawn Jack closer to her side, and several people noticed that the little widow was pale with anger.

'It went on for a long time,' the Professor said soberly. 'Little Brown never said a word at home, though he spent all his holidays, all his leisure time, in getting his Shakespeare by heart. His condition of mind may be easily imagined. There was no humour in it for him. One day it came to an end. It appears that he had recited all that he knew, and was still ordered to go on. It may be that he pressed forward—it may be that the poker was advanced a little too far. It is probable that he was desperate—it is probable that the brute who tortured him was reckless. There was a shout, a sudden scream. The iron, fresh from the fire, had touched his cheek!'

The speaker's voice had been raised a little towards the end. It was very stern, and vibrated strangely, while there was a spark in his quiet eyes which few had seen there before. Doctor Barrington spoke again, so shortly, so abruptly, that no one thought well to notice. Mr Rugman stood silent, leaning forward; and Mrs Arran, sitting with her lips parted and her eyes ablaze, looked the very incarnation of outraged tenderness and indignation.

'A nasty incident,' said one after a long pause. 'Of course the brute was expelled?'

'He left at the end of the term,' replied the Professor.

'You called him Smith,' cried Barrington. 'Have you forgotten his name, the unspeakable bully?'

'No,' said the Professor slowly, 'I have not forgotten his name.'

He looked up once more. His eyes passed round the circle, resting for a moment upon Mrs Arran's

face, clouded and angry still, and then moving to another face behind her chair.

That was a critical moment, the last of the passage-at-arms. The bold eyes of the man from Africa did not fall at first, though the florid face had paled, and the strong hands gripped the chair-rail convulsively. But the Professor's look was cold, unflinching, threatening. He could not go further with his story; but his eyes did not say that, for he was waging this battle for all that he loved, those hopes and dreams which were already more to him than all the fossils of all the ages. And he won!

The man from Africa bent to whisper a word in the widow's ear. She was surprised, but had no opportunity to say so. There was a movement of the door-curtains, a heavy but hasty step in the corridor. Mr Rugman had deserted the company without even saying 'Good-night.'

'I have not forgotten the name,' repeated the Professor calmly. 'But it would serve no purpose to mention it now;' and he surveyed the circle with that benign smile which his friends knew so well.

. . . . . .

Some time later our geologist, drawing on his gloves in the hall, was joined by a small boy, jubilant and eager.

'Oh,' he cried, 'I'm glad you told that story, sir! Mamma heard every word of it.'

'Jack,' said Professor Herne, 'you ought to be asleep.'

'I'm going,' replied Jack. 'But have you any more tales like that? Because if Mr Rugman comes and talks again to-morrow'——

The Professor smiled, and gently pinched the boy's ear. 'Don't worry,' he said. 'It is not likely that he will come to-morrow!'

Mrs Arran, descending the stairs behind, saw the action and the smile. Perhaps she heard the words too, or it may be that she had already guessed the truth. It is my suspicion that she had never really wavered in her loyalty to the Professor, but had wisely used the visit of Mr Rugman as a means of bringing her too-forgetful scientist more certainly to her side. If this suspicion be correct, it must be said that she had succeeded admirably, and had gained more than her point. Had she not seen her hero fight like a Paladin, and emerge from battle a conqueror? Had she not caught a glimpse of his heart, hidden so long beneath fossiliferous clay beds and layers of old red sandstone? Had she not, above all, seen something of its true tenderness, its warmth, its stern contempt for that which was small and brutal and cowardly? Yes, she too was a conqueror!

So the clasp of her hand was warmer than ever before, and though her sentences were few her face was eloquent. The charming Mrs Arran had a speaking method of her own, and the man who listened was satisfied indeed.

When the door had closed behind him he stood for a while upon the middle step, looking absently up the lighted close and struggling with the button of his glove. It was a troublesome button and required some management, so it is quite possible that his last remark referred to his successful struggle with it. The words were uttered just as he descended the lowest step of all: 'Victory,' he said softly, 'victory!'

RATTLESNAKE OIL

MEDICINES are frequently extracted from unexpected sources, and liniments from ingredients that would puzzle the most intelligent to discover how their efficacy became known. Perhaps the benefits derived from some of the medicines in use at the present time are as much delusions as the cures ascribed by Chinese physicians to the frightful decoctions they compound, and the relief credited to a proportion of the liniments may be due in a great measure to the vigorous rubbing-in that plays an important part in the treatment. Like all else in this world, the popularity of medicines undergoes many changes, and their worth may be frequently estimated by the length of time they have remained in the public service. Judged by this standard, rattlesnake oil has some claim to consideration, for it has been looked upon for over a century by a not inconsiderable number of people as a sovereign remedy for many ailments, and to-day more rattlesnake oil is rendered in the state of Pennsylvania in the farming communities, especially in the German farming communities, than has ever been. Internally it is taken as a remedy for hydrophobia, or rather as a preventive, if taken immediately after the bite and before symptoms of hydrophobia appear in the patient. Applied externally, it is believed to cure ringworm, sties, and sore eyes generally, and is particularly relied upon to relieve the most obstinate cases of rheumatism. That it is esteemed as a *bonâ fide* remedy, and not merely a quack nostrum, may be gathered from the fact that when rheumatism has failed to respond to the local physician's prescription, rattlesnake oil is resorted to by people who naturally look upon its use with horror, and in many cases it is said truly wonderful results have been attributed to it.

As might be supposed, the amount produced in the course of a year cannot be great when it is known that even large rattlesnakes in prime condition seldom furnish over two and a half ounces of

oil. But little of this finds its way into chemists' shops. It is for the most part carefully bottled and put away in the family medicine-chest for home use only. As a relief for the pains of rheumatism and for bad sprains, the application of rattlesnake oil is not confined to the state of Pennsylvania alone, but prevails more or less in a large number of the States. In California there are people who devote their entire time during the seasons when the rattlesnakes are plentiful to hunting them and rendering out their oil. A dangerous occupation, it might be supposed; but it is really not so, for the rattlesnake is perhaps the easiest discovered of any reptile. Not that its colour is bright and readily distinguished from its surroundings; on the contrary, it is dull and of a brownish gray that forms no contrast to the ground over which it crawls. There are two reasons why the occupation is not so dangerous as might be expected—the main one, owing to the rattlesnake's well-known habit of loudly rattling on the approach of an enemy, so that one is unlikely to tread upon it by accident; and then rattlesnakes are not often found in the grass. Occasionally they are discovered in hay-fields and in hedges, but their preference is for the stony sides of the mountains, away from shade and in the open, where they can bask in the sun on some rock and receive from below the heat that radiates from it. This preference is a kind intervention of nature, as nothing is more to be dreaded than a snake in the grass.

Soon after a rattlesnake is discovered and despatched, it is stretched on a board by a nail driven through its head and another through its body just above the rattles. It is then cut open and the fat taken out, which has very much the appearance of the fat of a healthy chicken. A piece of muslin is then stretched over a glass jar, which is placed in the sun. On this muslin the fat is spread, and as the sun renders out the oil it drips through into the jar, being strained at the same time. The oil is almost colourless and of the consistency of common machine oil. In order to tell whether the snake has bitten itself before death, which they are popularly supposed to do when not despatched at once, a little of the oil is dropped into a glass of milk. If the oil floats in one mass on the top without breaking up all is well. If, on the other hand, it separates into a number of minute beads, and the milk gathers into thick white flakes as though soured, the inference is that the snake bit itself, and the fat which was rendered into oil is consequently poisoned and dangerous to use. This being the case, the oil is taken out and thrown away, while the receptacle in which it was placed is carefully washed in boiling water before being used again for a further supply. Sometimes the rattlesnake is put to another use. Its skin is carefully tanned, and with the addition of a buckle makes a unique belt. Occasionally, also, in the western towns the skins are worked up into cravats, with the rattle attached to a pin, and on the frontier cowboys may frequently be seen with rattlesnake-skins nicely cured twined round their sombreros in lieu of the ordinary hat-band. These latter uses are, however, of no great importance; but if only half that is said in favour of rattlesnake oil as a remedy for rheumatism is true, then it is doubtful if these death-dealing reptiles may not be counted among the blessings which come to mankind in disguise.

'AT PARTING.'

When we two meet hereafter
How shall we kiss again?
With luted lips of laughter
Or muted mouths of pain?
With eyes glad or regretful,
Remembering or forgetful?
When we two meet hereafter
How shall we kiss again?

You count your love by hours, sweet,
But I count mine by years;
And all your tears are flowers, sweet,
But all my flowers are tears.
A night will soothe your sorrow,
But mine must wake each morrow.
You count your love by hours, sweet,
But I count mine by years.

Your love is love of May-time,
And mine is love of June;
Your dreams are of high day-time,
And mine of afternoon.
I would not deem you faithless
Though spring is hardly deathless—
Your love is love of May-time,
And mine is love of June.

Look up, and say, "'Tis sweetness!'
Look down and sigh, 'Alas!'
This day has known completeness
Whatever comes to pass.
Long parting o'er us hovers,
But still we stand as lovers,
Look up and say, "'Tis sweetness!'
Look down and sigh, 'Alas!'

What can our hearts regret, dear?
What is there left to tell?
The day, the way, we met, dear,
The wood, the wishing-well,
The bird that laughed above us,
The flowers that seemed to love us—
What can our hearts regret, dear?
What is there left to tell?

It seems the worst of sad things,
This sundering of twain;
We see throughout all glad things
The tearful threads of pain.
They run through every pleasure,
They tarnish every treasure.
It seems the worst of sad things
This sundering of twain.

Oh! what are all sweet kisses,
And what are all soft sighs,
To sound the cold abysses
Where faith in absence lies?
Ah sweet, not love the flowerful,
But give me love the powerful—
And what are all sweet kisses,
And what are all soft sighs!

J. J. Bell.

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'MADE IN JAPAN.'

THE wonderful trade advances that have been made by Japan since the conclusion of the war with China should make our manufacturers and merchants keep their eyes open, or they may find some morning their occupation gone in markets they thought they had secured. This enterprising people has in the past two years almost secured a monopoly in the Eastern markets of the match-trade. Some twenty or twenty-five years ago the import of matches in India and Burma was largely English and exclusively European. English imports gradually declined, being replaced by Swedish matches. These in their turn are being ousted by the Japanese match, equally good and sold at fifty per cent. lower prices. In Burma, a province which last year imported matches of a value of over five lakhs of rupees, or some £33,000, Japanese matches are almost exclusively used now. They pay an import duty of five per cent., and yet can be purchased retail in the streets of Rangoon at one anna, or about one penny, per bundle of ten boxes. The English match ten or fifteen years ago cost in Rangoon about five times as much, and at that time there was no import duty. Burma is a very damp country, with an annual rainfall varying from 100 to 200 inches. The English match in the rains was difficult to burn. If the box was kept in flannel it would ignite; but the wood of the match was thick and generally damp, and failed to keep alight. The Swedes first, and afterwards the Japanese, saw what was required, and made a thinner match, thus using less wood, and meeting the requirements of a province with a moist climate. Between them they have ousted the British match altogether; and a trade in this single Eastern province alone of a yearly value between £30,000 and £40,000, which will probably be doubled when the Rangoon and Mandalay Railway is extended to the borders of China (as it will be before the end of 1899), has been lost to England, probably never to be regained. The loss of the match-trade in India may be a small thing to grieve over, but where a single province of that great dependency takes in a year over £30,000 worth, manufacturers' profits must be something tangible over the whole area. In Burma and the surrounding countries nearly every man, woman, and child smokes, and matches are now to be found in the remotest Burman, Shan, and Karen hamlets hundreds of miles from the coast or railway communication. No jungle man or woman fails to provide himself or herself with a box of matches when they are so cheap. Their forefathers either borrowed a light from a fireplace in a neighbouring hut or procured fire by rubbing briskly two pieces of dried bamboo together, with some dried bamboo shavings—a process the writer, when foresting twenty years ago, often saw applied at an encampment on a wet night before supplies had been brought up by elephants, or when, as was often the case, the thick English match of that period was too damp to strike successfully.

Umbrellas, which were largely manufactured locally of oiled paper, are being supplanted also by Japanese articles, excellent copies of the European umbrella; and these are sold in the Rangoon bazaars at one rupee and four annas each, or about one shilling and eightpence. Similar umbrellas, before Japan took to manufacturing them, cost at least four times the price in Burma, and in this article, as in matches, no European country apparently can hope to compete with the Japanese in producing an equally good-looking and low-priced umbrella. The Burmans are largely taking to the imported umbrella, whilst their own paper umbrellas are often patronised by Europeans as a good protection against sun and rain; although they are not so convenient to carry unopened as the ordinary umbrella, as they are too bulky when closed to be used as a walking-stick. The local article can be bought for eight annas, or about eightpence, and if carefully used lasts for one rainy season.

Bicycles and sewing machines of Japanese make at half European and American prices have also

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been imported into Burma from the Straits. Doubtless before long we shall have Japanese merchants, and possibly a Japanese bank, established in Rangoon. Several cargoes of rice have already been sent from the Burman rice ports to Japan; and that astute people will doubtless soon realise that the best way to push their manufactures and the cheapest way to buy their rice cargoes is to have Japanese firms established at the rising capital of Rangoon, where there will soon be railway communication to the confines of China itself, with its hard-working millions of population. Japanese clocks are now sold throughout the East; and Japanese coals are highly thought of in Bombay.

Whilst Englishmen offer equal advantages to every nationality in trade with the East, it is not a pleasant sight for Englishmen to see British trade passing away into the hands of the foreigner resident in British possessions.

'A fair field and no favour' is a good motto, and one that in trade in British dependencies we have always endeavoured to carry out. If Japan can undersell us and make equally good articles, we cannot hope to persuade the consumer to buy English articles because they are English. An opposite policy has not proved such a success in Saigon and French Cochin China that we should ever think of or wish to imitate it. The British manufacturer may rest assured it is more difficult to regain a lost trade than to keep an existing one. By having trustworthy agents on the spot, and by altering his manufactures where they do not meet the wishes and wants of his customers; by being obliging and courteous, in fact; and by having his goods always up to sample, he may hope, even in these days of keen competition, to do a good trade. But he must not lose sight of the fact that times have altered a great deal in the last quarter of a century, and that he has many competitors now where formerly he enjoyed almost a monopoly. Under such circumstances, if he wishes to keep and extend his trade in the East, he must prove that he can, like his competitors, adapt himself to circumstances, and not expect his Eastern customers to alter their habits and customs to suit him. In short, the best manufactures will win the most markets, and best includes goodness of the article as well as economy in price. We have a good many brisk competitors in Germany, Belgium, and other European countries, not to speak of the Americans, all quite alive to the exigencies of the hour. But probably in the next quarter of a century we shall find articles 'Made in Japan' imported all over the East to a much greater extent than they are now; and it is to be hoped that we shall not have them (as in the match-trade) eclipsing British manufactures.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XIII.—OUR ADVENTURE ON THE ALPHEN ROAD.

WE rode in silence for maybe half-a-mile, while I turned over the events of the evening in my mind and tried to find some way out of the difficulties in which by my own folly I found myself placed. Nicol looked steadfastly before him and said never a word. By-and-by I found the desire for some one to speak with so overpowering that I up and asked him if he had heard aught of the events of the evening.

'Ay, sir,' said he. 'I heard ye had some kind o' stramash, but that was a'. I trust ye're weel oot o't.'

'Have you heard of my cousin Gilbert?' I asked.

'The Wastland lad wha used to come aboot the Barns? Oh ay! I've heard o' him.'

'I flung a glass at his face to-night,' said I.

'I hope, sir, that he flung anither at yoursel'.' he said anxiously.

'No. He swallowed the insult and left soon after. He is not the man to let me off so easily.'

'Whew,' said Nicol, 'but that's bad. Wad ye mind, laird, if I rode on afore ye?'

'Why?' I asked.

'Cousins and sodger-folk are kittle cattle,' says he. 'I wadna wonder noo but that Maister Gilbert were ahint a dyke. I've heard tell o' some o' his pliskies in his ain land, and he's no' the lad to let a midge stick in his throat.'

I drew up my horse angrily.

'Nicol,' I cried, 'you are intolerable. My cousin is a gentleman of birth, and do you think he is the man to kill from a dykeside? Fie on you! you have the notions of a common roost-robber.'

'Weel away then, laird,' cries he. 'So be it; but I've little faith in your Gilberts for a' their gentrice. I ken their breed ower weel. But I maun ride afore ye, for there are some gey rough bits on the road, and I'm a wee bit mair sure in the saddle than yoursel', wi' a' respect to your lairdship.'

So the wilful fellow must needs ride before me, looking sharply to the right and left as though we were in far Muscovy instead of peaceful Holland.

As for me, I felt in no humour to listen to my servant's tales or do aught than think dolefully on my own matters. The sight of my

cousin and of Mistress Kate had made me sore sick for home, and I could have found it in my heart once and again to take ship at the next sailing for Leith. But these thoughts I choked down, for I felt that they were unbecoming to any man. Yet I longed for Marjory as never lover longed for his mistress. Her bright hair was ever before my sight, and her last words on that February evening rang always in my head. I prayed to God to watch over her as I rode through the stiff poplars on the way to Leyden.

As for my quarrel, I cared not a straw for Gilbert and his ill-will, it having never been my nature to be timorous toward men. Nay, I looked forward to meeting him with no little pleasure, for it had long been an open question which of the twain was best at the sword-play.

'Maister John,' said Nicol, suddenly turning round, 'I saw twae men creepin' roond thae scrunts o' trees. I wis they maunna be after ony ill.' We were by this time nearing a black, inhospitable part of the land, where the road ran across a moor all covered with ferns and rushes and old trunks of trees.

'Ride on,' said I; 'if we turned for every man that crosses the path we should never leave our own threshold.'

He did as he was ordered, and our horses being put to the canter, covered the ground gallantly, and our spur-chains clinked in the silent night.

Suddenly, to my amazement, I saw Nicol fling himself back in the saddle while his horse stumbled violently forward. It was one of the most ingenious feats of horsemanship that I have ever witnessed. The beast stood quivering, his ears erect with fright, while I rode alongside.

'For God's sake, sir, take care,' Nicol cried. 'There's something ower the road, and if I hadna been on the watch it wad hae been a' ower wi' ae guid man. Watch, for ye may get a shot in your belly ony meenute.'

Now, as it chanced it was that lively canter which saved us, for the rogues who had set the trap had retired a good way, not expecting us so early. At the sound of the stumble they came rushing up from among the fern; and ere I knew, a pistol-shot cracked past my ears, and another and another.

Two went wide, one hit my horse on the ear and made him unmanageable, so that I stood there with my beast plunging and kicking, at the mercy of whosoever had a fourth pistol.

Nicol spoke not a word, but turning his horse, dashed forward in the direction whence the shots had come. As it fell out, it was the best thing that any one could have done; for the robber, not expecting any such assault, was preparing to fire again. As it was, the fore-feet of the horse took one villain on the chest, knocking him senseless, and well-nigh trampling the life out of him. A second gripped him by the sleeve, and attempted to drag him from the saddle, which plan would doubtless have succeeded had not my servant, pulling the pistol (which was not loaded) from his holster, presented it at the man's head with such effect that the fellow in fear of his life let go and fled across the moor.

By this time I had reduced my own animal to something like submission. I rode after Nicol, and came up just in time to see the third man of the band (there were but three; for, doubtless, they trusted to their trap for unhorsing if not stunning us) engaged in a desperate struggle. Nicol had him by the throat with one hand, and was endeavouring to squeeze the breath out of him, while he in turn had his opponent by the other arm, which he was twisting cruelly. Had my servant been on foot the matter would soon have ended, for the throat fared badly which those long, wiry hands once encircled; but being on horseback he dared not lean forward lest he should lose his seat. My appearance settled it; for the robber, freeing himself, at one desperate leap made off at the top of his speed, leaving his pistols behind him. There remained but the man whom Nicol's horse had deprived of his senses.

Fortunately the blow had not been a very severe one, for he was not long in coming to himself. There was some water in a little stagnant pool near at hand which Nicol dashed in his face, and in a little the man opened his eyes and looked up.

At the sight of us he started, and the events of the past half-hour came back to his memory. Then a look of sullen, obstinate anger came into his face, and he lay still, waiting for events to take their course.

'Who are you?' I asked.

He made no answer.

I repeated the question several times, and still the man kept his silence.

'Ye donnert scoondrel,' cried Nicol, 'tell us whae ye are, or ye'll hang the morn on the Gallows-hill at Leyden.'

Still the fellow would not speak.

'Let's tie him up,' said Nicol, 'and I'll ride wi' him on the horse afore me. He'll get justice when we win to the toun.'

But this was not my policy. I had other things to think of than bringing marauders to trial. A sudden thought struck me.

'I will try him another way,' said I to Nicol. 'Do you stand aside.'

The man lay on the ground where my servant's horse had laid him, with a belt round his legs, and his arms knotted together. I went up to him and stood over.

'Do you know who I am?' I asked sternly in as tragic a voice as I could assume.

The man stared sulkily, but did not speak.

'You fool,' I cried, 'do you think that thus you will circumvent me? Know that I am the

great Doctor Joannes Burnetus of Lugdunum, skilled in all arts of earth and heaven, able to tell divinations and prophecies, learned in all magic and witchery. I know all that thou hast done since thy birth, and thy father and grandsire before thee, all the wickedness which shall entitle thee to eternal damnation in that place which the devil is even now preparing for thee. Yea, I can tell thee the very death which thou shalt die'——

'Stop, stop,' cries the fellow. 'Oh! most learned sir, spare me. I know thou knowest all things. I confess my sins. And, Oh! I promise you I shall mend my ways. Stop, I pray.'

'There is still one ray of hope for thee,' said I, 'but I cannot give my word that thou shalt ever gain it, for thou hast advanced too far in sin already. But yet thou mayst escape, and there is but one way to set about it—namely, to tell me of all thy wickedness. I adjure thee by the sacred sign *Tekel*, which the Chaldeans used of old; by *Men*, which was the sign of the Egyptians; by the *Eikon* of the Greeks; by the *Lar* of the Romans. I summon thee by the holy names of God—*Tetragrammaton, Adonay, Algramay, Saday, Sabaoth, Planaboth, Panthon, Craton, Neupmaton, Deus, Homo, Omnipotens;* by *Asmath*, the name of the Evil One, who is lord over thee and my slave—I summon thee to tell me all thy deeds.'

The man was frightened past all telling. He tried to crawl to my knees, and began a recital of all manner of crimes and peccadilloes, from his boyhood till the present hour. I listened without interest.

'Had any Scot a part with thee in this night's work?' I asked.

'No, there was none. There were but Bol and Delvaux beside myself, both Dutch born and bred.'

My mind was lightened. I never really believed my cousin to have had any part in such a matter, but I was glad to know it for truth.

'You may go now,' I said. 'Go and repent; and may God blast thee with all His fire if thou turnest thy hand to evil again. By-the-by, thy name? I must have it from thy own lips.'

'Jan Hamman, your lordship,' said he.

'Well, God pity thee, Jan Hamman, if ever I lay my hand on thee again. Be off now.'

He was off in a twinkling, running for his very life. Nicol and I remounted and rode onward, coming to Leyden at the hour of one on the Sabbath morning—a thing which I much regretted.

COMPANY PROMOTING.

THE promotion of public companies has of late years attracted an increasing amount of interest, owing partly to the popular notion that therein lies one of the shortest ways to wealth; while its development has been so great that few there are who directly or indirectly are not concerned. The individual proprietor is fast giving way to the board of directors, with its army of officials; the personal element in business is on the decline, and as a consequence employers and employed now meet together under the passionless supervision of the Board of Trade. But it is the object rather of this article to ponder over and to expound a few aspects of company promotion—the rights and the wrongs of it, the opportunities and the justifications for it, and the pitfalls and the snares surrounding it.

The promotion of public companies has furnished a conspicuous object lesson on the proverb 'A fool and his money are soon parted,' and has shown up in a far from pleasant light the avarice that underlies the nature of so many of us; while the enormous growth of negotiable security, the direct result of limited liability, has afforded an opportunity for the greatest legalised gamble the world has ever seen. On the other hand, the public company has produced the Director, than whom, when he is what he should be—and he often is—there is no finer example of the public servant; it has occasioned the publication of profits, information invaluable to the consumer, that trading with glass pockets so desired by England's greatest prophet; it has brought about in many instances the union of interests of buyer and seller; it has checked hoarding, the gold pieces which formerly rusted in the stocking having paid the wages of the artisan, and stimulated the brains of the patentee to yet further marvellous achievement; in short, the public company has enriched industry an hundredfold, and has infused into property that invaluable quality, negotiability, enabling land and buildings, plant and machinery, stocks and good-wills to pass in the smallest quantities from one end of the country to the other, from one owner's pocket to another, with the ease and facility of sovereigns themselves. Many and many is the financial difficulty, and even ruin, which might with truth be ascribed to this very lack of negotiability; while limited liability has again and again smoothed the thorny path of the executor, and extricated him from the many prolonged and ruinous family quarrels which it seems so often his lot to contend with. In addition to all this, the public company has vastly extended the interest in trade. In a nation of shopkeepers, the retired tradesman has been in effect recalled to his counter; and from Land's

End to John o' Groat's there is neither village nor hamlet but has a stake in some industrial undertaking, whose fortunes are watched with a keenness and interest sufficient in themselves to provide a liberal commercial education.

With such an extended and extending scope of action, it is matter of congratulation to find that the public are gradually yet surely gaining experience in company flotation; but they still apparently have much to learn. They should understand that the flotation of a company is a sale differing but very little from an auction sale: the property is offered in attractively small lots to suit all comers, while the usual spontaneous eloquence of the auctioneer finds vent in the glowing descriptions to be found in the prospectus.

To follow the analogy yet further, the interest and character of an auction sale is largely determined by the name of the vendor, for it often satisfactorily disposes of the pertinent question, Why is the property offered? Similarly, when a public company is launched, Who are the vendors? and why is the property offered? are two points which should not be overlooked. It may be that an established business is to be acquired and extended, or that an amalgamation is to be effected; it may be patent rights or concessions are to be obtained, a scheme of exploration and development undertaken, or contracts to inaugurate a business taken over. Each class of flotation must therefore be criticised from a different point of view. Some are speculations, others investments; and while the intending investor ought to be safeguarded at every point, the speculator is entitled to no sympathy. In the case of the flotation of the established business, there is little difficulty in judging the capitalisation and the purchase consideration: the good-will must not exceed three years' profits, and the tangible assets must bear a proper proportion to the paper or good-will asset; and the working capital must be sufficient. But in this class of flotation the public need to know particularly why the property is offered and what the guarantees are for successful management in the future. In amalgamation schemes, to a great extent the same criticism holds good; but here there is a chance for the promoter to obscure the present actual earnings of the individual businesses, and to effectually exclude from view any weak reasons for disposal, by dangling before the eyes of the investor the enormous prospective profits to accrue from the amalgamation. In the first case, however, the occupation of the company promoter is nearly gone. A discerning public has squeezed him out, and his only chance is either to find a vendor who will sell his business for a sum far below its actual worth—a type of vendor, needless to say, almost as extinct as the dodo—or he must manipulate the figures or so dazzle the public with the glitter of the directorate as to turn their heads; but fortunately his opportunities in this respect diminish daily. There are times and seasons, however, when the public throws rational criticism to the wind, as in the recent cycle boom; then the promoter reaches down the bad stock from the top shelf, looks out the stale parcels, and sells them by marking them up at double the usual price. In such times the public subscribes its millions in the feverish hope that the morrow may bring into the market a yet more thoughtless plunger; repentance only comes when the bank sends a polite note that the overdraft has considerably exceeded the limit, while at the same time the door of the safe can be with difficulty closed owing to the accumulation of scrip. The established business, in short, must now be floated direct from the owners to the public, for the latter naturally require that the owners shall be willing to take the risk and pay the cost of the flotation; and there is now, as a rule, no room in such cases for a promoter's profit.

It is, however, in the flotation of patent rights and concessions that the Companies Acts seem best to fulfil their mission; and it is here, too, that the company promoter justifies his existence. A word or two might perhaps be introduced at this point on the company promoter himself, but there is an initial difficulty in the way—a difficulty of definition. Every individual who lives by his wits usually describes himself either as a commission agent, an accountant, a general dealer, or a company promoter—the latter probably if his liabilities are large enough—but he thereby maligns a profession honestly created by an honest demand, without which the public would often miss the development of a valuable addition to the standard of comfort. The promoter family is therefore a large one, and the cousinships therein taper out to many removes; consequently our remarks must be confined to the heads of families only. Of the penniless schemer we desire to say nothing: he rarely brings anything to a successful issue, and whenever he has wriggled himself into a promotion of any value he can usually be bought out for a few pounds. As a matter of fact, nearly the whole of company promotion is now in the hands of company promoting syndicates, and on very many prospectuses the name of this syndicate will be found figuring as the vendor who takes the risk of the promotion. It is on the boards of these company promoting syndicates that the real artist in the profession will be found, and the commercial ability of such men is unquestionably very great. As is usual in professions of which the public are ignorant, a much larger profit is attributed to such bodies than is actually the case. The risks are heavy which they undertake, and the result in ninety-nine times out of a hundred is a profit in shares of the undertaking brought out. To recognise a

patent as not only ingenious but of commercial value, to put down cash for some far-away concession obtained by skill and tact after encountering dangers and perils to life and limb, to experiment with and nurse such, to offer with all the attendant risk and expense these wares to a fickle and uncertain public, is worth surely some substantial recompense; and provided that a prospectus truthfully sets out the salient features of such a patent or concession offered, the public has no right to squirm if the venture does not turn out a goldmine. With such companies the investor should have nothing to do. In fact he should keep religiously clear of the promoted company altogether. There are plenty of sound industrials floated direct, without intermediate profit, where the good-wills are reasonable and the board efficient, and where the dividend is not likely to drop below six per cent. Let the investor stick to these and leave the promoted company of patents and concessions to the speculator. At present it is to be feared the public has made no distinction between the one sort of company and the other, and possibly, having been bitten in some harebrained scheme, refuses to invest money in anything registered under the Limited Liability Acts.

Not only, however, is there in company promotion a danger to the investing public, but also to the proprietor of a business who is approached by an unprincipled promoter. Specious statements are made as to the amount of cash that will be paid as purchase consideration, and on these statements free options of purchase are given, the business—or amalgamation—is offered, profits published, and in the end the original vendor is told that he must, if he wishes the flotation to be a success, take nearly all his purchase consideration in shares instead of cash—shares perhaps in a large amalgamated concern the destinies of which he is unable to control. But *experientia docet*, and there are evident signs on all hands that the business of company promoting is narrowing down into reasonable limits, where the profit earned is commensurate with ability displayed and risk undertaken; and it will be cause for hearty congratulation when the Limited Liability Acts have even freer play and wider scope, provided that the opportunities of bogus and dangerous promotions are further hedged; and to be more effective should emanate rather from a discerning public than from Blue Book regulations, which can usually be evaded.

When the flotation of public companies is better understood, when the investor's company has been clearly differentiated from that of the speculator, it is more than probable that a large proportion of trust money will eventually find its way into sound industrials, and this for many reasons. Thus, the competition for trust investments is becoming most inconveniently severe, the result being an accumulation in money on deposit at the banks, which spells poverty to many beneficiaries dependent for a living on the interest of a small capital sum. Gilt-edged securities have been driven up to a prohibitive price, mortgages at trustee valuations are snapped up in a moment, while at the same time there are trading companies yielding with no risk five and six per cent. It is a growing custom to bequeath money in trust, and while little latitude can be given to trustees already in possession of their trusts, the innovation will probably come in the way of special permit to trustees to invest in certain companies complying with certain conditions, possibly as to proportion of reserve fund to capital, dividends paid during past five or ten years, or some similar provisos; it may be, in fact, that shares in public companies may come to be subject to valuation in a similar way to properties, and that trustees will be empowered to invest in mortgage debentures, possibly even shares, of such companies where the margin of security is approved of. One thing is quite clear, the development of the public company will eventually be synonymous with the development of commercial undertakings, and when such an end is achieved trust money cannot afford to lie outside of such wide-reaching and interest-bearing securities.

'LINDA.

CHAPTER II.—ON THE WAY TO THE GOLDFIELDS.

AT Juneau the *Flaming Occident* had landed her passengers for what was then known as the Alaska goldfields. Thence, by water, they had travelled to Dyea; camped at the foot of the terrible Chilkoot Pass, waiting for a whole week, amidst driving, icy clouds of sleet and whizzing showers of snow, for the weather to clear. And when the weather *did* clear, and the awful precipitous wall of snow and ice loomed distinct and forbidding, towering high above them, the adventurers fell back in dismay. However, the difficulty had got to be faced, and Jim and Twilight Ben were among the first half-dozen who hazarded the arduous undertaking. With the assistance of a party of Tagish Indians, the tents and baggage were packed to the summit over a trail of steps cut in the icy steep with the axes of the adventurers themselves. Often a single false step would have been fatal:

but the false step did not happen. Once the summit was gained, the baggage was packed down the long ten-mile descent to Lake Lindermann; and, after long days of wearying toil and terrible suffering, the perils of the uppermost lakes were safely passed, the dangers of the White Horse Rapids left behind, and, three miles below, the raft on which the hardy argonauts had transported themselves and their baggage for the last fifty miles was poled to the side at the head of the White Horse for disembarkation.

There is a spot in Yorkshire that must be very familiar to many readers of this story, for poets have sung of it and painters have limned its romantic beauties for generations—the 'Strid,' at Bolton Woods. Here the river Wharfe gathers its wide, rapid waters together to hurl them in one swift, seething torrent through a narrow cleft in the solid rock scarce four feet wide. The White Horse, on the Lewes River, is a magnified 'Strid' on a stupendous scale. It is a chute through a deep gorge of some forty yards only in width—a 'box cañon'—and yet along that pent-up channel leap, with one long, frenzied bound, the concentrated forces of a river which is six hundred feet across immediately above the cañon. A few foolhardy dare-devils have attempted the passage of this awful spot, but only one or two have lived to tell the tale of their idiotic exploits. Although the gorge is but a hundred yards or so long, even an empty raft sent through is usually torn to pieces, and the travellers, after packing their outfit overland for this short stage, have to build another raft or boat below to carry them on their farther voyage.

It was at the very head of this chute, where the current begins to run strong, and the wide waters gather for their maddening plunge, that the raft was moored to the bank by a single rope. The whole of the baggage had been transferred to *terra firma*, and most of the little handful of prospectors had landed. The only man left upon the raft was Jim Vickerson, and, just as he was about to follow, a loud crack was heard. The rope had snapped, and with the sudden jerk Jim slipped, fell, and, striking his head against a projecting log at the end of the raft, tumbled senseless into the icy waters of the river.

Blind to the peril of the situation, and filled only with thoughts of a similar nature to those which would occur to a farmer on seeing his only useful horse in imminent danger of slipping its hip or breaking its leg just at the beginning of harvesting, Twilight Ben, with a savage oath, sprang back on to the gently-receding raft, and as Jim's unconscious body rose, grabbed it wildly by the collar, and attempted to drag him on board. But Jim was big, heavy, and unwieldy; it required all the old miner's strength and some moments of precious time to pull his helpless burden into safety on the logs; and when, having done so, he turned to the shore, the full terrors of their position swept appallingly across his brain. For already the raft was in the tow of the swiftening current, and had drifted a score of yards away from the bank, where his awe-struck companions stood, spell-bound with horror, rooted to the spot. All escape was cut off. Even a strong swimmer could never have reached shore across that swiftly-flowing stream, and Twilight Ben was no swimmer. In his fury his first mad, vengeful impulse was to pick up the inert body of the unhappy cause of the mishap, and hurl it to certain destruction in the gathering stream. Fortunately for the unconscious man, discretion came to the grizzled rascal. There was just a chance of running the chute successfully, and in that case one live Jim would be worth more to him than a hundred dead ones. It was all the work of a second or two. In a trice he had snatched the broken piece of rope that was still attached to the rude craft, passed it twice round Jim's body as he lay right in the centre of the mass of floating lumber, and once round a log of the raft. Then, throwing himself across the prostrate figure, he whipped the rope round his own waist, hitched it round another log, and twisted the end tightly round his wrist. In this position, with one leg firmly bent round a stanchion, he put every ounce of his strength into one mighty effort to hold on for dear life; and the next instant, whirling, plunging, tossing, they disappeared from the terrified gaze of their fellow travellers, and were swept into the jaws of the watery hell.

The lumber of which the raft was built groaned and shivered under the terrific strain of the furious race; the frowning bluffs to right and left flew past in one confusing, hurried blur; and yet the grim old miner kept his steely grip and held on. Tilted this way and that, the sport and plaything of the frantic torrent, the raft shot the first half of that fearsome death-trap in comparative safety; but at this point a huge swirl in the current caught the frail craft in its resistless power, and, flinging it like a chip, caused it to impinge with a thrilling shock against the nearest bluff. For one brief fraction of a second it paused, quivering from the impact, but it held together; and, though his toes were ground cruelly between a couple of logs, and the rope chafed deep into the raw flesh of his straining wrists, Twilight Ben still hung on and never relaxed his grip. Then, with a sickening whirl, the overpowering flood dashed the raft along its headlong course. With lightning speed it slid down the watery incline and plunged beneath the horrific chaos of wild waters. Raft and crew disappeared beneath the raging conflict. In the darkness of immersion, the thundering surge sang wildly in Twilight Ben's ears. A thousand demons of the angry flood were dragging remorselessly in every direction. The icy waters chilled his marrow. Still,

with aching muscles, he kept his grip; and, when that agonising moment had passed, and the raft, which had happily remained right-side uppermost, once more returned to the surface, the blood was spurting from his eyes, ears, and nose as the cost of his effort. Even then he did not realise that the chute was run, and they had passed out from under the shadow of an awful death. Borne on the quieter waters below, the raft at last caught a big snag, and was floated quietly into a side eddy. Here the other miners, who had hurried from above on foot, found them, and still Twilight Ben, with catlike tenacity, was clinging with unrelaxed grip to the craft, for, numbed and paralysed, he could not leave go his hold. Willing hands lifted them ashore and forced brandy between their teeth.

'I guess I'm a mighty pore hand at fixing up my thoughts into words,' began Jim in a quavering voice some hours later, after he had regained his wits and had learned the facts of his marvellous escape; 'but I ain't ongrateful—I ain't ongrateful. I owe my life to you—to you'——

'I calkerlate I ain't no more'n a ornery cuss at chin-music myself,' responded Twilight Ben, with a face and tone as emotionless as a Hindu god's; 'but you're on it this time, pard—right on it.'

'Yas,' Jim went on in queer little jerks, as the corners of his mouth twitched with the intensity of feeling his tongue could not relieve; 'you've saved my life at the risk of yo'r own—me, a stranger, and you risked an awful death fur me! Gosh! What did you do it fur? I dunno how to thank you, but little 'Linda will—ay, and the Lord will too; for "insomuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these"'——

'Cheese it, pard,' interrupted the other, 'I don't quite catch on to them high-toned notions. I calkerlate I jest did my level best to fish you out 'cos I couldn't afford to see you pass in yo'r chips—lestways not jest yet,' he chuckled to himself. 'Durn my pesky old hide, ef the young jay don't take me fur a phil-anther-feest! Ez ef I'd ha' been sech a lop-eared idjet ez to risk one j'int of my little finger fur his hull carcass, *ef I'd ha' knowed it!* Anyhow, I calkerlate it suits the lay I'm on, and I ain't agoin' to throw up the keerds when luck deals me a good hand—skursely!'

It pained Honest Jim to hear the old reprobate's irreverence, and yet, at the same time, his apparent modesty roused his admiration to an enthusiastic pitch.

'Couldn't afford to lose me!' he gasped, seizing Twilight Ben's hand in his fervent grip. 'And I've done nuthin' fur *you*—jest nuthin'—'cept put you to a power of trouble to help me git my hoofs toughened, ez you say. It's ontrue—ontrue! You jest say *thet* outer yo'r good-nature. It's *me* w'ot can't afford to lose *you!*'

Poor, deluded, honest Jim! The savagery of Twilight Ben's outward man was lost upon him, and through it he saw only beneath the outward ugly mask a wealth of rugged nobleness and generous heroism, where, in reality, there lurked nothing but incredible meanness and foul treachery.

With some repairs the raft was made to do duty again, and carried the little band of adventurous voyagers some eighty miles farther on their perilous journey. At the foot of Lake Le Barge, having already travelled nearly three hundred miles from Juneau, they made a camp and commenced boat-building operations. What with collecting the lumber for this purpose, squaring the logs, sawing them into boards, building and caulking the craft, nearly a fortnight was spent here; and then, safely shooting the Five Fingers and Reef Rapids, the party, without any further serious mishap, floated down to Fort Cudahy, on the Forty Mile Creek, the then centre of the mining operations.

By this time the Western Wolf had so far gained the ascendency over the Kansas Lamb that it required no persuasion to prevail upon Jim to throw in his lot with the old miner, and work a claim in partnership. Very little time was spent in prospecting, and within a fortnight of reaching Fort Cudahy, the ill-assorted pair had staked out their claim on the Forty Mile, pitched their tent, and were hard at work. At first they employed hired help; but the price of labour was high, and the pay-dirt yielded next to nothing. Outside help had to be abandoned, and the owners of the claim slaved on alone, wearied with incessant toil and worried by mosquitoes. Above and below them, luckier men were taking out from thirty to sixty dollars a day, while, now and again, they chanced upon a day that was marked with a good-sized nugget. As for Jim and his chum, ill-fortune persistently stuck to them. More often than not the gravel they dug was not worth panning out, and their best day—when they struck a tiny pocket of coarse gold—yielded only twenty dollars. The strain of expectation unsatisfied, of invariable disappointment, coupled with the bitter hardships of unaccustomed privations, told severely on the young Kansas farmer; and, day by day, one brick after another toppled down from the airy castle he had fondly built, until the ruins encumbered his brain; and over and among those ruins, in the nightmare that haunted him the moment he closed his eyes for a few hours in his hammock, he chased 'Linda—little 'Linda—while heavy weights clogged his feet, and every moment, despite his desperate efforts to overtake her, she sped farther and farther from him. Then he would wake with the cold sweat of anguished fear upon him, and return to his heavy toil unrefreshed and despondent.

Twilight Ben regarded the discouraging state of

things more serenely. The hot blood of love did not gallop scorching through his veins. For him there was no memory of a waiting dainty little school-marm to goad on the fiery fever. True, though, he was working for the attainment of *his* earthly elysium—a paradise of unlimited cut-throat euchre and draw-poker, filled in with the soul-soothing anticipation of being put to bed every night as full of whisky as he could comfortably hold. Moreover, in one sense his disappointment was really twice that of Jim's; for, while the latter only calculated on one moiety of the products of their labour as his share, Twilight Ben reckoned the whole of the joint earnings as *his*. And so he slaved doggedly on.

By-and-by came rumours that rich pay-dirt had been struck on Glacier Creek, on the Sixty Mile River, prospects showing a dollar, and sometimes more, to the pan. Along with some other miners on the Forty Mile, Jim caught the new infection, and would have left for the latest reported Colchos; but Twilight Ben, with a discretion begotten of riper years and former experiences of rushes, held him back.

'Say, pard,' he observed, 'don't you be in sech a pesky blamed hurry to bulge over to Sixty Mile till we've wrastled with this yer claim some more. Luck runs durned streaky, and I reckon thet's jest how the gold lies on these yer bars, this yer being a bed-rock creek. Thar's been pockets found above and below on jest sech prospects ez we got, and thar's pockets right here —somewhar—I'm tarnation shore. So, we've jest got to hump ourselves and go in bald-headed, and you bet yer gum-boots we'll tumble right on 'em *ker-slap*.'

For a while this cheering assurance had an encouraging effect upon the younger man; but his malady—for malady this terrible depression of spirits truly was—merely relaxed its grip a little, while it still kept its fingers upon him.

Then came September, and with its coming the thermometer suddenly dropped. A log hut was hastily built and well banked. The Ice King breathed upon the land, and the waters of the rivers became chained in their channels; snow covered those trackless desolate wilds; the Northern Lights flamed in the heavens, and the dark, silent terrors of the arctic winter, with its wearying succession of dawnless days, fell upon the earth. For lack of water no dirt could now be washed, and all that could be done was by means of thawing the gravel with fires and drifting, to dig out the pay-dirt and throw it up into a pile ready for washing as soon as the return of summer opened the rivers.

The rigours of that awful eight-months winter were hard enough to be borne; yet a thousand times worse was the horrible doubt—the racking uncertainty—as to whether they were 'shovelling-in' rich pay-dirt or helplessly wasting their strength for nought, by throwing away the desperate labour of two-thirds of a whole year in digging out gravel that would not even pay for the washing. With his ever-haunting fear upon him, the fever of his curious sickness burned within Jim with redoubled vigour, and it was only his exceptional constitution and sheer doggedness that bore him through the dark ordeal, until the sun shone once more upon their icy prison, and released the waters of the Forty Mile Creek.

Gaunt and haggard, like the ghost of his former self, he mechanically set to work with Twilight Ben to wash the accumulated pile of pay-dirt. *Pay*-dirt? It was nothing but a bitter mockery to call it that, so poorly did it pan out. Yet the miserable yield did not come as a shock to Jim, for he had dejectedly persuaded himself long before that failure was certain; only it deepened his gloom a little. After working almost incessantly for three weeks at the sluice-box, the gold-dust buried in a tomato-tin under one corner of the hut amounted to no more than five hundred dollars, or about half the amount of their original outlay in travelling expenses, outfits, and provisions. Pining for a sight of the little school-marm at Oloville, and sick at heart, Jim flung down pick and shovel.

'I jest can't stand this any longer. I'm going to quit,' he remarked dejectedly. 'I reckon there's enough of my share of the dust to git me back to Kansas.'

Twilight Ben made no audible response, but murmured to himself, 'Which this yer move don't quite suit my game, and I calkerlate I've jest got to chip in and to trump this yer young galoot's trick afore he spiles my hand.'

CONCERNING CHEMISTS.

'DOES the profession of chemist offer many attractions to our youth?' we have often been asked; and because we are of opinion that it does we think it worth while to call their present attention to it. What may be the net income of a fairly prosperous pharmaceutical chemist we have no means of knowing; but we are inclined to think that it is most substantial, despite the fact that a 'drug in the market' has become proverbial in its expression. As to the salaries drawn by analytical and consulting chemists we could speak more definitely if we considered it necessary. Suffice it to say that they are most liberal—and, accordingly, most desirable. But apart from monetary rewards

and considerations, the profession of chemist offers many attractions. Chemistry is in itself a most interesting and valuable study; its devotees are continually meeting some new and fascinating problem, and the possibilities lying before them are endless. Every day seems, indeed, to bring forth some new discovery.

The science has made great advances since the days when the alchemists strove to transmute other metals into gold and vainly searched to discover the elixir of life. 'The world was young then,' we say; but we know that the philosopher's stone has not yet been discovered! Alchemy, or alchymy, we may regard as the infant stage of chemistry, just as astrology was that of astronomy. A 'druggist' was originally one who dealt in dried roots or herbs, and vegetable substances still hold an important place in the manufacture of drugs, so that the name is even at the present day a truly correct and expressive one; and 'druggist' is also the name most commonly used when reference is made verbally to a dispenser of potions and poisons.

Now, any person may set up in business as a shoemaker or grocer, but it is not every one who can open shop and call himself a chemist and druggist. In fact, the profession of pharmacy is a most distinct and responsible one; and in order to qualify for the fulfilment of its duties a youth has to pass a series of hard examinations. The law upon the matter is very rigid, and we naturally agree that, in the public interest, it should be so. Many who have given attention to the question claim that it ought to be even more severe than it is, and that no one should be allowed to commence business on his own account unless he is qualified as a 'pharmaceutical chemist' and not merely registered as a 'chemist and druggist.' But this is purely matter of opinion, into the discussion of which we shall not enter. Yet we venture to counsel every boy—and every girl, for why should not girls become dispensing chemists?—who may have resolved to enter this profession to make up his mind to work for the higher diploma, and not to stop short at the lower. Where means and opportunity offer, there is nothing to hinder the aspirant from qualifying as an analytical and consulting chemist; indeed, we know cases where this has been done.

Before accompanying the apprentice chemist through his examinations we shall glance briefly at the constitution and powers of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. This was established in 1841 for the purpose of advancing chemistry and pharmacy, and for promoting a uniform system of education of those who should carry on the business of a chemist and druggist. Two years later the society was incorporated by royal charter, and its powers were extended and confirmed by the Pharmacy Act of 1852. This act established a distinction between qualified and unqualified persons, but did not otherwise interfere with the sale of drugs or with the dispensing of prescriptions. The society was empowered to appoint examiners, from whom all future candidates were to obtain their certificates of qualification prior to registration. The register is printed and published annually.

So matters rested until the year 1868, when the law once more stepped in. We may quote from the Pharmacy Act of 1868: 'It shall be unlawful,' it says, 'for any person to sell or keep open shop for retailing, dispensing, or compounding poisons, or to assume or use the title "chemist and druggist," or chemist, or druggist, or pharmacist, or dispensing chemist or druggist, in any part of Great Britain, unless such person shall be a pharmaceutical chemist or a chemist and druggist within the meaning of this act, and be registered under this act.' Thus a new class of persons was recognised and placed upon the register as 'chemists and druggists;' the 'pharmaceutical chemist' is registered under the act of 1852. The act was amended in 1869, and all legally qualified medical practitioners and members of the Royal Veterinary College, registered as such, were exempted from the restrictions imposed in regard to the dispensing of medicines.

The powers of the society do not extend to Ireland. In 1791 the Apothecaries' Hall was established in Dublin by act of parliament, and all apothecaries were examined as to their qualifications by the directors of this institution. An act to regulate the sale of poisons in Ireland was passed in 1870, and five years later a Pharmacy Act established and incorporated the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, induing it with powers similar to those of the sister society of Great Britain. This act of 1875 was considerably amended in 1890; and, everything considered, all three kingdoms may be regarded as on an equal footing in respect of the qualifications and registration of their chemists and druggists.

It is distinctly advisable for a boy to obtain a pass in the first or general knowledge examination before being apprenticed. The subjects prescribed are: (1) Latin: grammar, translation from Cæsar's *Gallic War*, Book I.; or from Virgil's *Æneid*, Book I., and easy retranslation; (2) arithmetic: numeration, simple rules, fractions, proportion, percentages and stocks, and the metric system; (3) English: grammar and composition, with special attention to spelling and handwriting. The fee is two guineas, and the examination is held four times a year, on the second Tuesdays in January, April, July, and October. There are five centres in Scotland (six in July) and thirty-one in England (thirty-four in July). The tests set are very thorough, and the marking of the examiners is severe. We consider it advisable to state this because very many are misled by the simplicity and narrow range of the subjects prescribed. The board of examiners

are empowered to accept in lieu of this examination a certificate of having passed in Latin, English, and arithmetic at the junior or senior local or at the matriculation or degree examinations of any of our universities. All three subjects must have been passed at one examination. Successful candidates may be elected 'students' of the society on payment of an annual subscription of half-a-guinea. This entitles them to be supplied free of charge with the society's *Journal*, besides giving them other privileges.

The other examinations held by the society are the minor, which qualifies for registration as a 'chemist and druggist,' and the major, which qualifies for registration as a 'pharmaceutical chemist.' These are both in writing and orally, and are held in London and in Edinburgh four times a year. Before entering the minor the student must have attained the full age of twenty-one years. At the same time he must produce a certified declaration that for three years he has been registered as having passed the first examination, and has been employed as an apprentice or student, or has otherwise for three years been practically engaged in the translation and dispensing of prescriptions. The subjects of examination are: chemistry and physics, botany, materia medica, pharmacy, practical dispensing, and prescriptions. The council recommends that all candidates before presenting themselves for examination should receive a systematic course of instruction occupying a period of not less than six months; and that such period of study should include at least sixty lectures in chemistry, eighteen hours' work in each week in practical chemistry, forty-five lectures and demonstrations in botany, and twenty-five lectures and demonstrations in materia medica. These figures represent the minimum courses recommended; indeed, it is much more than a mere recommendation, for no student need expect to obtain a pass without undergoing such training. The examination fee is five guineas, and successful candidates may become 'Associates' of the society.

Those who pass the major examination may become 'Members,' and as such are entitled to a seat in the council or on the board of examiners. The fee here charged is three guineas, and an annual subscription of a guinea is required from Members. The subjects of examination are the same as those for the minor, but necessarily much more advanced.

Regarding apprenticeship, the usual term is five years. During this time the apprentice will receive merely nominal wages, and it should be his own outlook to get under a good master, who will, of course, assist him and direct his studies for the minor and major examinations. The cost of six months' special training would run from fifteen pounds at private classes in Edinburgh, to, say, thirty pounds at the society's School of Pharmacy in London. This school is very efficiently equipped, the lectures are given by eminent professors, and chemical and research laboratories are attached, as well as a museum and a library containing over ten thousand volumes. In Edinburgh also a museum and a library have been established at 36 York Place. Medals and scholarships are yearly competed for, and altogether the apprentice chemist has every inducement to prosecute his studies. The diploma and other examinations are open to women equally with men.

We may now take leave of the Pharmaceutical Society, and turn to consider the diplomas of the Institute of Chemistry of Great Britain and Ireland. This society was founded in 1877, and incorporated by royal charter in 1885. Its objects are to promote the better education of persons desirous of qualifying themselves to be public and technical analysts and chemical advisers on scientific subjects, to examine candidates and to grant certificates of competency, and to elevate the profession of consulting and analytical chemistry by setting up a high standard of scientific and practical efficiency, and by requiring on the part of its members the observance of strict rules in regard to professional conduct. This last object is gained by the certificates granted by the institute being renewed every year. Public analysts, professional chemists in works, and analytical and consulting chemists in general are among its members, and, indeed, it may be said that the best situations obtainable in the profession are held by its diploma-holders.

The diplomas granted are Associate (A.I.C.) and Fellow (F.I.C.). No person is qualified to become an Associate until he has attained the age of twenty-one years, and unless he has passed through a course of at least three years' study of theoretical and analytical chemistry, physics, and elementary mathematics, and has passed such examinations in the several subjects as are prescribed by the council of the institute. In order to become eligible for the fellowship an Associate is required to have been continuously engaged for a further term of three years in the study and practical work of applied chemistry.

At present there are three examinations for the associateship. The first is that required to be passed by medical students prior to registration, or its equivalent. Then study may be prosecuted for three years at any university or approved college. Those who become 'students' of the institute require only two years at such classes; but they must in addition have been engaged for two years in the laboratory of a Fellow. The second examination is in theoretical and practical chemistry, the practical tests occupying about four days. Those who hold a B.A. or B.Sc. degree of a university with honours in chemistry are not required to undergo this examination. The fee is two guineas.

The final, for which a fee of three guineas is required, is a thorough test in analytical chemistry.

The candidate may select one of the following divisions of the subject: (1) mineral analysis; (2) analysis and assay of metals, especially alloys; (3) gas analysis; (4) organic analysis, including combustions; (5) analysis of food, water, and drugs. Success here earns the diploma A.I.C.

An entrance fee of four guineas is charged for the fellowship. We have already stated how an Associate may obtain the higher diploma; candidates who have not been Associates may be required to pass one or more examinations. In those cases where they have not received systematic instruction in physics, the council may require evidence of sufficient knowledge in the subjects of light, heat, magnetism, and electricity by graduation in science at a university. We hope to have sufficiently stated the leading lines while omitting the details, for we wish to show that the diploma F.I.C. is a most desirable one. It indicates not only sound scientific training, but much practical experience and general trustworthiness in all that relates to the practice of the profession. As a consequence it possesses a very considerable value.

We would add a final warning to the aspirant. Everywhere around us are the signs of advancement, and examinations are yearly growing harder and competition more keen. Anything worth striving for can only be got by determination, energy, and systematic work. There must be no impatience at the slowness with which success comes, for the success which remains and is satisfying is usually the result of, it may be, years upon years of plodding. Our ultimate happiness is the final reward of the exercise of self-denial and of the cultivation of moral strength, which, indeed, gives intellectual vigour and physical well-being.

A WEST INDIAN HONEYMOON.

By Major T. Preston Battersby.

'WHAT sort of a place is Santos, captain?' I asked, partly because I really wanted to know, but partly also because the cabin of the steamer was stuffy and cockroachy, and the sea rather rough, and I had just been served with a liberal plateful of hot plum-pudding with cream sauce, which in the tropics is a dish that requires reflection.

'Santos!' said the long-limbed Yankee captain, with a humorous side-glance at my untouched plate, which showed he quite understood the situation. 'Santos, sir, is hell upon earth when Yellow Jack is abroad, and not much better when he isn't.'

'How so?' asked I, motioning furtively to the steward to remove my plate, and shifting my chair a little so as to get the benefit of the trade-wind through the open port. I was on board a little tramp steamer, making the trip from Barbadoes to St Lucia, at which latter island I had a few hours' inspection-duty to fulfil, which would have entailed a wait of a fortnight had I gone by the regular mail.

'Well, sir, it's this way. First and foremost, it's a big port and hundreds of ships put into it. It is a hot, dirty, damp, unhealthy place, with fifteen thousand inhabitants. And the fools have only built two wharves to load and unload at; you must take your turn. Eight months I have known a barque lie at anchor in the harbour waiting her chance.'

My face must have expressed incredulity, for my nautical friend here stopped his story to remark, 'I guess you don't believe me, stranger. Steward, bring the officer another help of pudding.'

I assured him that I believed him implicitly, and, indeed, I found afterwards that the information he had given me was perfectly correct. I also declined the pudding, and begged him to continue, which he did after smiling a grim smile.

'I was there in 1891; we put in on our way to New York. I thought there would be a good chance of picking up a few passengers whilst the fever was on, and so I did; but we paid dear for it. You see, they had cholera there that year, as well as Yellow Jack, and the harbour was full of ships that couldn't get away, because they had no officers left to navigate them and no crews to man them. Seventy-nine captains and six or seven hundred sailors had died when I got there, and I calculate many a naval action wouldn't have cost as much. I'm not easily frightened myself, but I can tell you I thought it was time to go when I went ashore one evening after dark, and the first thing I did was to trip up over a body lying across the street, and fall with my face right in the waistcoat of another gentleman who had just died where he lay of Yellow Jack. The one I tripped over had died of cholera, as I could see when my mate brought up the lantern!'

I stared at him in amazement, but the man was quite serious; he did not seem to think that he was narrating anything at all unusual. From what I have since heard of Santos, I do not suppose he was.

'Well, sir, my first mate was with me, and he

said he felt sick, and went and got some rum to keep his pecker up. It is a bad thing to drink rum in Santos. Next morning he and six of our passengers were dead. I wanted to bury them decently on shore or in the harbour; but the fools that called themselves the government wouldn't allow it—as if one dead body more or less mattered then; so I made the engineer get up steam, and we sewed the corpses up in sail-cloth, with plenty of scrap-iron, and lashed them out over the gunwales, and so we went out to sea. The niggers we passed in the fishing-boats howled that we were a death-ship.'

'I should think you were!' said I.

'We were afterwards. When we got a mile or so from land I read a few prayers, the best I could think of, and then a man went round and cut the lashings, and we laid our course for New York; but you bet we had a time of it before we got there. We took the fever with us, and we had no doctor on board; and it would not have mattered much if we had had. The crew went mad one after the other. It began with the firemen; they dropped down dead with the shovels in their hands. Then one man with the fever on him jumped overboard to get out of his misery. After that they all did. I put some of them in irons when they tried it, but they just died raging mad in a few hours, so I gave it up. We only landed one man at New York, out of all the passengers we took on board at Santos, and but for fine weather we would never have reached port at all, we were so short-handed. Once we got out of the tropics we lost no more, though.' He thoughtfully expectorated into a spittoon at his feet, and I found it advisable to go on deck, whither he soon followed me.

Carlisle Bay, with its shipping, and the low hills of Barbadoes were fast disappearing behind us as the little tramp, with the strong trade-wind behind her, plunged ahead through the sparkling waves, blue tourmaline colour in their depths, shading off to the green of an aquamarine where their tops grew thin and transparent. Our bows were pointed straight towards the setting sun, and a black cloud of smoke poured from the funnel, showing that the engineer was firing up. He had dined with us, and I wondered what he felt like in the engine-room, and how a temperature of one hundred degrees or so would agree with that cream sauce.

'We will be off Castries about four o'clock to-morrow morning,' said the captain. 'I am not going to stop there. The harbour-master will take you ashore in his boat, but you will not find it easy to pass away the time till daylight. Your folks are all up on the Morne Fortunée, and you can't get up there in the dark. There is a sort of hotel in Castries where you might be able to knock somebody up, but I doubt it.'

'Oh, never mind,' said I; 'I can rough it. It will not be like Santos anyhow.'

'You're right there, sir. I've seen curious things happen in these waters too. I dare say, now, you have been on Pelican Island?'

'The quarantine station?' said I. 'Oh yes, I have seen it. Uninteresting little place it is, too.'

'Well now, I'll tell you a story about that, that I'll venture to say you have never heard before. It happened years ago, and I do not think there ever were many who knew the rights of it. Light your pipe if you like, sir. No! Well, maybe you're right. I should not feel I had had my dinner if I didn't get a smoke after it.

'There was a young fellow who came out to Barbadoes to take a post as manager in one of the firms that trade in Bridgetown. They promised him a good salary, for he belonged to their London house, and I suppose he was a smart business man. He knew he would have a lonely time of it out here, and he could well afford a wife, so he brought one out with him—a little English girl. I have heard from those who saw her that she was real fond of him and he of her, and they were wonderfully taken with the strangeness and the newness of everything they saw. You see, when one first comes out to the tropics one's health is good, and you have the cold climate's energy in you, and if you do not take an interest in things then—why, you never will.

'Now, about that time a barque had come in from Santos, forty-three days out, with a clean bill of health for the voyage, and so she had not been quarantined. When they began to unload the ballast to fill up with sugar, one of the men fell ill, and then another; so the captain took them up to the town hospital, and there they died of yellow fever, and were buried in a great hurry, and nothing said about it, for fear people should be frightened.

'The health officer went on board the barque, and he soon found what was the matter. The ballast was all Santos earth—full of fever no doubt. He had the hatches of the hold battened down and sealed, and then he telegraphed to the owners asking for power to hire a schooner and put the well men on board of her, whilst the barque was taken out to sea and the ballast jettisoned. But the owners sent word back that it was no business of theirs, and the colony might do what it liked; they had no money to waste in hiring schooners because a lot of sailors were afraid of yellow fever.

'By this time a lot of the men were ill, so the government bought a couple of marquees from the military and pitched them on Pelican Island—one for the sick men and one for the well ones; and they sent a doctor to live with them, and to see that no one left the island to carry the infection elsewhere.

'Now, the whole matter being kept very dark, as I said before, and this young man and his wife being only just landed, and their heads full

of each other and of the wonderful things around them, it is easy enough to see that they would scarcely hear of what was going on; and one evening nothing would suit the pair but to hire a boat and go sailing in Carlisle Bay to get away from the mosquitoes on shore; for, as they were new-comers, the mosquitoes plagued them greatly, as I dare say they did you, sir, when you first came out.

'Well, the silly couple started for their sail, and he took a revolver to shoot sharks with—though he might as well have taken a popgun—not to mention that there are no sharks in Carlisle Bay now; they are frightened of the steamers.

'After they had sailed about for a while, as ill-luck would have it, the girl saw the white tents on Pelican Island, and nothing would do for her but to go and explore it, and see who was having a picnic there. And the poor young fellow knew no better than to take her at her word. He was London bred, and I don't suppose had ever heard of quarantine in his life.

'They tied their boat up to the pier, and the first the doctor knew of their being in the island was when he saw them standing inside the door of the marquee where he was helping the nigger attendant to lay out a seaman who had just died of the fever, whilst two other poor chaps who had an hour or so longer to live looked on.

'Well, sir, you may imagine the doctor was angry. He jumped up and pushed them both out of the tent, and then he got hold of the young manager and shook him, and asked him what he meant by bringing a young woman fresh from home (as he could see by her colour) to that place; and did he know it meant certain death if she took the fever? and so on, and so on. And then he told them they could not leave the island now they had got on to it, and it was his bounden duty to keep them in it. And all the time the young man never answered a word, but got whiter and whiter. At last he cried out to his wife to run down to the boat and he would follow her. She did what she was told, sadly frightened no doubt, poor thing. The doctor called out his nigger from the tent, and was for running after her, but the manager whipped out his revolver and swore a great oath that he would shoot him if he did not stop. The nigger ran away, but the doctor was a good-plucked one. "I'll die doing my duty!" he said. With that the young man put the revolver back in his pocket, and ran at the doctor and knocked him down, and then rushed down to the boat, where his wife was, and jumped in. He cut the painter and hoisted the sail. But a lookout man on shore had seen their craft touch at the island, and by this time two white ten-oared boats were coming from Bridgetown as fast as the men could row, to see what was the matter. They were between him and the shore, and he couldn't doubt what their object was, as they altered their course to cut him off.

'Now, sir, I won't go into details; but a man dying of yellow fever is not a pleasant sight to look at, and I make no doubt that if I had been on board that boat myself, and knew that I and my wife were likely to be brought back to Pelican Island and left there, for months maybe, I would have done as the manager did—put up my helm, slacked off the sheet, and ran away. The trade-wind was blowing strong, and he could easily outsail the oars. I suppose he thought, on that course, he was bound to make some of the islands, as they all lay to leeward.' The captain paused a while and looked over the stern at the foaming track of the screw. We were light in the water.

'Well,' asked I, 'what happened next?'

'I don't know, sir; I don't know. It is not every landsman who can steer a boat running before the trades with a following sea; perhaps she was pooped, or he may have let her broach-to. Either way she would be pretty certain to fill and sink, and I hope that was what happened. Sometimes at night, when I am on deck, I think of those two poor things in an open boat, with no food or water, and no prospects before them, even if they got safe to land—for of course he could never go back to Barbadoes. He had his revolver, you see! Next day a gunboat came into Carlisle Bay, and she was sent to look for the lost craft, but she never found her. So the few who knew the rights of the story agreed to hush it up, and most people thought the boat had been blown out of the harbour, and so swamped. After all, there was no one to blame; but it was a sad pity—a sad pity!'

The short tropical twilight was changing rapidly to the darkness of night. The captain walked forward to see that the port and starboard lights were burning properly, and I went below to try to get some sleep before reaching Castries. I saw no more of him till I said good-bye as I stepped into the harbour-master's boat in the warm, velvety blackness of the early morning. As I shook hands I asked him how he happened to know the story himself.

'I was the skipper of the barque,' he said shortly. 'I was on Pelican Island.'

Half-an-hour later, as I was fighting the mosquitoes and trying vainly to get to sleep in a chair in the odorous bar-room of the Castries hotel, I remembered several other questions that I should have liked to ask him; but I never saw him again. The little tramp steamer was sunk whilst running the blockade at Cuba with a cargo of arms and ammunition for the insurgents. I have always felt that the captain did not tell me quite the whole of that story.

RIFLING SHIPS ON THE AUSTRALIAN COAST.

SEVERAL times in each year Australian newspapers announce the departure to England or San Francisco of vessels carrying hundreds of thousands of pounds' value in gold. As much as three millions sterling are sometimes carried away from the Australian coast in a few months. In 1896 the three colonies of Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria sent away £8,889,000. It is not a matter of surprise that such announcements excite the cupidity of a section of the community, or that from time to time attempts are made to surreptitiously lay hands on some portion of the seductive treasure. A century ago the means employed for the exploiting of a ship's valuables differed greatly from those in vogue now. Then pirates attacked the vessel on the high seas, and a battle royal determined the issue, or some of the ship's own men or officers conspired and fought the others for the booty. At the present day there is none of this sensational bravery. Personal prowess of the demonstrative kind is never seen, and the smoke and noise of war are wholly absent. Robbing a ship's safe on the Australian coast is now conducted with the same silent and thoughtful deliberation as is the solving of a difficult chess problem. And the success which attends this new method exemplifies from an unexpected quarter the truth of the poet's high conceit:

> In silence mighty things are wrought;
> Silently builded, thought on thought,
> Truth's temple greets the sky;
> And, like a citadel with towers,
> The soul, with her concentred powers,
> Is strengthened silently.

The poet had a different object in his mind's eye, but his canons of work exactly suit the needs of the modern ship-safe rifler.

The first thing the rifler sets his heart upon is how to get the key. It is singular what negligence ship officers often display in regard to the custody of their keys. The theory, and indeed the general practice, is that the captain checks the boxes as they are stored in the bullion-room, locks the door when the transaction is complete, and, sleeping and waking, carries the key in a leather pouch around his neck till he unlocks the door at the end of the voyage. But theory and practice are often set aside. In the *Tararua* case at Melbourne in 1880, when £5000 worth of gold bars were stolen, the police discovered that two keys, either of which opened the bullion-room, used to hang against the wall in the public bar. It was also discovered that one of these keys mysteriously disappeared twelve months before the robbery, and that no serious investigation was then made into the loss; nor was any alteration made in the lock of the bullion-room. This *Tararua* was a Union Company's boat, running between New Zealand and Australia, and had shipped boxes of gold at various ports. Altogether she was supposed to carry eleven boxes. On arriving at Melbourne it was found that one of these boxes, containing five bars, weighing 1255 oz. 12 dwt. 12 gr., and valued at over £5000, was missing. Examination showed that some one had simply opened the door with a key, extracted the box, and locked the door again. There was no clue as to when the deed was done. The fact that the twelve months' missing key had never been traced stood to the advantage of the criminal. The police record of the proceedings says: 'So many persons had the opportunity to take this gold, owing to the carelessness of those who ought to have had charge of the keys of the gold-room, that we find it most difficult to fix suspicion more firmly upon one than another.'

The robbery from the *Iberia*, which left Melbourne for London in March 1889, is supposed to have been also effected by means of a key surreptitiously procured. In that case the purloined gold consisted of five thousand sovereigns, and the robbery was not discovered till the arrival of the vessel in London. The captain, second officer, and purser were called on to resign, not on account of suspicion resting on them, but because they could give no explanation of the robbery. The mystery was never fully cleared up, but events indicate that some of the sailors had a hand in the crime.

The robbery of £5000 in gold ingots from the *Aredale* at the Nelson Wharf, New Zealand, about 1865, was undoubtedly the outcome of mislaid keys.

Bullion is carried in solid bars or ingots, generally 8 inches by 3 inches by 1 inch, and each bar is valued at £800. It often happens, particularly along the coast of Australia, that the captain has to add to his consignments at port after port, and thus necessarily locks and unlocks the bullion-room door many times. When it is discovered at the London side that a robbery has taken place, the fact stated greatly extends the area of investigation. The surroundings on each occasion of locking and unlocking must be minutely examined, and all suspected persons carefully looked up and shadowed. Interested parties, or individuals with a taste for practical jokes, increase the difficulties of elucidation by showering the police with anonymous revelations as to the whereabouts of the missing treasure. At a critical stage of the *Tararua* investigations the detectives received a letter running thus: '. . . Bars. Search butcher's shop, —— Street, Melbourne; also dwelling-house for a prospect. Night.' The butcher's shop and dwelling-house were duly raided at night, but no

gold bars were forthcoming. Another anonymous letter ran: 'What about —— and a certain cabman? They know something of the *Tararua* gold.' Here again the clue ended in nothing. Detectives wisely give a certain amount of attention to anonymous letters; but there is no doubt that such letters are often written to throw justice off the scent.

The robbery from the *China* developed in a remarkable way. Here the Oriental Bank in Sydney placed the gold on board a coastal steamer called the *Avoca*. At Melbourne the gold was transhipped to the *China*. The *China* touched at Adelaide and other ports, but it was only at Galle the discovery of the robbery was made. Detectives operated on all the ports simultaneously, but nowhere could a clue be found. The amount missing was the usual £5000. The P. & O. Company, to whom the *China* belonged, dismissed various officers, and after a time the subject dropped out of public talk. In 1878, however, a man named Weiberg, who had been carpenter on the *China*, took up a selection in the interior of Victoria. Before settling down he married a Melbourne barmaid, and appears to have confided to her some shady particulars of his past history. The Samson and Delilah story was in part repeated, and the public laid themselves out to watch Weiberg. The upshot was the arrest of the man as the safe-rifler of the *China*. In his effects lay ready proof of his guilt. One thousand sovereigns were found in a tin of fat stored away by him in Melbourne. In his hut was discovered a wooden plane stuffed with gold; the wood was hollowed out and the gold dropped in. In the hut was also discovered a bar of soap containing two hundred sovereigns. A policeman happened to lift the soap, when its great weight arrested his attention. With an auger the soap had been drawn out and the sovereigns inserted in its stead. Weiberg was a man of resource who declined to accept defeat. He told the detectives that he had eighteen hundred sovereigns concealed on his selection, and offered, if they accompanied him, to point out the spot where the booty lay. As may be surmised, he fooled the police into a wild, thick-timbered region, took them suddenly off guard, and made his escape. He was recaptured, however, some months later, and after doing a term of hard labour was accidentally drowned in a Gippsland lake.

The mystery of the *Iberia* £5000 was cleared up in a still more singular manner. Every attempt to trace the lost money failed, and the authorities ceased to think about it. One day two boys playing at Williamstown saw a mouse run into a hole under the platform of the railway pier. One of the boys started to dig the mouse out with a stick, and, to his surprise, unearthed a mass of sovereigns. The boys gathered up between them two hundred and eighty-two sovereigns, and hurried home to report their luck. The police were informed, and before the day was out three thousand seven hundred and forty-two sovereigns were recovered. This still left a balance, but neither balance nor robber has since turned up.

The recovery of the *Aredale* gold was more satisfactory, as far as amount is concerned. This robbery was, as has been said, effected by some one who made use of unguarded keys. It took place in the early sixties, and covered the usual £5000, but in bars. For nearly two years the police laboured in vain. The mystery might never have been cleared up but for an accident. A wharf-lumper fishing at Nelson Pier, where the *Aredale* had been berthed, hooked on to something which excited his curiosity. Obtaining assistance, the lumper succeeded in bringing to the surface the missing box with its treasure intact. The robber had evidently sunk the box, intending to return for it when opportunity permitted.

Less than a year ago the *Oceana* lost £5000 at or near Melbourne, but investigation has so far failed to unravel the mystery.

HOME SICK.

Write to me very often,
And I greatly long to hear;
For alien hearts are round me,
And alien faces near.

Write when the sun is sinking,
And the firelight flecks the gloom,
And the mist dims all the window,
And the shadows shroud the room.

Write when the songs that we sang
From other voices come,
When the old, old strains awaken
The thoughts that have long been dumb.

Write to me very often;
For, in times of thoughtful pain,
I dream that I do what we did
Over and over again.

Write from the cheerless city
In autumn's evening-damps,
When the splashing pavements glimmer
With the rain-bespattered lamps.

Write from the happy country,
With its grass-grown hills and sun,
Where under the moss-hung boulders
The musical rivulets run.

Write to me very often,
For I often think of you;
And the life I lead is lonely,
And the friends I find are few.

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

By Major-general Sir Edmund F. Du Cane, K.C.B.

A BRIGHT Pennsylvanian youth, being required on his examination to set forth the advantages secured to every citizen by the constitution of the United States, included among them 'death by hanging.' If he meant that this institution was retained as a protection against murder and violence, he was not so wrong as might appear at first sight. There are those among us who desire to put an end to capital punishment for various abstract reasons; but they never meet the objection that it is necessary to retain this punishment in order that those who are tempted to commit murder may be deterred by the fear of what may happen to themselves. It is not often that direct evidence of this deterring effect can be obtained; but sometimes chance furnishes the desired proof—as in the following instance. When West Australia, now the great goldfield, was made a convict colony, a local law was passed by which a convict committing a murderous assault on a warder became liable to the penalty of death. A turbulent convict who had been transported to the colony managed to find means of surreptitiously communicating with a friend in England. He therefore sent him a letter which did not, as usual, pass through the hands of the prison authorities. When the letter arrived in England the friend had disappeared and left no address. After lying some time in the Dead-Letter Office, it was returned to the writer through the prison authorities in West Australia, and therefore became open to their inspection. He had in it informed his friend of various points in the new sphere he was moving in, and among other things he mentioned the law above referred to, and made the following comment on it in the lingo of his fraternity: 'They tops' (that is, hang) 'a cove out here for slogging a bloke' (that is, assaulting a warder). 'That bit of rope, dear Jack, is a great check on a man's temper.'

On the whole, there is no more just answer to any proposal for doing away with the death-penalty than that of the witty Frenchman: 'Que Messieurs les assassins commencent.' In order to prevent the painful scenes which have sometimes taken place when an execution is bungled, which lose nothing in their sensational aspect in the notices transmitted to the press, an inquiry was some time ago instituted with a view to establishing a mode of action which should as far as possible prevent any such mishaps. The extinction of life effected by hanging may be brought about either by the constriction of the air-passages, which produces suffocation, or by that of the veins and arteries, producing apoplexy, or by breaking the neck, thus severing the spinal cord. The most instantaneous and least painful of these is the last, and it was determined that the arrangements should be such as to effect that object. In former times the criminal was either pulled up a certain height from the ground (in this method the French used their 'lanternes' as gibbets in the Revolution), or else the cart he stood in was drawn away from under him and he was left hanging. By these methods the length of drop was very short, and death ensued from one of the first two of the above causes. The breaking of the neck is effected by giving a long drop; and Marwood, the late hangman, used to talk of Calcraft, his predecessor, as a 'short-drop man' as one might speak of a rival school of art.

At the time of the Indian Mutiny a considerable amount of rough-and-ready justice was dealt out to the mutineers caught red-handed. A sergeant of one of the flying columns accepted the office of executioner, and, having had no previous experience, was thought to have sometimes given to the patients who came under his hands pain which might have been avoided. His commanding officer summoned him to reply to this charge, and his plea in rebuttal was: 'Please, sir, I han't had no complaints.'

In order to settle scientifically the length of drop which should effect the object without

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running the risk of mutilating the body by stretching the muscles of the neck to the point of rupture, a learned professor in Dublin, recently deceased, devoted some time to investigating the subject, and evolved a mathematical rule which made the length of drop inversely proportionate to the weight of the patient. Some modification of this is the rule now adopted. A special kind of rope has been manufactured which is very strong and pliant, and stretches very little, so that none of the shock of the descent of the body is absorbed in stretching the rope; and the above rule obviously gives the longest drop for the lightest body, so as to produce the right momentum, and *vice versâ*.

There is no lack of competitors for the office of executioner when the operation has to be performed in England, but in Ireland there is a great prejudice against undertaking it; and there have been difficulties sometimes in the Colonies in finding an operator. Marwood used to say he never experienced any unpopularity in England, and accounted for Calcraft being sometimes badly received by saying that 'Mr Calcraft never made himself agreeable.' Going to Wales on one occasion to fulfil his office in the case of a foreigner who had committed several brutal murders, he found himself quite popular, and was received at the station when about to depart with a sort of ovation, to which he responded affably, saying he hoped he might 'before long have occasion to visit them again.' On the other hand, on coming back from Cork, where he had been to carry out the duties of his profession because no native could be found to do the job, he had rather a rough experience; for on board the steamer he overheard a conversation between two Irishmen, one of whom related that he heard the hangman was on board; to which the other replied that if he could find him he would throw him overboard during the night. Marwood on this thought it well to retire to his bed in a dark corner, and did not make his appearance any more until the steamer was well in the dock in England.

On one occasion, at the Cape of Good Hope, a Frenchman offered himself to fulfil the function of hangman. With the national love of effect, he posed as a high public official fulfilling a noble and important function. Dressed in evening costume, with white tie and white gloves, he presented himself on the scaffold, and went through his duties in a most imposing manner; after which, conscious that the bystanders might wish to possess a relic of so great a man and such an occasion, he drew off his gloves, folded them into a neat little ball, and threw them to be scrambled for by his admirers. Sometimes in England the hangman has lent himself to sensational effects by exhibiting himself and his implements in a town where he has been employed, but this is sternly repressed by the authorities.

The demeanour of persons who are destined to be hanged varies much. Most of them, happily, are conscious of their crime and the justice of their sentence, and die penitent—the old bravado which was the result of the public system of execution is not now so common—but complete indifference is sometimes exhibited. Dr Pritchard, the Glasgow murderer, on his way to the gallows apparently had no thoughts of his own position, but, addressing the medical officer, said, 'It's a very cold morning, doctor; oughtn't you to put on your coat?' Wainwright, the ex-Scripture reader, was obscene and blasphemous almost to the last. When the eight *Flowery Land* pirates were brought up for execution, and at the last moment a reprieve arrived for one of them, his immediate thought was, 'Then I can have Francesco's shoes.' The notorious Peace was very business-like. It was said that he and Marwood the hangman had met before in the train and become acquainted with each other's line of life. When they met again on the scaffold at Leeds, and Marwood had put the rope round Peace's neck and was running up the washer to keep it in its place, Peace observed, 'Ain't you a-pulling of it rather tight, Mr Marwood?' 'Oh no,' was the cheerful reply; 'I won't hurt you.'

It is part of the duty of the high sheriff to carry out an execution. He generally acts through an under-sheriff, who sees to all the arrangements, which practically are carried out by prison officers, who for those purposes are under the orders of the sheriff. He appoints the hangman; and it was one of the recommendations of the committee which was appointed to consider all the details of an execution, that an assistant should always be appointed in order that some other person or persons might have experience on the subject in case of need. No spectators are admitted to see an execution except by order of the sheriff, and it is now very common to admit no members of the press, and thus a very unsavoury kind of sensational writing is avoided. In England a coroner's inquest is always held on the body, and this completely satisfies any legitimate public interest in the matter.

In former days when any sentence of death was passed within the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court it was the duty of the Recorder to submit the names and offences to the king in council, and it was then decided whether or no the sentence passed in conformity with the law should take effect. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall relates that when Dr Dodd was sentenced to death the king had the strongest desire to save him, and that Lord Sackville had informed him that 'to the firmness of the Lord Chief-justice, Dodd's execution was due, for no sooner had he pronounced his decided opinion that no mercy ought to be extended than the king, taking up his pen, signed the death-warrant.' After he was hanged his body was conveyed to a house in the city of London, and underwent every scientific profes-

sional operation which it was hoped might restore animation. Pott, the celebrated surgeon, was present to direct them.

It is doubtful whether there ever was actually, as is commonly believed, a death-warrant signed by the king—the sentence of the judge is the authority and direction to the sheriff; only the sentences of the Central Criminal Court were systematically brought before the king, and then his action was only to reprieve or pardon.

When the Queen ascended the throne one of the first acts passed was to relieve her Majesty of this duty, for it is dated 17th July 1837, and she succeeded on 20th June. It purports to be to assimilate the practice of the Central Criminal Court to that of other courts in England, and directs that the judge shall order the time and place of execution, not being more than twenty-one days nor less than seven from the date of the order.

A curious survival of old laws unnoticed for some years occurred in connection with this subject. The Isle of Man makes its own laws through a 'Court of Tynwald.' One of these laws passed in 1817 requires that the king shall issue his warrant for an execution to the Lieutenant-governor. In 1872 a wretched man had a quarrel about some small property with his father, aged seventy, in which he was supported by his mother. After going to law they compromised the matter, and the father was to receive a cow from the son. Shortly before the time for handing over the cow, the son went to his father's cottage and killed him with a pitchfork. He was sentenced to be hanged; and in conformity with the law her Majesty was called in to approve the sentence, which, under advice of the Home Secretary, she did, though with a great strain on her feelings. The Mutiny Act required that all sentences of a general court-martial should be submitted by the judge advocate-general to be confirmed by the Queen, and this might have brought about the submission of death sentence; but the present Army Act enables that duty to be delegated.

The number of executions during the present reign has been much smaller than formerly. Coke, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, remarks on the large number of persons hanged. In 1750 a great increase of crime occurred, and in the following year sixty-three persons were hanged in the small London of those days. But many more were sentenced than were actually hanged. In England in 1785 there were 242 sentenced, and 103 actually suffered. Townsend, the Bow Street runner, said that between 1781 and 1787 he had seen as many as twelve, sixteen, or twenty hanged at one execution. Twice he had seen forty hanged at one time. In the fifty-eight years ending 1894 there were 736 executions in England and Wales, or between twelve and thirteen per annum. In the first ten years there were 100, in the last ten 164—which, though actually more, is, in proportion to the population, less than in the first ten, as the population doubled between 1837 and 1894. The largest number in any one of these years was in 1877, when there were twenty-three; and the smallest in 1871, when there were four.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE FIRST SUNDAY OF MARCH.

I SLEPT late on the next morning, so that it was near nine o'clock ere I was up and dressed. By the time that I broke my fast I had had some leisure to reflect upon the events of the preceding night and the consequences which should ensue. Nicol came to me as soon as the meal was over, and together we sat down to consult.

'This is the Sabbath, your honour,' said Nicol, 'so you may consider yoursel' free for the day at ony rate.'

'Not so free,' said I, for I knew my cousin Gilbert; 'the men I've to deal with have little respect for the Lord's Day.'

'Weel, weel,' says Nicol, 'if that's sae, it maun be sae. Will ye gang oot wi' him the day?'

'No,' said I. 'Not that I am caring for the day, for you mind the proverb, "The better the day the better the work;" but, being in a foreign land, I am loth to break with the customs of my country. So we'll keep the Sabbath, Nicol, my lad, and let Gilbert whistle.'

Now I would not have him who may read this narrative think from my conduct on this occasion that I was whiggishly inclined, for indeed I cared nought about such little matters. I would have a man use the Sabbath like any other day, saving that, as it seems to me, it is a day which may profitably be used for serious reading and meditation.

'Weel, Laird, that means ye'll no see the body though he comes,' said Nicol, 'and, God help me! if ye dae that there'll be a terrible stramash at the street-door. I'se warrant auld Mistress Vanderdecker'll get her ribs knockit in if she tries to keep them oot.'

'They can make all the noise they please,' said I hotly; 'but if it comes to that, the two of us are as good as their bit officers. I ask for nothing better than to take some of the pride out of Gilbert's friends with the flat of my sword. Then, if they come to-day and are refused entrance, they will come back to-morrow, and all will be well.'

'Then what am I to dae? When the bodies

come to the door I'm to say, "His lordship's compliments; but his lordship's busy keeping the Sabbath in his upper chamber, and if ye will come back the morn he'll look into your claims."'

'You'll say to them that I am busy with other work, and that I will be glad to see them to-morrow about the matter they know of. Most likely they will go away quietly; and if they do not it will be the worse for their own skins. You take my meaning?'

'I'll dae your orders, sir, to the letter,' said Nicol; and I was well aware that he would.

I got my books out and set to work to read the Gospel of John in Greek for my spiritual benefit, but I made little speed. This was mainly the fault of Nicol, who every few minutes came into the little room where I sat, on some feigned errand. I soon divined the reason, for the same chamber contained a great window, whence one might view the whole length of the narrow street wherein the house was situate, and even some little portion of the great Breedestraat at the head. It was plain that my servant was not a little concerned on my account.

'Are you sure that your honour's guid wi' the small-sword?' he asked mournfully. 'If this room were a wee bit braider and the day no what it is I micht gie ye a lesson.'

I did not know whether to laugh or to be angry. 'Why, you rascal,' I cried, 'do you know anything of these matters? There are many better swordsmen than I in the world, but I think I am more than a match for you.'

'Weel,' said Nicol modestly, 'I've gi'en some folk a gey fricht wi' the swird; but let that be. I'll be blithe if ye get the better o' him, and a waefu' man I'll be if he kills ye. Lord, what'll I dae? I'll hae to become a sodger in this heathen land, or soom hame, whilk is a thing I am no capable o'.' And he began to sing with a great affectation of grief:

> 'The craw killed the pussie, O,
> The craw killed the pussie, O,
> The wee bit kitlin' sat and grat
> In Jeanie's wee bit hoosie, O.'

In which elegant rhyme the reader will observe that my cousin stood for the crow, I for the pussie, and my servant for the kitlin'.

I laughed; but it was not seemly to stand by while your own servant sings a song which compares you to a cat, so I straightway flung a Greek lexicon at his head and bade him leave the room. I much regretted the act, for it was my only copy of the book, Master Struybroek's, and the best obtainable, and by the fall some leaves came out; and one—πολυπενθής to πολύποτνς—has not been renewed to this day.

After Nicol had gone I amused myself by looking out of the window and watching the passers-by.

I had not sat long when I noted two gentlemen coming down the alley from the Breedestraat, very finely clad, and with a great air of distinction in their faces. They kept the causeway in such a fashion that all whom they met had to get into the middle of the road to let them pass. I half-guessed their errand, the more as the face of one of them seemed to me familiar, and I fancied that he had been one of the guests at the supper at Alphen. My guess was confirmed by their coming to a halt outside the door of my lodging and attentively considering the house. Meantime all their actions were plain to my view from the upper window.

Now, I had bidden Nicol be ready to open to them and give my message. So I was not surprised when I heard the street-door opened and the voice of my servant accosting the man.

I know not what he said to them, but soon words grew high, and I could see the other come forward to his comrade's side. By-and-by the door was slammed violently, and my servant came tearing upstairs. His face was flushed in wrath.

'O' a' the insolent scoondrels I ever met, thae twae are the foremost. They wadna believe me when I telled them ye were busy. "Busy at what?" says the yin. "What's your concern?" says I. "If ye dinna let us up to see your maister in half a twinkling," says the ither, "by God! we'll make ye." "Make me," says I. "Come on and try it."'

'Nicol,' I said, 'bring these men up. It will be better to see them.'

'I was thinkin' sae, your honour,' says Nicol, 'but I didna like to say it.'

So in a little the two gentlemen came up the stairs and into my room, where I waited to receive them.

'Gentlemen,' said I, 'I believe you have some matter to speak of with me.'

'Why do you keep such scoundrelly servants, Master Burnet?' says one, whom I knew for Sir James Erskine of Tullo.

'Your business, gentlemen,' I said, seeking to have done with them. They were slight men, whom I could have dropped out of the window, most unlike the kind of friends I should have thought my cousin Gilbert would have chosen.

'Well, if you will have our business,' said the elder, speaking sulkily, 'you are already aware of the unparalleled insult to which a gentleman of our regiment was subjected at your hands?'

'Oh yes,' I said gaily; 'I had forgotten. I broke Gilbert's head with a wine-glass. Does he want to ask my pardon?'

'You seem to take the matter easily, sir,' said one severely. 'Let me tell you that Master Gilbert Burnet demands that you meet him at once and give satisfaction with your sword.'

'Right,' I cried, 'I am willing. At what hour shall it be? Shall we say seven o'clock to-morrow morning? That is settled then? I have no second, and desire none. There is the length of my sword. And now, gentlemen, I have the

honour to wish you a very good day,' and I bowed them out of the room.

They were obviously surprised and angered by my careless reception of their message and themselves. With faces as flushed as a cock's-comb they went downstairs and into the street, and I marked that they never once looked back, but marched straight on with their heads in the air.

'Ye've gi'en thae lads a flea in their lug,' said Nicol. 'I wish ye may gie your cousin twae inches o' steel in his vitals the morn.'

The rest of that day I spent in walking by myself in the meadows beyond the college gardens, turning over many things in my mind. As for the fight on the morrow, I did not know whether to await it with joy or shrinking. As I have said already, I longed to bring matters between the two of us to a head. There was much about him that I liked; he had many commendable virtues; and especially he belonged to my own house. But it seemed decreed that he should ever come across my path, and already there was more than one score laid up against him in my heart. I felt a strange foreboding of the man, as if he were my *antithesis*, which certain monkish philosophers believed to accompany every one in the world.

If I conquered him, the upshot would be clear enough. He could not remain longer in Leyden. His reputation, which was a great one, would be gone, and he would doubtless change into some other regiment and retire from the land. If, again, he had the advantage of me, I had no reputation to lose, so I might remain where I pleased. So he fought with something of a disadvantage. It was possible that one or other might be killed, but I much doubted it, for we were both too practised swordsmen to butcher like common cutthroats. Nevertheless I felt not a little uneasy, with a sort of restlessness to see the issue of it all—not fear, for though I had been afraid many times in my life, it was never because of meeting a man in fair combat.

Toward evening I returned to my lodging, and devoted the remainder of the day to the study of the books of Joshua and Judges for the comforting of my soul.

THE MINERAL RICHES OF CHINA.

IT has long been known that the mineral resources of the Chinese Empire were extensive, and not a few good people, aware of the material advantages which follow the development of such resources, but imperfectly acquainted with the Celestial character, have expressed astonishment that the government should never have decided to work them to their full capacity. Not that they have at any time remained entirely neglected in the ground; the gold and silver deposits in some of the various provinces have been worked by or under the supervision of the authorities. Iron manufacture is also carried on in many parts of the empire, and coal is mined in innumerable districts. But virtually the mineral riches of the vast, unwieldy country have remained undeveloped. The precious metals excepted, such minerals as are produced at all are for the most part produced only for local requirements, whereas if their winning were organised on a real commercial footing, the result would be to alter the attitude of China to the rest of the world in an almost revolutionary manner. This will perhaps be regarded as an extreme statement, but it is none the less true.

The main obstacles which have hitherto prevented any material progress in the development of China's mineral wealth are the apathy of the central government, which has never been solicitous for the welfare of the country so long as it has received the full sum of taxes demanded from each province; the rottenness of the provincial governments and the blackmailing habits of the mandarins and other officials; the want of rapid and economical means of transit, and the lack of efficient machinery and intelligent supervision. In effect, whatever may be the case in theory, there is no well-defined system of land tenure—everything rests with the official classes; and so far from affording encouragement to prospectors, these classes have done the reverse by the arbitrary imposition or increase of excessive royalties to swell their own individual perquisites, superadded to enhanced transit dues on such products as are sent by river or overland to any considerable distance. The provision of railways, of which we have heard much talk recently, and of steamers on some of the principal rivers contiguous to the deposits, would go a long way towards removing the present obstructions; but every one who has made personal acquaintance with the ways of the provincial governor-generals and their subordinates will agree with me that any complete exploitation of the country's wealth is impossible until the reformation of its fiscal system. For instance, the maritime provinces of Pechili and Shantung, and the provinces of Hunan and Shansi, bordering upon them in the interior, contain stores of coal and iron, which, if they could be brought to the seaboard at a reasonably low cost of carriage, would drive all other coals—British, Indian, Australian, and Japanese—right out of the Eastern seas. But under existing conditions this cannot be done, and at present no more than a few thousand tons ever reach the treaty-ports in the course of a year.

Though one despairs of a complete exploitation, it is interesting to note that China has lately given indications of a recognition of the value to itself of its unworked minerals, metalliferous and non-metalliferous. It has sanctioned the grant to an English syndicate of a large tract of gold-bearing land in Manchuria; and in Hunan it has established a Bureau of Mines for the purpose of promoting and controlling the output of coal, iron, copper, tin, &c. In themselves these two concessions are of little account. But they are valuable in that they display a changed attitude on the part of the authorities, and therefore they are an encouraging augury for the future. If one searches for an explanation of the change, it will probably be found in the lesson taught to China by the war with Japan (not to speak of the intervention of Russia and Germany in Chinese affairs)—that Western methods count for more than the Celestials were before disposed to admit; and that future development must be made on lines at least suggested by Western methods, together with all that such a divergence implies. Save for the gold concession granted to the English syndicate, the mining of this metal, as well as of silver, remains for the present in the hands of the government. As to the richness of the land in gold, not much is really known, because of the absence of any systematic survey of those parts in which it is found, and the absence of any authentic data bearing upon the annual production. On the other hand, there are many known districts in which it is mined, and the quantity brought into the various gold markets of the interior and into the capital, where it is hoarded or converted into ornaments, is very considerable. The mountains that rise to the north of Pekin and stretch right to the Amoor are regularly worked for quartz and gravel gold, and some of them are so rich as to have earned for themselves the title of 'gold mountains.' In the south-western provinces of Szechuan and Yunnan there are more government mines. The river Kinsha, which rises in Tibet and ultimately becomes the Yang-tse-kiang, is known as the 'river of gold,' and its banks are regularly washed by the aid of primitive appliances which involve the loss of fully 75 per cent. of the gold that passes through them. Go into any province you choose—if the mandarins will allow you—and the people will tell you of places where they have found gold casually, or where it is worked for the benefit of the imperial owners and their Tartar satellites.

There are mines now at work only a few miles inland from Chefoo; and in the province of Shantung, of which it is the capital, there are other gravel-gold deposits at Kin-shan-sze, Moshan, the Saw Teeth Mountains near Tantzuen, Tsi-hai-hien, Lai-Yang, and Kow-tew. There is not the same secrecy about the silver-mines of the empire, though they too, like the gold-mines, are worked either by the officials or under official supervision. Silver is, in fact, a form of money, and though it passes current in the form of *sycee* or shoe-blocks, mints for its proper coinage have recently been established—another evidence of progress. Some of the principal mines are in Yunnan.

In Pechili it is worked near Ching-shui; at Mount Tsu, 4½ miles west of Lu-ling-hien, in conjunction with gold and iron; at Mount Yin-yen, north-east of Pekin; Si-lin, and Yuh-wang. In Shansi there are mines at a place called King-saupu, at Ngan-i-hien, and in the south near Ping-loh-hien; in Shensi at Mount Tsungnan (in company with iron and jade stone); at Mount Tu, 21 miles from Shangchow; at Mount Szeni; in Kansu-Pingliang-hien (with copper), and also in Wha-ting-hien in the department of Pingliangfoo; and at Mount Ning-kwei, 9 miles south of Ning-yuen. It would be possible to enumerate other provinces which contribute to the annual total, but these are the chief. What the annual total is cannot be even approximately stated, because of the numerous contributions and the carelessness of the central government as to statistical records; but we are justified, on the basis of the vast quantity in circulation, in assuming it to be very large.

The researches of Baron Richthofen, Pumpelly, and other geologists to whom facilities for investigation have been accorded, show that up and down the great disjointed empire are mines of tin, antimony, quicksilver, &c.—of course, in addition to copper, which is used for the staple currency of the country, and which has therefore been fairly well exploited, though there are many districts yielding this metal which have hitherto remained quite untouched. But in nothing is the country so rich as in coal and iron. The most conservative of the many estimates of the extent of its coal deposits puts the area at 400,000 square miles—which means that if all other sources of supply of this fuel were suddenly to fail, China would be in a position to meet the world's requirements, at the present rate of consumption, for some thousands of years.

We speak proudly of the coal-measures of Great Britain, to which in large measure we owe our unrivalled position as the world's workshop. But the coalfields of Great Britain are only 12,000 miles in extent. And it must not be supposed that all Chinese coal, or even a moiety of it, is of inferior quality, like the Indian and Japanese articles. The average grade of the bituminous coal of Hunan is quite as high as anything England can show; the anthracite of Shansi is equal to the best Pennsylvanian. These two provinces are the richest in coal, and in Shansi iron ore of a uniformly high grade is found in conjunction with or in close proximity to the coal. Other provinces are also favoured in this dual direction. Shantung, for example, has four coalfields of considerable extent, in addition to several minor ones. Black oxide of iron is so plentiful in the district twenty miles south of Tung-chow-foo that I have seen it breaking through in all directions. In other parts other varieties of iron ore have also been located. They are all conveniently situated for ready communication with

the sea if only the necessary means of transport were furnished. But the riches of Shantung are inconsiderable by comparison with those of the other two provinces.

Hunan has coalfields extending through two degrees of longitude and two degrees of latitude, and comprising over 21,000 square miles. There are two main beds—one of the anthracite, stretching along by the Lui river, and another of bituminous, stretching along the Siang river. Lui river coal is of uniformly high quality. The methods of mining it are primitive and involve great waste. Until the establishment of the Bureau of Mines there existed only the very vaguest notions of ownership. Any man was at liberty to work the deposits in a large way provided he was able to secure the consent of the provincial governor (which involved a liberal distribution of what is vulgarly known as 'palm oil'); and any native of the country round was at liberty to take from the ground as much as he required for his personal wants. This absence of proper appreciation of the value of the deposits has led to the opening of many shafts, which have invariably been abandoned before the extraction of one-tenth of the coal in them.

Both the Lui and the Siang rivers run into the Yang-tse-kiang, which traverses the province; and by means of this waterway Lui anthracite reaches Hankow, where it can be laid down at about three taels (say 10s.) per ton, of which one tael and a half represents cost of carriage. At present the coal is sent along the river in boats, and the cost on the way is swelled by transit dues. If these were abolished, and if deep mining were inaugurated with the aid of European machinery, and if, moreover, cheap steam freights were established on the great river, millions of tons of Hunan coal could be brought down to Shanghai at prices which no competitor could touch. It occurs in conjunction with iron ore of great purity; so that, under proper encouragement, a considerable manufacturing industry might be established in this rich and populous province.

Between Hunan and Shansi lie the mines of Lushan and Juchau, Honan-foo, Taihong-shan, and other districts of Hunan, which stretches from the Yang-tse-kiang to the Hoang-ho. This last river forms the southern boundary of Shansi, which has 630,000,000,000 tons of the best anthracite waiting to be tapped. The coal-measures of this province are found on a plateau between 2000 and 3000 feet above the sea at its south-eastern extremity, and the main bed covers over 14,000 square miles. The average width of the seams is nearly 20 feet; the stratification is regular; and on all the edges of the terrace land, especially on the eastern side, the seams crop out, through the nature of the superficial configuration. A great advantage of this region is, that the eastern margin is on the slope of the plateau leading down to the Great Plain, which is intersected by navigable rivers, and capable of being cheaply provided with railways, and which is, further, capable of affording an untold store of the cheapest labour in the world.

The crowning merit of the Shansi coalfields is that, as in Hunan, iron is found abundantly in several strata of the coal-formation. The natives use only one kind of this ore—a kind that melts readily without the aid of any flux. A fairly large iron manufacturing industry is already carried on, and in spite of the crude methods of preparation, the product is of high quality—by reason mainly of the superiority of the raw material.

Just try to imagine for one moment the completeness of the revolution that would be effected by the introduction of Western works, equipped with Western machinery and appliances, into the heart of the great mineral-producing district of Shansi! Exercise your imagination a little more, and try to realise the change that would come over China, in its internal and external conditions and relations, if the government were suddenly to resolve upon an organised and determined endeavour to develop all the resources of the country, and were to carry out its resolve by the removal of all disabilities now existing, in the shape of vexatious internal taxes and jealous dislike of innovations, by the grant of direct mining licenses on reasonable royalties, and by the provision of rapid and cheap means of communication! Such a social revolution as this is a dream of the distant future, but it seems destined to be realised. Meanwhile a start has been made, and if the progress should prove to be slow, let it be remembered that, apart from its troubles from without at present, the government, under the peculiar fiscal system that prevails, is very poor.

'LINDA.

CHAPTER III.—1896.

'LOOK yer,' Twilight Ben urged persuasively; 'you're a tenderfoot, and I calkerlate you ain't got accustomed to the climate yit. I seen this yer run of ill-luck kinder souring on yer fur some time, and I do allow thet I don't jest hanker arter working on a grub stake myself; but, durn my skin, I did think you hed more grit in yer hide thin to cave in jest becos you don't git a straight flush fust deal! Blame it, man, hump yerself!—toot yer horn!—Hail, Columby!—and we'll strike it rich yit!'

Thus, with his forcible eloquence, did the old rascal seek to turn his younger companion from his expressed purpose, for he doggedly

stuck to his belief that the luck was bound to change sooner or later; and as Jim had shown 'he wasn't no slouch at shovelling-in the pay-dirt,' Ben viewed with distinct disfavour any proposal that threatened to interfere with his cold-blooded and murderous design of doing half the work and securing, by fair play or foul, the whole of the profits. Yet all his rude oratory availed him nothing.

'It ain't no use,' observed Jim wearily, when the one-sided conversation had gone on until after midnight. 'I dunno what it is, but there's a dead weight dragging me down. I've fit agen it until I can't fight no longer, and I've jest got to git back to Oloville right away. I guess I'll jest drop down to Fort Cudahy and see when they expect one of the Alaska Company's steamers up. You'll recollec' thet Cracker Harry said there was one expected soon.' And he made his preparations for his dreary ten mile expedition.

'Wall,' returned Twilight Ben, with the air of one who has exhausted all his arguments and accepted defeat in the discussion, 'I calkerlate I'll take another turn at the cradle fur a spell; and by-m-by, ef so be ez you air minded to streak it back yer ez soon's you git the information, mebbe I'll meander down the trail to meet yer and git the latest news.'

So Jim started out for the fort alone; but Twilight Ben, left to himself, betrayed no special anxiety to get to work, and the cradle knew not the touch of his hand that day. Instead, he sat in the hut, smoking and thinking, for an hour.

''Pears thar ain't no way of gitting the bulge on the young galoot with chin-music. I calkerlate I'll hev to play a trump keerd,' he soliloquised as he rose from his meditations.

Later in the day he started off down the creek, and half-way between their claim and the fort he met the returning Jim.

'Wall?' he inquired sharply.

'They say there's purty sure to be a steamer up early next week. So I guess I'll jest git my things together and tote 'em down to the fort and wait fur her.'

'Pard, I rather tuk to you becos I thought you was grit,' Ben went on solemnly; 'and I'm disapp'inted. Still, you're white, and I like you, and ef you *will* throw up yer hand becos the keerds is agen us—wall, it ain't no funeral of mine, though it gravels me pesky hard to part with you; and ez I'm going to hang on to this yer game myself till I strike a streak or I'm wall-broke, I calkerlate I'll pay you outer my share of the dust fur what grub thar is left.'

'Now I call thet real kind,' Jim returned gratefully; and during the rest of the way back to the claim their time was occupied in making mutual arrangements with regard to squaring up accounts.

'Gosh!' ejaculated Twilight Ben, with a start, as they came in sight of their cabin; 'I could ha' sworn I'd shet and locked thet hut-door afore I quit. Ef thar's been any ornery, durned, lop-eared greasers browsing round after the dust, by thunder, I'll shoot 'em on the fly ef I git on their tracks!'

With this savage threat he hastened forward, closely followed by Jim. At first, when they had commenced to work their claim, such a crime as the old miner suggested would barely have been possible, for other claims were being worked contiguous to their own; or if even an attempt had been made, it would have been almost certain to have been instantly detected, and the culprit, probably, promptly lynched; not from any fine sentimental sense of justice (which is an extremely rare exotic in mining camps), but from the pretty unanimous instinct not to allow a mere trifle like sending a sin-logged soul, unrepentant, to his Maker off-hand to interfere with the individual desire of each man to secure as far as possible the safety of his own treasure. Now, however, since the rush to the Sixty Mile had practically emptied the creek of its restless population, bluffs hid the claim from its nearest neighbours above and below, and thus gave any thievishly-inclined party who might find the hut temporarily unoccupied the opportunity to attempt a little enterprise with reasonable hopes of impunity.

As the two reached the hut a glance was sufficient to show them that the lock had been smashed and the door burst in by force. Just inside the threshold they stopped. The interior of the hut was a den of confusion. Here and there the floor had been scored and pitted with the pick of the marauder in his unholy prospecting.

'Look!' exclaimed Twilight Ben hoarsely, pointing to the farthest corner.

But Jim Vickerson had already looked. A few shovelfuls of loose earth lay piled upon the floor; the hiding-place was laid bare, and the old tomato-tin that held the whole of their scanty store of hard-won dust was gone. With half-raised hands and round, staring eyeballs, he stood rooted to the spot, glaring in mute agony at the empty corner, oblivious of the presence of his chum—oblivious of everything save the fact that he was now a prisoner in a lone land, far from her whom his weary heart hungered for.

With a savage oath Twilight Ben sprang to the corner, and, dropping on his knees, scratched with his fingers like a dog among the loose earth. A minute sufficed to show the futility of such a search. Then Twilight Ben rose to his feet, and lifted up his voice and cursed. From gulch and mining-camp, from forecastle and gambling-hell, from ranch and saloon, the hoary old sinner had gathered in a stock of profanity such as would have awed the veriest ruffian of the Bowery into

speechless wonder; and now the reservoir of his blasphemy burst its bounds, and gushed from his lips in one continuous, appalling avalanche. Mexican oaths jangled fiercely against deep British curses; anathemas and execrations from every land and every clime trod wildly on the heels of one another, and the unhallowed slang of mining-camp and ranch rounded off the awful deluge into one incessant stream. And yet Honest Jim heard never a word of the awful abuse. His unwinking eyes stared straight before him. His half-raised hands had neither risen nor fallen a fraction of an inch. He was turned to stone—ice—anything that is cold and immovable.

At length the torrent of fierce invective ceased—ceased because of want of breath—and the old reprobate sat down, gasping, on an upturned bucket and looked at Jim. Still the latter maintained his dazed, petrified pose. Twilight Ben had never seen a man take a misfortune like this, and his one piercing eye fastened on the strange sight. By degrees a feeling of unaccountable uneasiness began to mingle with his curiosity. He got up and kicked the iron bucket over with as much racket as he could conveniently get out of the operation. Yet Jim gave no sign. This unprecedented state of things was intolerable. For a few seconds Ben cogitated; then, unable to bear the oppressiveness of it longer, he strode up to the statuesque figure near the door, and digging it in the ribs, jerked out querulously:

'Say, pard, ain't it 'bout time you started in to cuss?'

The touch recalled Jim to his senses with a violent start. His hands dropped listlessly to his sides, and he blushed like a boy of fourteen detected in the act of writing a youthful love-letter to a schoolmate's sister.

'Say, pard,' the other repeated, 'ain't you going to cuss?'

'No,' replied Jim slowly and solemnly; 'I'm—going—to—*pray!*'

And there, in the centre of the comfortless hut, on the cold, hard earth, with no stuffed hassock or softly-upholstered *prie-dieu* to lessen the irksomeness of *devotion*(?), he fell upon his knees and stretched out his clasped hands before him in earnest supplication.

Once, when, during a brief industrious spell, he was trapping in the Rockies, and was sitting alone in the tent, a shadow fell upon him, and turning round to greet his returning chum, he found himself hugged by a grizzly, Twilight Ben had been surprised. Still more surprised was he when, after a desperate struggle, he came out of the encounter alive and comparatively unhurt. Then, in spite of his extensive vocabulary and his abnormal skill in using it, words suitable to the occasion failed him. They failed him now. The bewildering unexpectedness of Jim's speech and simultaneous action staggered him. His sightless eye-socket opened, and the turned-up half of his moustache bristled like the quills of a porcupine at bay. Instinctively he gave one sobbing gasp of astonishment, and waited for what was to follow. And as he waited, with his gaze riveted on the kneeling figure on the ground, his wonder grew, for he expected to hear Jim fiercely beseech the Lord to restore the lost treasure, and pour out all the vials of His wrath upon the head of the thief; but no such vengeful petition came from his lips.

No glib string of stereotyped pious phrases came gliding from his tongue. For a few minutes he knelt there silently struggling—not praying—to shape his unwieldy thoughts. Then came, slowly, brokenly, the first words, uttered laboriously. His big breast heaved, his clasped hands clutched each other with an iron grip, and the perspiration trickled down over the knotted veins on his temples, as he literally *wrestled* in prayer—not for himself, not for the lost gold, but for the sinner who had wronged him.

Twilight Ben grew uncomfortable. Once or twice in his career he had heard at camp-meetings and revival services, to which curiosity had led him, evangelists pour out loud, voluble, and sometimes incoherent forms of supplication and praise; but never before had he witnessed a human soul in the painful agony of desperate, earnest prayer, and it awed the brute within him. Without knowing why, he took off his hat, and spat on his hands and rubbed them on his corduroy trousers to make them cleaner. He fidgeted uneasily as his discomfort increased, and took the quid out of his mouth and held it in his hand. The situation pressed tighter and tighter upon him, until he could bear it no longer. An indefinable dread seized him.

'Blamed ef ever I knowed I was so tetchy afore; but this yer gospel-jerking, when they git down to wrastling with the bed-rock, ruther gits the bulge on me,' he muttered uneasily to himself. 'I calkerlate I'd better jest vamoose the ranch.' And he quietly sidled out of the hut.

Once out in the open, he felt that he could breathe more freely, yet he remained standing near the door, where he could both see and hear the earnest suppliant within, as he strove, haltingly and disjointedly, to plead that the transgressor might be snatched from the clutches of sin; and when at length Jim rose to his feet and turned towards the door, Twilight Ben, with a feeling of inexpressible relief, jerked his plug back into his cheek, clapped on his hat, and sauntered away towards the workings.

It was another Jim Vickerson—more like the old one—that strode out of the hut. A great and evident change had been wrought upon him. The sudden shock of greater misfortune had shaken him free from the toils. The leaden glamour of that weird, monotonous

region no longer enchained him. Home-sickness and the depression consequent on unrewarded labour had fled from him, and he was himself once more—strong in determination to win a home of ease and a life of happy comfort for the little 'Linda that was waiting for him in the flower-twined schoolhouse far away over the dreary plains and terrible fastnesses.

As he gained the open air Twilight Ben had reached the top of the shaft. While looking moodily down, the foot or two of earth upon which he stood suddenly gave way, and he disappeared. As he fell one side of the pit caved in; and when, with a cry of horror, Jim reached the spot, nothing was to be seen at the bottom of the shaft but a mass of loose gravel. Snatching a shovel, he leaped down upon the fallen heap of débris, and worked as he had never worked before to shift the rubbish. It was slow—terribly slow; for the best he could do was but to shift the stuff from one side to another, and all along the thought haunted him that he might with his own weight be trampling the last remnant of life out of the comrade he was working to save. Minutes dragged slowly by. An hour had passed, and his frenzied efforts redoubled themselves. At length, while pausing for a moment to wipe his streaming forehead, he thought he heard a faint, muffled sound like that of a human voice. He listened intently. It was his chum's, and it came from the direction of the tunnel, the entrance to which had been covered by the fall. With a definite guide now to direct him, Jim fell to work again with brighter hopes. In another quarter of an hour the entombed miner was released, little the worse for his imprisonment. Luckily for him, he had fallen with his head and shoulders inside the tunnel, free of the weight of earth that held his body and limbs immovable, and so had escaped suffocation. The shock had, however, knocked him senseless; and it was when he cried out, as soon as he came to himself, that Jim heard him. With no bones broken, a few hours' rest in his hammock soon put him right again, except for a stiffness and soreness that lasted for some days to remind him of his narrow escape.

As may easily be supposed, when Jim turned into his bunk some hours subsequent to the rescue, what with his journey to Fort Cudahy and the experiences he went through immediately after his return, he slept the heavy sleep of the wearied. On awaking he noticed the hide in the corner of the hut had been restored to its usual state of studied unsuspiciousness, and the end of a log laid negligently over it. The older miner was out. Jim examined the spot closely. The old tomato-tin, with its golden contents, had returned to its place. Jim went out and joined his partner at the cradle. Together they worked for hours, mostly in silence, and not a word passed on the subject that was uppermost in both their minds, until Twilight Ben suddenly dropped his shovel and abruptly strode across to the other. For a minute they stood facing one another without a word. Then:

'Say, pard, did yer savvy (*Anglice:* know by perception) who the durned skunk was who stole thet thar dust?'

'Wall, I kinder guessed,' Jim replied, with a quiet smile.

'Then why the tarnal did you scratch me outer thet thar landslip fur, when you knowed I'd been playing it low down on you like thet?'

''Cos I reckon I couldn't do no other.'

'You—couldn't—— Dog my cats ef you ain't the durnedest, queerest cuss I ever come across!' exclaimed Twilight Ben. 'And I like you! Put it thar!'

Jim took the proffered hand in his. The firm, hearty grip betokened the commencement of a new era in the partnership of the curiously matched pair. And so the evil scheme passed out of Twilight Ben's warped brain, and he had no longer any thought to work the young man harm.

The brief summer was quickly passing away, and still no sign of luck came their way. Twilight Ben himself had arrived at the conclusion that it was folly to waste any more time in working their claim on the Forty Mile, when it suddenly became known that prospectors had struck it rich on the Bonanza Creek. The information was quickly verified, and the Klondyke leapt into local fame as the new Eldorado. Unfortunately the coming winter was already within measurable distance, and provisions were none too plentiful. Many of the miners in the latest-discovered field would—rather than face another winter of darkness and privation that killed several and drove others stark mad—after working their new claims for a few weeks, drop down to Circle City for the long, dreary spell of icy darkness, to relieve the tedious hours with gambling and bad whisky. As for Jim and Twilight Ben, they spent the whole of their dearly-got gold at Fort Cudahy in buying provisions at exorbitant prices; and packing up-country, they staked out their new claims well up towards the head of the Bonanza, and determined to fight out the winter there on an insufficient larder, in the hope of killing a stray moose or bear to help things along. Their first prospects were encouragingly successful, showing two to four dollars to the pan; and by the time the river closed and the winter set in they had washed about three thousand dollars. With a good heart, confident now that they were not wasting their energy in digging worthless rubbish, they faced the trying ordeal, and occupied themselves, as they had done the previous winter, in throwing up a dump of the ice-bound pay-dirt in readiness to be washed as soon as the returning sun should release the water-supply.

SOME NEW USES FOR PEAT.

ALMOST everybody knows that from time to time articles have been discovered in peat-bogs strangely preserved; but it was not till lately that people began to think that this strange preserving power in peat might be put to some use. The first trials made were simply with peat in the form of powder, and it was found to be so effective that several experts looked into the matter, and after long and arduous experiments, made what is now so well known as peat-wool dressing.

This surgical wool is extremely absorbent—in fact, much more so than ordinary wool, although somewhat slower in absorbing the liquids; and it is predicted that there is a big future before it, especially in army surgery, where its small bulk makes it very convenient for transport; and its deodorising power is great.

Another product of peat is a roughly-woven material manufactured from the fibres which may be seen running through a mass of peat. This cloth is much used for felt and undercarpeting, as there seems to be a property in this fibre which is very antagonistic to the life of animals and insects of all kinds. People who have examined this material have expressed their astonishment that such a strong and useful cloth could be made from the apparently worthless peat.

A further development is the compressing the peat into solid blocks, so hard that it is with the greatest difficulty they can be turned on a lathe; indeed, they very often blunt the edge of the finest-tempered tools. These blocks can be so polished that they resemble finely polished oak, and in gloss and colour they are far more beautiful.

A well-known Continental firm (Messrs Brion, Pate, Burke, & Co., 4 Rue de Frerise, Paris; the London agents being the Peat Industries Syndicate) has, within the last few months, brought out a very ingenious application. 'Peat flannel'—for so it is called—is a fine, delicately shaded flannel, containing a considerable portion of peat in its contexture, and, as far as hygienic qualities are concerned, is said to be far superior to many of the so-called hygienic flannels now in the market, besides being very suitable for all outdoor sports. It is extremely deodorant and absorbent, and seems likely to become very well known in a few years.

Moss litter for horses, &c., is highly prized by farmers and horse-owners for its healthy and sanitary properties. Peat charcoal is valuable in iron-smelting and in tempering cutlery; and admirable flower-pots are made of compressed peat. Petroleum or paraffin is distilled from peat.

Experiments have also been made as to the effect peat has on micro-organisms, and it was found that although peat can hardly be called a germicide, still it possesses the power of considerably retarding the propagation of typhoid and cholera germs.

Anything likely to encourage the utilisation of peat, which opens up a way for the development of the now almost useless peat moors and bogs throughout Great Britain, would be looked upon as a blessing by the owners of these lands.

Tennyson, it will be remembered, founded his Irish poem 'To-morrow' on a story related to him by Aubrey de Vere, which ran as follows: 'The body of a young man was laid out on the grass by the door of a chapel in the west of Ireland, and an *old woman* came and recognised it as that of her young lover, who had been lost in a peat-bog many years before; the peat having kept him fresh and fair as when she last saw him.'

THE FRENCH INVASION OF 1797.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

WITH 1897 just behind us, we can afford to laugh at the French invasion of England in 1797; but our ancestors, for a day or two at least, thought it no laughing matter. The 3 per cent. consols stood on Friday the 24th of February 1797 at 52½. The next day, after the publication of the *London Gazette Extraordinary* with news from Haverfordwest of the Fishguard landing, they fell to 50¼. That same evening, at a council held in Mr Pitt's house, it was decided to send a messenger immediately to Windsor, to request the king's attendance. His Majesty was present at the Sunday council, and London's excitement in this unique event was intense. Money payments at the Bank of England were to be withheld; and, in sympathy with the wishes of the Cabinet council, there appeared in the *Times* of Tuesday the 28th no fewer than six columns of names of merchants and bankers appended to the undertaking 'that we will not refuse to receive bank-notes in payment of any sum of money to be paid to us.' By then, however, the scare was over. Even on Monday consols were up again to 52¼. The following authoritative intimation from Haverfordwest, under date February 24, 9 P.M.,

had tranquillised both the Cabinet and the City: 'I have the honour and pleasure to inform your Grace (the Duke of Portland) that the whole of the French troops, amounting to near 1400 men, have surrendered, and are now on their march to Haverfordwest.' The invaders had had their chances, and had misused them.

The scene of the brief yet stirring event was the rough, rectangular promontory of Pen Caer, in Pembrokeshire, bounded on the west by the bold purple cliffs of Strumble Head. In rough weather this part of the coast was eminently unsuited for an invasion. But Tuesday the 21st has been described by a Pembrokeshire worthy of the period as 'the finest day ever remembered at such a season, when all nature, earth, and ocean wore an air of unusual serenity.' The three frigates, with their cargo of six hundred regular French troops and eight hundred so-called convicts, passed St David's flying English colours. As British vessels they were about to be saluted by the fort at Fishguard when they sailed into the mouth of the bay. But Fishguard was spared this humiliation by the sudden change from British to French colours. After this the vessels drew back a little, and finally anchored off the rocks of Carreg Gwastad Point. A St David's gentleman had watched the vessels suspiciously, until his suspicions developed into certainty. He was an old seaman, and he believed the ships were French, and that the troops on board were for local aggressive purposes. He raised the district, so that, while Fishguard was taking measures to secure its property and obtain troops, St David's was mustering bravely for attack, and even stripping the lead from its cathedral roof for the blacksmiths to mould into bullets.

Under the command of a certain Irish-American named Tate, the invaders made a very vigorous beginning. Their landing-place was not sufficiently secure for an encampment. The men therefore pushed on to the little white-cotted village of Llanwnda, a constant rise from the sea-level, and passing its village green (doubtless then as now the resort of the local gossipers, including droves of garrulous geese), climbed the rocky plateau on the other side. They did more. They dragged casks of ammunition with them, and made all ready for holding a fairly defensible situation. If Tate could have kept all his men as well disciplined as these workers, he might have made a strong show even against Lord Cawdor's forces. But while some were thus perspiring in the darkness, others were dispersed about the rugged headland, which was, and is, far more populous than the nature of the soil would seem to justify. Farmstead after farmstead was entered and sacked. The Llanwnda geese were especially attractive to the invaders. 'Not a fowl,' it is said, 'was left alive, and the geese were literally boiled in butter.' As it happened, there had recently been hereabouts the wreck of a vessel laden with wine. One result of this was that the Welshmen's cottages were all surprisingly blessed with good liquor. The sequel was of course inevitable. One after another General Tate's precious crew became very drunk, and the majority unmanageable besides. Mr Fenton, the county authority already quoted, tells us that 'the veil of night was kindly drawn over their execrable orgies, disgraceful to nature, and which humanity shudders to imagine.' Really, however, nothing so inordinately dreadful seems to have occurred. At least there is no circumstantial account of the invasion which it revolts one to read. The first report, in the *Times* of February 27, is not of a very sanguinary kind. We learn that the very children of Pen Caer took up reaping-hooks and abetted their parents in defence of their property. Four Frenchmen are then said to have been killed —two by a father and his son, who caught them helping themselves to calves in a stable; and a third having been dismally run through with a pitchfork 'while regaling himself with ale and bread and cheese.' By then the mortality among the Welsh was two only. And, as a matter of fact, this about represents the whole loss of life in the affair. What would have happened if Tate could have kept his men sober, and marched them promptly over the hills and down to Fishguard (which was quite worth sacking), one can, of course, only conjecture. The pretty little town was then a place of fair importance for its trade with the Mediterranean in cured red and white herrings, and there were country-houses hard by, including Mr Fenton's, which would assuredly have yielded better spoil than the stumpy white homesteads of Pen Caer.

The drinking and the boiling of geese in butter went on gaily enough throughout Wednesday. Tate must then have seen that it was all up even with his chance of leaving a memorable mark on the neighbourhood. He was at Trehowel Farm, whither he had been led by a Welshman named Bowen, who was with his troops, and who had formerly worked on the farm. Like his men, he lived freely on the produce of his environment. Not content with eating the hams and geese, he 'eviscerated the feather beds for the sake of the tick, burnt the furniture, and left a mere shell to greet the return of the proprietor.' At another farmhouse one may still see a grandfather's clock with a bullet-hole nicely middled in its case. A tipsy Frenchman shot it, presumably taking its pendulum for the tongue of a challenger. Llanwnda church was bound to suffer. It is an ancient little building, with heavy arches, an old font, and some interesting decorated stones embedded in its outer walls; and in its churchyard are a surprising number of mortuary tablets to master-mariners. But it was not likely to yield much plunder. One of the French officers laid hands on the church plate. The chalice in use is the one that thus suffered some slight vicissitudes. It is much cracked and dented, and bears the in-

scription, 'Poculum Ecclesiæ de Llanwnda.' After the failure of the invasion, its purloiner offered it for sale in Carmarthen, with the feeble lie that the word 'Llanwnda' stood for 'La Vendée,' of which royalist district of France he declared it to be a relic. But the Carmarthen silversmith was not thus deceived, and eventually the little church came by its own again. As for the rank and file of the invaders, aggrieved by the nakedness of Llanwnda church, they destroyed all in it they could lay hands on, and set fire to the pews and other combustible matter. From a hiding-place above the rood-loft a nursemaid and child peeped down upon the depredators, no doubt with misgivings. But they were not burned to death, nor did they fall into the hands of the tipsy ransackers and suffer as probably they expected to suffer.

There are tales extant of the wonders wrought by the local peasantry in defence of their homes. The heroism of Jemima Nicolas is a case in point. This sturdy damsel, armed only with a pitchfork, advanced against twelve Frenchmen. Her tongue and the pitchfork conjointly prevailed over the twelve, so that she had little difficulty in leading the dozen prisoners to Fishguard. But who except a Welshman of Pen Caer is likely to believe such a yarn as this? Again, there is the picturesque story of the muster of Pembrokeshire dames on the adjacent hillsides. In their red woollen 'whittles' and tall hats, they were of course a very fair imitation of fighting-men; and as such they are said to have marched and countermarched before the eyes of the wine-sodden Frenchmen. This at any rate is moderately credible, if we assume, as we may, that the ladies wore their skirts as short as some of the Welsh peasant women are accustomed, in their daily vocations, still to wear them.

After all, however, circumstances unaided were the worst foe Tate and his men had to fight. The invasion soon proved a farce. The camp that was formed on the Tuesday night had lost its importance by Thursday. The Frenchmen had eaten their vicinity bare, and Lord Cawdor, with the Castle Martin yeomanry, the Cardiganshire militia, two companies of fencibles, and a scratch lot of volunteers, was approaching the marshy lowlands between Fishguard and the pleasant little modern pleasure-resort of Goodwic, on the Fishguard side of Pen Caer. A strange new calamity precipitated matters: the three frigates sailed away to the north, leaving Tate to enjoy his conquest or his calamity by himself. And so, on the Thursday evening, the Frenchmen tried to treat with Lord Cawdor. But no terms were admissible. His lordship proposed to attack the Llanwnda camp with ten thousand men unless the invaders laid down their arms as prisoners of war. An effective little brag like this was permissible enough, and no wrong is done to the Fishguard fencibles and the rest in the supposition that they were all very relieved when General Tate, after an anxious meditative night, marched down to Goodwic sands on the Friday morning and surrendered without bloodshed.

The subsequent fate of the captured Frenchmen need not be dwelt on. Some were sent to Pembroke Castle, where five-and-twenty escaped in Lord Cawdor's own yacht, having first won the tender hearts of the women who looked after them, and then burrowed some sixty yards through the ground. It was not well to be a prisoner of war in those days. Nevertheless, we prefer not to believe the tale told about certain other of these invaders confined at Porchester Castle, in Hampshire. They are said to have laid hands on Lord Cawdor's horse and eaten it when he one day paid them the civility of a visit. It was surely enough that his lordship should have his yacht pilfered without having his horse cut into steaks and collops.

GAS-WORKS MANAGEMENT AND CONSUMERS' INTERESTS.

By a Director.

THERE is undoubtedly very much misconception in the minds of gas-consumers everywhere on subjects concerning gas-works, such as the management thereof generally, and the relation of the gas industry to its customers. Gas-men are usually considered to be prejudiced; but when one is both a householder and a gas-consumer in the same district, some degree of accuracy and impartiality may be claimed herein.

A gas company is a concern constituted primarily to supply a public necessity—namely, light during the hours of darkness; and latterly gas has become a household requisite for cooking and heating purposes, and is also extensively used for motive-power. Most of the existing companies were formed many years ago in the comparative infancy of gas-lighting; and as progress was then very doubtful, the money required for promotion was generally difficult to raise; hence the high rate of interest that was allowed by parliament. The argument of 'bloated dividends' still holds sway, and is even now a sore point with consumers; but these are relics of the past, and are practically not the happy experience of shareholders of to-day, whose holdings have been mostly acquired at market prices, and consequently do not realise the high rate of interest they bear upon their face. This rate is undoubtedly high when viewed in the light of present experience; but all honour must be accorded to the pioneers

of this industry who risked their money in a doubtful venture, the grand success and brilliant future of which nobody could foresee, and we should not grudge them their good fortune. Many concerns groan almost under the weight of a comparatively heavy capital charge, but that cannot now be helped, and we should quietly bear our share of the burden (if it can be so called in the light of what follows), that of our predecessors having been a natural anxiety as to their investment.

Constituted by act of parliament as a rule, a gas company is confined within limits not generally understood nor recognised. It may pay its statutory dividends, but the price of the commodity to be charged to the consumer must not trespass beyond a certain point. After paying its full dividends, keeping the works in good order and repair, and setting aside gradually a reserve fund, all further profits must go to reduce the price of gas. Quality is also determined, a penalty being sometimes attached for defect therein. As a rule an aggregate amount, equal to ten per cent. only on the prescribed capital, can be retained out of profits to form the reserve fund; and that fund can only be called upon for certain specific purposes. Also, generally no depreciation fund is permitted; so that quality is defined, and dividend and reserve fund are absolutely restricted—everything, in fact, being regulated to the ultimate advantage of the consumers.

It will thus be seen that consumers have a direct, and by no means insignificant, interest in a gas company. Thirty years ago the price charged for gas may have been ten shillings per 1000 cubic feet; whereas it is now possibly only three shillings and sixpence to two shillings; in large, thickly-populated towns even less, according to the district. This means that, comparatively, consumers are obtaining nowadays for the same quantity of light practically a dividend equal to a high rate of interest on the amount of their annual accounts, with no more serious capital outlay than the cost of fittings; or are able for the same money to have a lighting capacity for their premises two or three times greater than formerly. The greater the consumption of the district, the more economically is gas produced; and the surplus profit thereby realised belongs, not to the shareholders, but to the consumers. Sometimes a sliding-scale is in operation, whereby the shareholders get so much increased or decreased percentage of dividend, according as the price of gas is lowered or raised beyond a certain fixed standard. But, generally speaking, the consumers of to-day have obtained all the innumerable advantages of economy of manufacture, of greater science and skill, of the introduction of machinery, and of cheap coal that have for many years been in evidence; so that almost without exception the price of gas everywhere is at the lowest point it has ever reached, a consideration which is entirely in the consumers' interest. Thus, whilst the gas industry is decried as a 'monopoly'—which means, in other words, that the shareholders have obtained all that was legally due to them, and nothing more—consumers have year after year reaped all the benefits of cheaper production, and are therefore to all intents and purposes partners in the concern, participating largely in its progressive prosperity.

Moreover, what has the Welsbach incandescent system done for the consumer? The writer's experience is, that one such burner does the duty of three ordinary burners; and as it consumes so much less gas than one ordinary burner as, with a certain amount of care, will pay the annual cost of renewals of mantles and chimneys, it follows that the same amount of light may be obtained therewith at one-third the cost of former years. The 'care' referred to consists principally in the manner in which the mantle is at first fixed, and a little personal attention thereto will be found to pay best generally.

In connection with such economy of lighting as is claimed by the above system, and having regard to the competition of the electric light, it may be pertinently asked how, in the extensive adoption of both these systems which undoubtedly obtains—the first reducing, and the second substituting, consumption of gas—gas-works go on prospering and increasing their production, as seems to be the case. There is little doubt that in a well-regulated household—and such, let us hope, are in the majority—the chief allots so much annual income to the gas bill; and when that is found to be on a moderate, and perhaps decreasing scale, then is considered a fitting time to put up a heating or to introduce a cooking stove. So the consumption of gas is kept at its normal quantity, or is even allowed, on account of these facilities which economise in other directions, to exceed that; but the bill, owing to continued reductions in price, remains practically the same. Undoubtedly a heating or cooking stove, when well fixed, is very clean, serviceable, and economical, provided it is not allowed to be used wastefully.

The gas-man, whether director, manager, collector, or what not, must have a very broad back, and be prepared with equanimity to be termed liar, thief, rogue, or such-like; he is fairer game than almost any other, and is 'shot at' without mercy or compunction all round. The director is generally considered to be one who has little to do, and gets well paid for doing the same as badly as it can be done. He seems to delight in causing the greatest amount of exasperation to a wide circle; it is his business almost to defraud the public in as legal a manner as possible, and to carry out that policy of 'grasping rapacity and extortion' with which all gas companies are credited. He has even been accused of supplying better gas to his own house than to adjacent premises. The manager, who is also usually

engineer, is the individual who invariably makes a bad article, and sits comfortably in his office, or perhaps on the top of the governor—not the chairman, by the way, but the instrument for regulating pressure throughout the district—driving gas through the meters attached to the houses in his domain whether consumers are willingly utilising it or not. His one other duty perhaps is to see that the quarterly bills are made out sufficiently large from figures mysteriously supplied by the myrmidons sent abroad to read the meter indices.

If it is possible for the average gas-consumer to believe one of the above-mentioned public (but hitherto unpunished) criminals, let me state briefly what are the true facts in connection with these much-despised, wholly-unappreciated public servants. The director always stands immediately between two fires—the shareholders on one side, and the consumers on the other. Elected by the former, who live perhaps mostly miles away from the district, he is expected regularly to furnish the full statutory dividend, to see that the works are kept in good order, and to provide a decent annual statement. So long as these matters are right the shareholders are satisfied. Directors must necessarily consider shareholders' claims first and foremost, as required by act of parliament, other things being equal, and because they are their officers. But, on the other hand, directors must, and do, carefully consider the consumers' interests. They must be shareholders themselves, and most frequently they are consumers also in the same district; so that from a purely personal point of view they are directly interested both ways. They do strive from various motives, and in divers ways, to keep down the price of gas. When a reduction (say of threepence) is made, they get no thanks; the concession is swallowed as a thing that ought to be, or rather ought to have occurred long ago; but let them raise the price by so little as a penny, and at once there is a howl of execration from all sides, no matter what the circumstances may be that cause the necessity for this unhappy incident. Gas never is too cheap anywhere; if it were given free of cost, it would always be at least bad. The excess profits over the dividend of any year belong by right to the consumers, and must be utilised when sufficiently ample to reduce price; and directors do think a lot of those profits, superfluous as to dividend, in connection with the consumers. A reduction of a penny in price seems, and is generally considered by the public, to be a trivial thing; its real value should, however, be estimated by the wrath and indignation with which an increase of a similar amount is received. Also, it is not remembered that such reductions, following one another year after year, amount to a respectable item in the course of a few years; nor that reductions have been for a long time the rule, whilst increase has been very exceptional.

The above remarks concerning the director will apply also to the manager; if there is any difference, it can only be to emphasise them in the latter case. The director may be waylaid and brow-beaten, but how much more the poor manager! Whilst bearing the burden and heat of the day in connection with his particular profession, he has to listen with patience and forbearance to the individual complaints of all those ills with which gas apparently is afflicted, at least in the opinion of a certain number of people. This is no light task, for with many it is impossible to argue. You may explain that the fault may not be altogether in the gas itself, but with some degree of probability in connection with fittings or burners, but in vain; the gas is abominable, and the way it runs through the meter is a deep mystery! My opinion of the gas manager is briefly this: however small the works may be, he must understand his business, must have had therein a certain amount of experience. Beyond these qualifications, you will frequently find him intelligent, sometimes even clever and ingenious, enthusiastic in his duties, generally on the lookout for some improvement in the details of his work; and if he does not sympathise with his customers in their troubles and help them in their gassy difficulties, such an one may be considered generally an unsuccessful man. This is particularly the case with companies; when corporations own the works, all the officials are more independent in every way.

It is the best policy of directors to order, and of managers to make, gas good in quality, not only as regards illuminating power, but also in point of purity; and this is usually the policy adopted. If the quality varies by two and a half per cent.—which may be taken to mean half a candle, an almost extreme variation—it is sure to be heard of at the works. Many things may cause unintentional deviation from routine, such as unexpected sudden demand from one cause or another. But complaints of 'bad gas' nearly always arise from defective fittings or worn-out burners. Burners require changing occasionally; new ones should be obtained from the gas office. The truth of this remark may be verified by visiting a few houses on the same night in the same district, or sometimes even by examining in one's own house the gas in different rooms; a variation will almost certainly be discovered more or less pronounced, which can only be accounted for as has been suggested, for it is the same gas, but it is evidently not obtaining the same equal chance everywhere. Many companies by their special act are allowed to supply gas at as low quality as fourteen or fifteen candles, whereas in order to meet the requirements of their district they actually make their gas up to eighteen or nineteen candles. For this they get no credit; but as a matter of fact each candle extra costs from a penny to three-halfpence, according to

locality, so that many companies could 'reduce price' by sixpence by adhering strictly to the letter of their constitution. A gas richer than eighteen candles is unnecessary, and unless such is used through special burners there is much waste with it, and consequent loss to the consumer.

'Dear gas' is a chronic complaint. A scattered country district, with miles of only partially productive mains, is inconsiderately presumed by many to be in the same position to obtain gas from its local works as a town with its streets of closely-built houses, shops, workshops, &c. One hears regularly the pathetic lament that in the country gas is three shillings and sixpence, whereas in the adjacent town it is only two shillings and sixpence. Comparatively the former price may be much the cheaper, if due regard is given to the differing circumstances of the two cases.

The meter is a thing that no gas-consumer can understand, except when the bill is smaller than anticipated, owing perhaps to difference of weather, which is an important factor in the case. If the bill is larger than usual, the gas has certainly not been used, and something must be wrong with the meter! From the commencement of housekeeping, when the writer had no direct interest in gas matters beyond a consumer's, the following plan was adopted, and has since been carried out methodically: every week the meter index has been read and noted, and the weekly variations have been weighed up and accounted for. That cannot be accomplished at the end of the quarter, for one cannot remember the weather variations, the differences in the days' shades of light, or perhaps the dinner-parties, and so forth, any of which make a lot of difference between one corresponding quarter and another. During all this time not one single error has been discovered in the accounts. Much waste occurs in the household unless a certain amount of care is exercised; servants will leave too much gas turned on when it is not required, and in their rooms they are generally reckless and extravagant with gas, especially if no notice is taken of the matter by the mistress. The gas bill is like the proverbial red rag in front of a bull: it never satisfies the average consumer as to its accuracy, and the moment of its arrival frequently disturbs the domestic peace. The writer can only repeat in its favour that he never at any time found an error in his accounts. Meters are wonderful but reliable machines, that do their work on the whole in a fair and honest way; if they are considered to be out of order, the consumer can have them tested free of charge when discovered to be erratic.

The discount system is in vogue in some places, and is generally successful, but occasionally generates discontent among the few who by their own carelessness miss getting it. If the account is paid by a certain date, so much discount is allowed therefrom. The date must be strictly adhered to, in common fairness to the majority who take the trouble to pay in time. It is usually attributed to the company, when they refuse to accept any excuse from a delinquent, that they are unbusiness-like—whereas the boot is really on the other leg—and that they are advantaging themselves pecuniarily by their sharp practice; when, as a matter of fact, all discounts so forfeited may be practically considered as items which go to assist a future reduction in price. The system involves no more inconvenience to consumers than the call of a collector, perhaps several times repeated, was wont to do; and is a matter of great economy to the company, again to the interest of consumers, to whom it means perhaps a reduction of a penny in the price of gas by the saving effected.

Little need be said here as to the competition of electricity with gas. Experience has proved it as a fact, whatever may be the reason therefor, that wherever electricity has been introduced, gas consumption has increased rapidly. Gas remains the economical light of the country, for unquestionably it is much cheaper than electricity so far, even when all the advantages claimed for the latter are taken into account; whilst electricity may be viewed sometimes as a great convenience, yet always as a luxury. There is undoubtedly room for both in the world, and the competition between them is a healthy one. It is an interesting struggle between these two great producers of artificial light, and the issue is by no means yet narrowed down to the question of the survival of the fittest. So far, where both come into direct competition, there is simply a matter of choice between the two, each perhaps possessing distinct advantages for individual preference; at least the general or final result must be universally beneficial. Electricity has probably the largest area for experimental research and improvement.

On the whole, it may be claimed for gas companies that for very many years they have supplied a necessity of the times; that they have been good and useful public servants; and that they have done, and are doing, their duty by their customers, just as much as by their shareholders. And the point most desirable to emphasise is, that they are well-regulated, progressive commercial enterprises, directed and managed on sound business principles, not altogether nor exclusively in the interests of shareholders, as the idea so generally seems to be, but to a very appreciable extent with regard to the interests and for the benefit of their customers. In short, gas companies to-day are not the 'absolute and perpetual monopolies' of bygone years, if only for the weighty reason that the total economies that have brought the price of gas everywhere down to its present low point have been thereby appropriated absolutely by the consumers.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE STORY OF A BURNS FIND.

By the Author of *The Book-hunter in London.*

A COMPARATIVELY recent article in *Chambers's Journal* on 'The Providence of Book-hunters' has induced me to put on paper one of the most singular bits of luck which ever came in the way of either bookseller or collector. The story dates back some years; but as it is now recorded for the first time it is none the less fresh.

All the world knows that chief amongst Burns's friends during the early portion of his residence at Dumfries were Mr and Mrs Riddell. Those who will turn to the second edition (1813) of Cromek's *Reliques of Robert Burns*, page 188, will find this paragraph: 'The chief part of the following remarks on Scottish Songs and Ballads exists in the handwriting of Robert Burns, in an interleaved copy, in four volumes 8vo, of Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*. They were written by the Poet for Capt. Riddell of Glenriddell, whose autograph the volumes bear. These valuable volumes were left by Mrs Riddell to her niece, Miss Eliza Bayley (whose autograph the volumes also bear), of Manchester, by whose kindness the editor is enabled to give to the Public transcripts of this amusing and miscellaneous collection.'

The history, therefore, of *The Scots Musical Museum*, interleaved, and with upwards of one hundred and forty interesting notes in the handwriting of the poet Robert Burns, is clear and distinct up to the time of Cromek's edition of 1813. For over half-a-century nothing more apparently was heard of these 'reliques.' Miss Bayley died in due course, and bequeathed them to a friend, at whose death they were again inherited by a lady, who, knowing nothing whatever of their value and interest, called in a well-known second-hand bookseller, Mr John Salkeld, then of Orange Street, Red Lion Square (but now of Clapham Road), London. These volumes, along with an autograph presentation copy of Burns's *Poems* (Edinburgh, 1793) and much other miscellaneous matter, were offered to Mr Salkeld at a small figure, and, at that price, cleared without more than a mere passing examination. Previous to this, a quantity of manuscripts, pamphlets, and so forth, inherited from the same source, had been destroyed, and the astonishing fact is that the *Musical Museum* did not share the same fate.

The books were duly conveyed to Orange Street, and some days elapsed before they were examined for catalogue purposes. In the meantime a very smart bookseller called, and, in grubbing about, picked up the *Musical Museum*. He glanced over it first casually, and then carefully, and demanded: 'How much do you want for this?' 'Five pounds,' was the random answer of the owner, who loved not the rival tradesman. 'I will give you three pounds,' was the immediate offer, which Mr Salkeld promptly refused. The smart bookseller left the shop, only to return the following day with a five-pound note and a demand for the books. It was too late; for the owner's curiosity had been excited, and a very brief examination showed him the extraordinary interest of his purchase. The price suddenly went up to a hundred and ten guineas. The smart man left without the books, but with the firm conviction, which he did not hesitate to express, that the other man was mad.

In the next Salkeld catalogue, No. 51, these Burns 'reliques' make a good show, the description occupying two pages, and include a number of articles which had no connection with the poet, but only with his friends the Riddells. The catalogues were duly posted, the country ones first, and the town ones a day later, as is the custom. Within forty-eight hours there came up to London a well-known provincial bookseller, who demanded the little collection for ready cash at ninety pounds. This offer was refused, and the disappointed bibliopole left the shop with his money in his pocket, and perhaps, like the former bookseller, with the conviction in his soul that the London man was stark, staring mad.

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During the bartering, an old customer, who had missed the new catalogue, had been quietly 'browsing' amongst the books in the shop; and when the provincial gentleman left, he asked permission to see the collection. The request was of course immediately granted, to be followed almost as quickly by the purchase and the conveyance of the collection away in a cab to his residence in Barnsbury, where it now is.

Of course, the provincial bookseller again turned up a few hours later, prepared to give the full catalogue price; but I will mercifully draw a veil over his consternation when he discovered that the collection had not only been sold, but actually removed. The 'moral' of this little story is fairly obvious; for here were two exceptionally smart booksellers who overreached themselves, each in turn offering what both must have known was an inadequate amount for what Allan Cunningham truly describes as 'precious volumes.'

The Scots Musical Museum, 'humbly dedicated to the Catch Club, instituted at Edinburgh, June 1771, by James Johnson,' is, it need hardly be said, the gem of the collection, which altogether comprises fourteen volumes. The copy of the *Poems* already mentioned is also unique in its way, and the absence of Beugo's portrait is more than compensated for by the presence of the following characteristic note in Burns's autograph: 'When you and I, my dear sir, have passed that bourne whence no traveller returns, should these volumes survive us, I wish the future Reader of this Page to be informed that they were the pledge of a Friendship, ardent and grateful on my part as it was kind and generous on yours—That Enjoyment may mark your days and Pleasure number your years, is the earnest prayer of, my dr. sir, your much indebted Friend, THE AUTHOR.' The letter is not dated; and it is curious to note in this connection that when a short time before his death (which occurred on July 21, 1796), the poet went to Brow, a seaside village on the Solway, where Mrs Riddell was then residing in ill-health, his greeting was, 'Well, madam, have you any commands for the other world?'

The other volumes in this collection comprise *An Album for 1791*, selected for Robert Riddell of Glenriddell, by his friends at Manchester, in MS.; Allan Ramsay's *Poems* (1761), with the signatures of Robert Riddell and Eliza Bayley; Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (1791); Cordiner's *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland* (1780); a volume of miscellanies, including articles written by Robert Riddell; and a folio volume of music, partly written and partly printed—altogether as choice a collection as a book-hunter could hope to meet with even in his wildest dreams!

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XV.—THE FIRST MONDAY OF MARCH.

NICOL wakened me before dawn, and I made haste to get ready. I looked to see that my sword was in fit condition, for it was a stout cut-and-thrust blade of the kind which speedily takes the rust. Then, having taken a draught of strong ale to brace my nerves for the encounter, I left the house and set off with my servant for the college gardens.

Now, from the college gardens there stretches down to the great canal a most beautiful pleasaunce, all set with flower-beds and fountains. Beyond this, again, is a more rugged land, a grove with great patches of grass in it, and here it was that gentlemen of the Scots regiment were wont to settle their differences.

I cannot tell how I felt as I walked through the cool morning air among the young herbs and trees, which still bore the dew upon them. It minded me so keenly of the mornings at home in Tweeddale, when I was used to rise before daylight and go far up Tweed with my rod, and bring back, if my luck were good, great baskets of trout. Now I was bound on a different errand. It was even possible that I might see my own land no more. But this thought I dismissed as unworthy of one who would be thought a cavalier.

In time we came to the spot which the others had fixed on. There I found my man already waiting me; my cousin stripped to his shirt and small-clothes, with his blade glimmering as he felt its edge; his companions muffled up in heavy cloaks and keeping guard over Gilbert's stripped garments. They greeted me shortly as I came up; so without more ado I took off my coat and vest, and gave them into my servant's keeping. Then, going up to my opponent, I took his hand.

'Let there be no malice between us, Gilbert,' said I. 'I was rash maybe, but I am here to give account of my rashness.'

'So be it, cousin,' he said, as he took my hand coldly.

We both stepped back a pace and crossed swords, and in a trice we had fallen to.

My first thought, and I am not ashamed to confess it, when I felt my steel meet the steel of my foe, was one of arrant and tumultuous fear.

I had never before crossed swords with any one in deadly hatred; and in my case the thing was the harder, for the feeling against my cousin was not so violent a passion as to make me heedless of aught else. But now a feeling which I had not reckoned with came to oppress me—the fear of death. Had my wits been more about me I might have reflected that my cousin was too good a swordsman to kill me and lay himself open to many penalties. But my mind was in such a confusion that I could think of naught but an overwhelming danger.

Howbeit in a little this fit passed, and once more I was myself. Gilbert, for what reason I know not, fenced swiftly and violently. Blow came upon blow till I scarce could keep my breath. I fell at once upon the defensive, and hazarded never a cut, but set all my powers to preserving my skin. And in truth this was no easy task, for he had acquired a villainous trick of passing suddenly from the leg-cut to the head-stroke, so that more than once I came not up to guard in time and had his sword almost among my hair. I could not guess what he meant by this strategy, for I had ever believed that a man who began in a hot-fit ended in a languor. He sought, I doubt not, to speedily put an end to the encounter by putting forth his greater strength, hoping to beat down my guard or bewilder me with the multiplicity of his flourishes.

Now, this conduct of my opponent had an effect the very counter of what he proposed. I became completely at my ease; indeed I swear I never felt more cool in my life. This has ever been the way with me, for I have always been at my best in the extremest perils. Oftentimes, when things went very sore with me, I was at a loss and saw no way of escape; but let them get a little worse and I was ready to meet them. So now I was on the watch to frustrate every movement; and since no man can fight rapidly and fight well, I kept him at bay till he deemed it prudent to give up this method.

But now, when he came down to slow, skilful fence, I found my real danger. We were well-matched, although I was something lighter, he somewhat stronger in the arm and firmer in the body; but taking us all in all we were as nearly equal a pair as might be. And now there was an utter silence; even the birds on the trees seemed to have ceased. The others no longer talked. The sharp clatter and ring of the swords had gone, and in its place was a deadly *swish-swish*, which every man who has heard it dreads, for it means that each stroke grazes the vitals. I would have given much in that hour for another inch to my arm. I put forth all my skill of fence. All that I had learned from Tam Todd, all that I had found out by my own wits, was present to me; but, try as I would, and I warrant you I tried my utmost, I could not overreach my opponent. Yet I fenced steadily, and, if I made no progress, I did not yield my ground.

With Gilbert the case was otherwise. His play was the most brilliant I had ever seen, full of fantastic feints and flourishes such as is the French fashion. But I could not think that a man could last for ever in this style, since for one stroke of my arm there were two of his, and much leaping from place to place. But beyond doubt he pressed me close. Again and again I felt his steel slipping under my guard, and it was only by a violent parry that I escaped. One stroke had cut open my sleeve and grazed my arm, but beyond this no one of us had suffered hurt.

But soon a thing which I had scarcely foreseen began to daunt me. I was placed facing the east, and the rising sun began to catch my eyes. The ground was my own choosing, so my ill-luck was my own and no fault of Gilbert's. But it soon began to interfere heavily with my play. I could only stand on guard. I dared not risk a bold stroke, lest, my eyes being dazzled by the light, I should miscalculate the distance. I own I began to feel a spasm of fear. More than one of my opponent's strokes came within perilous nearness. The ground, too, was not firm, and my foot slid once and again when I tried to advance. To add to it all, there was Gilbert's face above the point of the swords, cold, scornful, and triumphant. I began to feel incredibly weak about the small of the back; and I suppose my arm must have wavered, for in guarding a shoulder-cut I dropped my point, and my enemy's blade scratched my left arm just above the elbow. I staggered back with the shock of the blow, and my cousin had a moment's breathing-space. I was so obviously the loser in the game that Gilbert grew merry at my expense.

'Well, John,' he cried, 'does't hurt thee? My arm is somewhat rougher than Marjory's.'

There seems little enough in the words, yet I cannot tell how that taunt angered me. In the mouth of another I had not minded it, but I had a way of growing hot whenever I thought of my cousin and my lady in the same minute of time. It called to my mind a flood of bitter memories. In this encounter, at any rate, it was the saving of me. Once more I was myself, and now I had that overmastering passionate hate which I lacked before. When I crossed swords again I felt no doubt of the issue, and desired only to hasten it. He, on his part, must have seen something in my eyes which he did not like, for he ceased his flourishes and fell on defence.

Then it was that the real combat of the day commenced. Before it had been little more than a trial of skill, now it was a deadly and determined battle. In my state of mind I would have killed my foe with a light heart, however much I might have sorrowed for it after. And now he began to see the folly of his conduct in the fore-

part of the fight. I was still fresh and stout of arm; he was a little weary and his self-confidence a little gone.

'By Heaven, Gilbert, you will eat your words,' I cried, and had at him with might and main.

I fenced as I had never fenced before; not rashly, but persistently, fiercely, cunningly. Every attempt of his I met and foiled. Again and again I was within an ace of putting an end to the thing but for some trifling obstacle which hindered me. He now fought sullenly, with fear in his eyes, for he knew not what I purposed concerning him. I warrant he rued his taunt a hundred times in these brief minutes.

At last my opportunity came. He made a desperate lunge forward, swung half-round, and exposed his right arm. I thrust skilfully and true. Straight through cloth and skin went my blade, and almost ere I knew I had spitted him clean through the arm just above the elbow. The sword dropped from his helpless hand.

I had put forth too much strength; for, as he stumbled back with the shock of the wound, I could not check my course, but staggered heavily against him, and together we rolled on the ground.

In a second I was on my feet and had drawn out my weapon. With lowered point I awaited his rising, for he was now powerless to continue the combat.

'Well,' said I, 'have you had satisfaction?'

He rose to his feet with an ugly smile. 'Sufficient for the present, cousin John,' said he. 'I own you have got the better of me this time. —Hi, Stephen, will you lend me a kerchief to bind this cursed wound?'

One of his companions came up and saw to his wants. I made to go away, for there was no further need of my presence, but my cousin called me back.

'Farewell, John,' he said. 'Let us not part in anger, as before. Parting in anger, they say, means meeting in friendship. And, 'faith, I would rather part from you in all love and meet you next in wrath.'

'Farewell,' I said carelessly as I departed, though I was amazed to hear a man with a pierced arm speak so lightly; courage was not a quality which my cousin had to seek. So I left him in high good-humour with myself, much pleased at my own prowess, and sensible that all immediate annoyance from that quarter was at an end.

Little man knows what God hath prepared for him. Had it not been for his defeat, Gilbert had not left Holland, and my greater misfortunes had never happened. And yet at that hour I rejoiced that I had rid myself of a torment.

Nicol was awaiting me, and soon I was arrayed in my coat once more, for the air was shrewdly cold. My servant was pale as I had never seen him before, and it was clear that he had watched the combat with much foreboding.

'Eh, Maister John,' he cried, 'ye're a braw fechter. I never likit ye half as weel. I thocht a' was ower whiles, but ye aye cam' to yoursel' as sprig as a wull-cat. Ye're maybe a wee thing weak i' the heid-cuts, though,' he added. 'I'll hae to see to ye. It's no' what ye micht ca' profitable to be aye proddin' a man in the wame, for ye may prick him a' ower and him no' muckle the waur. But a guid cleavin' slash on the harns is maist judeecious. It wad kill a stirk.'

It was still early, and we had breakfasted sparely, so we sought a tavern of good repute, 'The Three Crows,' and made a hearty meal. I was so mightily pleased with my victory, like a child with its toy, that I held my head a full inch higher, and would yield the causeway to no man. I do believe if M. Balagny or the great Lord Herbert had challenged me I should not have refused.

Some three days later I had sure tidings that my cousin had sailed for Leith, and was thought to have no design of returning.

CHAPTER XVI.—I SPEND MY DAYS IN IDLENESS.

SUMMER came on the heels of spring, and the little strip of garden below my windows grew gay as the frock of a burgher's wife on a Sunday. There were great lines of tulips, purple and red and yellow, stately as kings, erect as a line of soldiers, which extended down the long border nigh to the edge of the water. The lawn was green and well-trimmed, and shaded by the orderly trees. It was pleasant to sit here in the evenings, when Nicol would bring out the supper-table to the grass, and we would drink our ale while the sun was making all the canal a strip of beaten gold.

The routine of my days was as regular as clockwork, for it was always part of my method to apportion my day equally among my duties. In the morning immediately upon rising I went to Master Sandvoort's lecture on the Latin tongue. Then I broke my fast in the little tavern, 'The Gray Goose,' just at the south entrance to the college. It was a clean, well-fitted place, where were found the fattest landlord and the best ale in Holland. Then at the hour of ten in the forenoon I went to listen to the eloquence of Master Quellinus. Having returned thence to my lodging, I was wont to spend the time till dinner in study. Thereafter I walked in the town, or resorted to the houses of my friends, or read in the garden till maybe four o'clock, when it was my custom to go to the dwelling of Sir William Crichton (him whom I have spoken of before), and there, in the company of such Scots gentlemen as pleased to come, to pass the time very pleasantly. From these meetings I had vast profit, for I learned something of the conduct of affairs and the ways

of the world, in the knowledge of which I had still much to seek.

But there were several incidents which befell during this time, and which served to break the monotony of my life, which merit the telling. It was one afternoon as I sat in the arbour that Nicol came across the green followed by an elderly man of grave and comely appearance, in whom to my great joy I recognised my kinsman, Gilbert Burnet of Salisbury. He had alighted in Leyden that morning, and proposed to abide there some days. I would have it that he should put up at my lodgings, and thither he came after many entreaties. During his stay in the city he visited many of the greater folk, for his fame had already gone abroad, and he was welcome everywhere. He was a man of delightful converse; for had he not travelled in many lands and mixed with the most famous? He questioned me as to my progress in letters, and declared himself more than satisfied. 'For, John,' said he, 'I have met many who had greater knowledge, but none of a more refined taste and excellent judgment. Did you decide on the profession of a scholar I think I could promise you a singular success. But indeed it is absurd to think of it; for you, as I take it, are a Burnet and a man of action, and one never to be satisfied with a life of study. I counsel you not to tarry too long in this foreign land, for your country hath sore need of men like you in her present distress.' Then he fell to questioning me as to my opinions on matters political and religious. I told him that I was for the Church and the King to the death, but that I held that the one would be the better of a little moderation in its course, and that the other had fallen into indifferent hands. I told him that it grieved my heart to hear of my own countrymen pursued like partridges on the mountains by some blackguard soldiers, and that when I did return, while deeming it my duty to take the part of the king in all things, I would also think it right to hinder to the best of my power the persecution. In this matter he applauded me. 'What in Heaven's name is all this pother?' he cried. 'Is a man to suffer because he thinks one way of worshipping his God better than another? Rather let us rejoice when he worships Him at all, whether it be at a dyke-side or in the king's chapel.' And indeed in this matter he was of my own way of thinking. When finally he took his leave it was to my great regret, for I found him a man of kindly and sober counsels.

The other matter which I think worth noting was the acquaintance I formed with a Frenchman, one M. de Rohaine, a gentleman of birth, who was in great poverty and abode in a mean street off the Garen Markt. The way in which I first met him was curious. I was coming home late one evening from Master Swinton's house, and in passing through a little alley which leads from near the college to the Garen Markt I was apprised of some disturbance by a loud noise of tumult. Pushing forward amid a crowd of apprentices and fellows of the baser sort, I saw a little man, maybe a tailor or cobbler from his appearance, with his back against a door and sore pressed by three ruffians, who kept crying out that now they would pay him for his miserly ways. The mob was clearly on their side, for it kept applauding whenever they struck or jostled him. I was just in the act of going forward to put an end to so unequal a combat when a tall, grave man thrust himself out of the throng and cried out in Dutch for them to let go. They answered with some taunt, and almost before I knew he had taken two of the three, one in either hand, and made their heads meet with a sounding crack. I was hugely delighted with the feat, and broke forward to offer my help, for it soon became clear that this champion would have to use all his wits to get out of the place. The three came at him swearing vehemently, and with evil looks in their eyes. He nodded to me as I took my stand at his side.

'Look after the red-beard, friend,' he cried. 'I will take the other two.'

And then I found my hands full indeed, for my opponent was tough and active, and cared nothing for the rules of honourable warfare. In the end, however, my training got the mastery, and I pinked him very prettily in the right leg, and so put him out of the fight. Then I had time to turn to the others, and here I found my new-found comrade sore bested. He had an ugly cut in his forehead, whence a trickle of blood crawled over his face. But his foes were in a worse case still; and when word came at the moment that a body of the guard was coming they made off with all speed.

The man turned and offered me his hand.

'Let me thank you, sir, whoever you may be,' said he. 'I am the Sieur de Rohaine, at your service.'

'And I am Master John Burnet of Barns in Scotland,' said I.

'What!' he cried, 'a Scot?' And nothing would serve him but that I must come with him to his lodging and join him at supper. For, as it seemed, he himself had just come from Scotland, and was full of memories of the land.

From him I learned something more of the condition of my own land, and it was worse even than I had feared. M. de Rohaine had had many strange adventures in it, but he seemed to shrink from speaking of himself and his own affairs. There was in his eyes a look of fixed melancholy, as of one who had encountered much sorrow in his time and had little hope for more happiness in the world. Yet withal he was so gracious and noble in presence that I felt I was in the company of a man indeed.

If I were to tell all the benefit I derived from this man I should fill a volume and never reach

the end of my tale. Suffice it to say that from him I learned many of the tricks of sword-play, so that soon I became as nigh perfect in the art as it was ever in my power to be. I was scarce ever out of his company, until one day he received a letter from a kinsman bidding him return on urgent necessity. He made his farewells to me with great regret, and on parting bade me count on his aid if I should ever need it. From that day to this I have never cast eyes on his face or heard tidings of him, but I herewith charge all folk of my family who may read this tale, if ever it be their fortune to meet with one of his name or race, that they befriend him to the best of their power, seeing that he did much kindness to me.

In all this time I had had many letters from Marjory, letters writ in a cheerful, pleasant tone, praying indeed for my return, but in no wise complaining of my absence. I looked eagerly for the coming of these letters, for my heart was ever at Dawyck; and though I much enjoyed my sojourning in Holland, I was yet glad and willing for the time of departure to arrive. In January of the next year I received a bundle of news written in the gayest of spirits; but after that for three months and more I heard nothing. From this long silence I had much food for anxiety; for though I wrote, I am sure, some half-dozen times, no reply ever came. The uneasiness into which this put me cast something of a gloom over the latter part of the winter. I invented a hundred reasons to explain it. Marjory might be ill; the letters might have gone astray; perhaps she had naught to tell me. But I could not satisfy myself with these excuses, so I had e'en to wait the issue of events.

It was not till the month of April that I had news from my love, and what this was I shall hasten to tell.

(To be continued.)

THE CAPE GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

AT a recent meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute, Earl Grey said he doubted whether there were many questions in the whole circle of politics more important at present than those in connection with the extension, consolidation, and improvement of railways in South Africa; and a member of the House of Commons present at the opening of the line to Buluwayo (or Bulawayo) in November, a line piercing 1360 miles into the recesses of the Dark Continent, avowed that he had never before realised the greatness of Britain's destiny in Africa.

The success of the Cape government railways may be characterised as almost phenomenal, considering that every ounce of material for the iron road has had to be transported 6000 miles, and in view of the many natural obstacles that have had to be overcome in the matter of construction. In view of the vast future possibilities which are being opened up, no less than the present material prosperity in course of development, and the numbers of men who are attracted to the service from the mother-country and elsewhere, a few jottings by a railway-hand, who for thirty years past has made the Cape of Good Hope his home, may not be uninteresting or uninstructive.

When the writer landed at Capetown in the year 1865, the entire system comprised a private line to Wellington, forty-five miles in length, with a short branch of eight miles to the suburb of Wynberg; to-day the government has under its control and administration over 2000 miles, representing a capital of something like twenty-two millions sterling, showing an interest-return of close upon nine per cent. The small and insignificant-looking corrugated-iron shed which in the early days did duty as a passenger and goods terminus in Capetown has been supplanted by a palatial pile of buildings, forming one of the architectural features of the city; but every day emphasises the fact that even the latter is too limited, and plans are now in hand for very large extension. Standing on one of the platforms awaiting the departure of the nine o'clock P.M. train for the North, one has difficulty in realising that one is 6000 miles from the hub of the universe; and, were it not for the coloured faces, you might by no great effort of imagination almost fancy yourself at Charing Cross or Victoria. The handsomely upholstered, electrically lit, and well-appointed saloon coaches, the travelling post-office with its busy staff of sorters, and all the various concomitants of railway economy, cannot fail to impress the spectator, and convince him of the rapid march of progress in the southern hemisphere. All sorts and conditions of men are in evidence—black, white, and gray, Kaffirs, Malays, and Europeans. Paupers mingle with millionaires; there are numbers of young fellows just fresh from home, full of life and vigour, bent on trying their luck in the domain of gold and diamonds; and weary invalids searching for health, which they are sanguine of attaining in the dry, bracing uplands of the North. Night after night, year in and year out, there is the same busy scene of animation and excitement. Indeed the authorities, in view of the large congregation of idlers and loungers 'to see the train off,' have

imposed a charge of threepence upon every person not an actual passenger going on to the platform; but even this restriction does not seem to diminish the crowd.

When one steps ashore at the commodious and extensive docks in Table Bay from one of the 'Castle' or 'Union' liners plying every week between England and the Cape, arrangements can be made for the through booking and registration of baggage to any part of South Africa; and the traveller, thus relieved of all worry and anxiety, can hail a hansom, and in five minutes be driven to the railway station, whence two trains a day, morning and evening, depart for Kimberley, Johannesburg, and Buluwayo, which last-named place, by the way, only a few years ago was the kraal of a merciless and bloodthirsty savage despot. It seems almost like a romance; but there is more to follow, and many now living may very likely yet see the day when it will be possible to go by rail from Capetown to Cairo.

One can travel on the Cape government railways either first, second, or third class according to the length of his purse; third class is about a penny a mile, and the others in proportion. A reliable and experienced conductor is in attendance on each train, and passengers are supplied with meals on board at a fixed charge of half-a-crown each, and with light refreshments at moderate charges. To add to the comforts of travelling, bedding, consisting of mattress, blankets, sheet, and pillow, is supplied at a small extra charge; indeed no trouble or expense is spared to render the journey as agreeable as possible. Many improvements are being made at the various refreshment rooms along the lines, and the tariff of charges is one of the subjects of official control, which prevents anything like fleecing.

With so large a mileage, and with a large increase in the number of trains running, it cannot be expected that there should be immunity from accidents; but these are few and far between, and the provision of the tablet system, which it is proposed shortly to bring into operation, will be an additional safeguard. During 1896 there were only thirty-four deaths from train casualties, and of this number eight occurred to railway employés. A very large proportion of the line is fenced in on both sides, and the government offers special facilities to farmers living adjacent to the track who are desirous of having their lands enclosed, so as to prevent their cattle straying and being run over and destroyed.

Railways and public works in the Cape Colony constitute a ministerial department, of which the Hon. Sir J. Sivewright, K.C.M.G., is the present commissioner; the more immediate details of working, however, are in the hands of a general manager, who has held the post for about seventeen years past, and has acquitted himself in a manner satisfactory alike to the government and the public generally. He is assisted by a chief traffic manager, engineer-in-chief, chief locomotive superintendent, and accounting officer, each head having in turn his respective staff. The heads of departments meet the general manager periodically for the purposes of mutual consultation and advice in regard to matters affecting working and maintenance. Larger questions of general policy are practically vested in the ministry of the day. The advantages of state as compared with joint-stock railways may be open to debate; but this much is certain, that the Cape railways are worked smoothly and efficiently; one hears comparatively very little dissatisfaction on the part of the public, while the financial results are all that could be desired. For instance, the revenue which in 1887 amounted to £1,200,000 rose in 1896 to £4,100,000. In 1887 the number of passengers conveyed was 2,200,000; in 1896 the number was 8,000,000. The tonnage of goods carried was, in 1887, 350,000; in 1896 it was 1,350,000. Figures such as these are very striking as showing the wonderful increase of traffic, and abundantly justify the prosecution of railway enterprise in the country.

So far as internal economy is concerned, the railways being owned by the government, the officers and employés, with the exception of daily-paid men, constitute part of the colonial civil service, and enjoy all the privileges attaching thereto. At the age of sixty, for instance (and in the case of engine-drivers at fifty), a man can retire on a pension equal to one-sixtieth of his salary for every year of service. For a payment of two shillings a month, every member of the staff, from the general manager to a carriage-cleaner, can have medical attendance with medicine for not only himself but his family, however numerous. The holiday arrangements are also on a fairly liberal scale; and if a man allows his annual leave to accumulate he can, after a specified time, proceed to Europe for six months, three on full and three on half-pay. A good number avail themselves of this privilege, as the rate of salary paid is sufficient to enable those of a thrifty disposition to lay by after a few years' work sufficient to enable them to renew acquaintance with friends and relatives in the old country.

The education of railway children, very many of whom of necessity live far removed from the centres of civilisation, has lately received a good deal of attention at the hands of the government, and a railway education officer has been appointed, whose duty it is to attend to railway schools, reorganising where necessary those already in existence, and starting fresh

schools where practicable. There is also a railway training-office, which is largely made use of by young men anxious to qualify themselves for appointments; classes for the acquisition of shorthand and typewriting are also held. Lads on entering the service receive £4 a month; but if they show any aptitude and ability they are soon pushed ahead, as, with the largely increasing traffic and the frequent opening up of new sections, chances of promotion are always occurring. At the same time, men from the mother-country with good railway experience are almost sure of being taken on when they apply, especially in the traffic department; and the writer knows many who in England or Scotland received a bare pittance, but are now enjoying substantial salaries with the additional advantage of easier hours and speedier prospects of promotion. In this connection I cannot do better than conclude by quoting from the last report of the general manager: 'While good work is done in the training-office, it cannot be expected that the short training the men receive can qualify them for all the varied work that railway men have to apply themselves to; but the demand for men has been so great that we have often been compelled to employ young men before they were duly qualified for their appointments. The same difficulty has been experienced in other branches of the service; and it is a matter of surprise that the demand for men of all descriptions should have been so great during the last two or three years.'

'LINDA.

CHAPTER IV.—1897.

THE new year was two months old, and the outlook at the head of the Bonanza was a desperate one. In some respects the time had passed more tolerably than the previous year, for Twilight Ben had become humanised, if not Christianised, and proved himself more sociable. Besides, he had fallen in love at second-hand with little 'Linda, and Jim wasn't a bit jealous.

'Say, pard,' he would observe, filling his pipe and squatting on his heels, with his back against the logs of the hut, 'jest toot us a yarn 'bout this yer little schule-marm of yourn over yander at the spellin'-schule in Kansas.'

Then Jim, nothing loth, would enthusiastically sing her praises again and again. And so passed many a pleasant hour of well-earned leisure, and it was a better tonic to Jim than all the physic in a drug-store.

They had, too, the satisfaction of being pretty certain that they had a valuable dump ready for cleaning-up. And yet, otherwise, things had gone badly with them. On those awful, snow-clad heights that hemmed in the little straggling camp game there was practically none. Once the pair had, with the occupants of the nearest claim below, caught a moose and shared the spoils, and twice Twilight Ben had shot a fox. That was all that had come in their way to swell the larder, and now starvation stared them in the face. Already men in the creek had died from hunger, and food was not to be had for love or gold. A handful of beans, a meagre chunk of rancid bacon, and a few pounds of flour were all that remained; and it was hopeless to expect fresh supplies up the river by steamer before the end of June. True, a pack-train might possibly before that reach them, or, as soon as the journey to Forty Mile City was practicable, a bare subsistence might perhaps be had at an enormous price; but, at the best, a couple of months must elapse before they could hope for relief, and there was barely provision to keep body and soul together for one month.

Moodily they sat in their lonely cabin and discussed the situation; or, at least, Jim discussed it, while his chum sat silently smoking. Walled up in a living grave, helpless in that dark solitude—helpless, and yet treading upon riches that in almost any other part of the world would have procured them every earthly comfort—it was hard to die. And to die, too, without another sight of 'Linda. It was a thousand tortures.

"'Linda! 'Linda! 'Linda!' he wailed pitifully, and buried his face in his hands.

For five minutes a ghastly silence reigned in the hut, and neither of the men gave sign or motion. Then, knocking the ashes from his pipe, Twilight Ben rose to his feet, and observed in a casual tone:

'Say, pard, this yer's bed-rock. I calkerlate I'll jest prospect round and shoot suthin' to make the pervisions hold out a spell longer.'

Jim heard him only mechanically, and took no notice of him as he left the hut. The next instant a sharp report drove the words home to his absent brain, and he sprang excitedly through the door into the open. Twilight Ben *had* shot something. Over the terrible ice-bound heights the Northern Lights flashed and flamed in the heavens, lighting up that snow-whited sepulchre with their weird, fitful radiance. And in the foreground, revolver still in hand and finger on the trigger, lay Twilight Ben with a bullet-hole through his chest.

With one bound Jim was on his knees by the

prostrate man's side, but he could do no good. The life was fast oozing away. He held the dying man's hand in his, and felt his grip returned with a feeble pressure of the horny fingers. For a moment the old sinner's eyes opened, and a smile passed over his face—a smile that almost transformed his ugly features—as he whispered:

'Say, pard, I calkerlate I've shot suthin' that'll help you hold out till supplies come in. I 'm going —over yander now. Give my—respec's—to—the —little—schule-marm—and—and'——

And Twilight Ben had gone 'over yander.'

. . . . . .

The summer was nearly over, and the woodbine on the walls of the log schoolhouse at Oloville was beginning to turn crimson. Inside, 'Linda was for the fifth time that week giving the children a lesson in geography. Somehow, during the past two years, those children had had a lot of geography lessons. Say what you will to the contrary, the world is a big place, and there is a lot of geography in it. And as it is generally admitted that it is far better to know one branch of a science, and know it well, than to skip hurriedly over the whole superficial surface of it and understand little or nothing of it at the finish, 'Linda had directed the attention of her youthful students towards Alaska and the neighbouring districts of British Columbia; so that, after two years of careful attention to that locality, they were getting to know it pretty well, and were nearly ready to turn to some other less important part of the globe.

The dainty little school-marm was a trifle thinner than she was on that other afternoon that seemed so long ago; and she was more staid. She had been paler, too, during those two long, weary years —pale with anxiety for him who was away groping for gold in the northern night. But now a bright flush had come back to her cheeks ever since—just a fortnight previously—that letter had come which now lay hidden away in the bosom of her dress, nearest to her heart, which it had instantly warmed into a fever of joyful expectancy. Jim was coming home! There was a wistful gleam of hungry love in her dark-blue eyes, and little 'Linda looked more bewitching than ever.

The geography lesson ended, as it usually did, on a now famous tributary of the river Yukon; school was over for the day, and, as the children rushed out of the door, a stranger who was approaching it was all but overwhelmed in the human avalanche. For a moment the youngsters stopped and stared curiously at him, but it was nobody they recognised, and they quickly sped away.

The westering sun threw a long shadow on the schoolhouse floor as the stranger paused within the doorway. 'Linda stopped with a sudden start in her task of gathering up the slates and exercise-books, and a wild hope set her heart thumping madly. She leaned, trembling violently, against a desk for support, afraid to look up lest the new-comer should not be *him*. And still the stranger paused, speechless, upon the threshold. 'Linda, with one hand pressed tightly on her breast, was struggling to brace herself against possible disappointment. At last she raised her eyes and turned them towards the door. The tension of the moment was over, and yet the reaction was cruel—terribly cruel. Her heart sank with a sickening sensation, and all the hot blood fled from her face and neck in icy streams that chilled her, as she found herself face to face with the unfamiliar and unknown. Vaguely she wondered what could be his business here. What did he want with her?—he, this unknown old man, with the white hair and the long beard streaked with silver sweeping his bosom, and the big hollow eyes that frightened her with their hungry stare, and the bowed shoulders, and the sunken, haggard cheeks, and the pinched nose, and the starved cheek-bones that seemed trying to burst through the tight-drawn, dried-up skin. For a minute they stood looking at one another—these two. Then the unknown spoke, and it was in an unknown voice, for in a hoarse, cracked, rattling tone came the one word:

''Linda!'

For a second the little school-marm's heart stood still, as she gasped for breath, and her legs shook violently under her.

''Linda—little 'Linda! it 's me—Jim!' he went on, in the same hoarse, decrepit voice, and he stretched out his arms entreatingly.

Yet she only shrank, shivering, from him, and continued to stare at him with unconcealed terror in her dilated eyes.

'Sweetheart, I guess this hes come too suddent-like on you, pore lamb!' Jim said, with something in his throat that broke up his words into queer little husky quavers. 'You don't jest realise yet thet it 's me—come back with enough gold to make you comfortable fur life. Yas, shore enough, it 's me, 'Linda—Jim—*yo'r* Jim!' and, carried away by his emotion, he made a step towards her.

'No, no!' she cried hastily, as, flinging up her arms before her as though to ward off a dreaded blow, she retreated from him. 'Don't touch me! I can't bear it! Go! Leave me alone! You frighten me. Have mercy on me! Go away—go —go! It 's not *my* Jim—not *my* Jim!' she wailed piteously.

'Gosh!' Jim sighed wearily to himself, as a new light broke cruelly upon him and froze up every morsel of hope in his breast; 'I reckon I 'm beginning to git the hang of things. Wall, I allus allowed she was too good fur me, so thet I couldn't hardly ever believe she could ever be mine. And so I reckon I oughter be resigned; but it 's powerful hard—powerful hard. And yit the Lord was very good to me to give me her love even fur a little while. Yit it 's powerful hard—powerful hard. Pore little 'Linda!'

With a dazed stare the little school-marm watched him limp slowly from the room without another word, saw his bowed head pass the window; and then she sank on the floor, and quietly fainted away.

Later, 'Linda tossed restlessly upon her bed in the gable-room at Eben Hutchin's. Mechanically she heard the clock in the parlour below strike ten and eleven. Her eyes ached with staring at the darkness, and yet no sleep came to close the weary eyelids. Her heart ached with straining for her Jim—the other Jim—the one who had gone away and carried all her love with him; not *this* Jim whom she could not recognise—and yet no peace came to soothe the gnawing pain. And all she could do was to moan dismally:

'I have no Jim now. It is not *my* Jim. My love is dead—dead!'

The clock in the parlour below struck twelve, and 'Linda sprang off the bed. If she lay there any longer, alone in the darkness with that tormenting nightmare, she would go mad. Besides, the atmosphere in the room was stifling. She could not breathe. She moved across to the window to let in the cool night air; and, as she drew aside the curtains and looked out, a light suddenly flickered in the darkness, and went out. It flickered again and burned into a steady light that shone from a window across the way and a little lower down the road. She watched it absently. Twice a shadow passed between the light and the window. Then she recollected. It was the schoolhouse window she was looking at, and somebody was in the schoolhouse! The door, she knew, she had locked. Could burglars have—— But no; there was nothing of value in the place to tempt thieves. Who else could be there at this time of night? There was only one conclusion her wearied brain could come to—it must be Ji—No, no! there was no Jim for her now! It must be *the man*—the unknown Jim who had terrified her so. What could he be doing in the schoolhouse?

The minutes dragged by slowly until half-an-hour had passed. And still she watched; and still the light streamed steadily from the schoolhouse window. The shadow once more came betwixt the light and the window, and the next instant the light went out. She strained her eyes; but all was black, and only to her quick ears came the sound of the window being gently closed. Next she heard the sound of footsteps on the road, footsteps that slowly got fainter and fainter until they died away in the distance down the grade.

Hastily dressing herself in the dark, she put on her hat, let herself quietly out of the house, and hurried across in her slippers to the schoolhouse. The door was still locked. With her key she opened it, passed inside, and lighted the lamp. All was as she had left it, save that the window was unfastened and a splinter had been broken from the sash where it had been forced open—and—yes—there was a small package on her desk, tied up and addressed to her. The writing was terribly shaky, and yet there was something of Jim's hand in it—the old Jim's. Breathlessly she cut the string, and tore it open, and as she did so a bundle of bank-notes fell upon the desk. She took no heed of them, for she had a letter in her hand; and as she read it the scales fell from her dazed eyes and she saw clearly.

The letter was simple and straightforward. The writer had not dared to use affectionate epithets, lest he should betray the anguish he was struggling manfully to strangle. The letter simply ran:

'You are right. I don't blame you. I can see it all now, and for your sake I thank Heaven that you found out before it was too late that you were not made for the likes of me. You tried to love me I know, but you just couldn't do it. It warn't likely. I ought to have knowed that, and stood out of the way for some other fellow who was more your equal, and could have made you happy. I'm going away now, so that the sight of me won't ever pain or annoy you again. But before I start I have got a kind of trust to close. Afore I set out for Alaska, I just settled one thing in my mind, and I solemnly vowed, "Come rain or come shine, what gold the Lord puts into my hand this trip is 'Linda's—every cent of it." You will find it all in this package—forty-three thousand dollars I took out of the Bonanza and fifteen thousand I sold the claim for—in notes on the Union Bank, 'Frisco, for fifty-eight thousand dollars. There was a matter of a few odd dollars besides that I have taken the liberty of keeping for present expenses until I get a job, knowing that you would not grudge them me. When you read this I shall be far away. Try to think kindly of me sometimes. God keep and prosper you all the days of your life.

'JAMES VICKERSON.'

With flaming cheeks and heaving breast, she read it through to the end. Then she pressed the writing wildly to her lips, and held it tightly to her breast. Passionately she cried and laughed and laughed and cried—cried for shame and laughed for joy. A hundred times she kissed the letter, and her scalding tears ran down on to it and blurred the writing. And all the time, between her sobs and laughter, she was crying over and over again:

'It *is* my Jim—*my* Jim! Oh, how heartless and wicked I must have seemed! And yet my heart was his—every bit his—all the time; but it didn't recognise him till now. Yes, it's *my* Jim—the same old, dear Honest Jim—and I was blind and couldn't see him!'

Soon an awful fear crept over her. Had she found her Jim only to lose him again? 'When you read this I shall be far away' he had written. He had not thought she would read it until school-time. He must be going away by the night train. The cars came through Oloville at two o'clock. She gave one hurried glance at the clock. It was then a quarter to two, and the depôt was a mile and a-half away. Her heart sank. Stop! There was just one hope. The cars might be late. Leaving the bank-notes strewed upon the desk, but still clasping in her fingers that precious letter, she turned out the lamp, and flew out into the night.

Stumbling and slipping in the darkness, she sped down the grade at her utmost pace. Thorns by the wayside caught and tore her dress, and still she flew onward. Her hat vanished in the gloom and her hair streamed out behind her blacker than the night, but she never halted a second. Soon an ugly stone in her way wrenched off one slipper, yet she never paused—at least not longer than to kick off the other one, which now incommoded her running. She was getting nearer the depôt. She could see the signal light. The loose stones on the track cut through her stockings and bruised her feet; yet she never even felt them, for in the distance she could hear the rumble of the approaching cars as they thundered down the grade from Dipsburgh. She could see the lights of the train now, creeping swifter and swifter over the prairie. It was a race for life—for love. Her stockings hung in rags about her bleeding feet as she strove every nerve to increase her speed. Once she tripped over a loose shingle lying in the road, and fell heavily, cutting her hands badly on the track. In a second she was up again, and flying on. She could hear the engineer clap on the brakes as the cars began to slow down into the depôt that was still fifty yards ahead. One last wild, frantic effort, and she bounded on to the platform as the solitary passenger, with one hand on the handle, was about to step into the car. A dart—a spring! and she had caught him by the arm and dragged him back.

'Jim—Jim!' she gasped wildly, as she struggled fiercely for breath. 'Take me back again, Jim!—*my* Jim!—my *own* Jim! I was blind—cruel—unworthy, but never false. Take me back, Jim! Let me be your servant—slave—dog! but take me back!'

And, as the cars rolled out into the night, Jim took her—bleeding, weeping, tattered, and dishevelled—into his arms and held her tightly to his breast. But he could not take her back to his heart, for she had never left it.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SUBMARINE NAVIGATION.

THE ideas so cleverly worked out in Jules Verne's romance, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*, are at last realised to a considerable extent by a vessel called *Argonaut*, which is the invention of Mr Simon Lake of Baltimore. This submarine boat is not intended for purposes of warfare, although, no doubt, it will point the way to some offensive weapon of the same nature. It is intended for the salvage of wrecks, and will carry a crew of divers, who will be able, like those described by Jules Verne, to leave the vessel when necessary to work on the sea-bottom. This submarine boat is cylindrical in form, each end being pointed like a cigar. At the top is a conning-tower for the pilot, and at the prow is a powerful electric searchlight. The propeller is driven by a gasoline engine at the rate of about five miles an hour on the surface, and much faster when the vessel is submerged. The boat has four wheels upon which it can creep along the bottom, the engine-power being shunted from the propeller to these wheels when occasion arises. But the most important fact with regard to the new submarine vessel is that it has been through a successful trial lasting two hours, during which time the crew suffered no harm from being shut out of all communication with the outer air.

SANITATION IN LONDON.

In his new-year's address as president of the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, Sir John Hutton gave a very interesting account of the manner in which sanitary progress in the metropolis had influenced the death-rate. He said that the aim and the result of his association were to promote longevity; and so far they had been most successful. Looking back a couple of centuries, he found that the death-rate in London in the year 1660 was no less than 80 per 1000—in 1896 it was only 18·9. This was a remarkable contrast, especially when he considered the increased number of houses and the density of the population. At the beginning of the present century London had 142,042 houses, in 1831 the number had swollen to more than a quarter of a million, and this had increased in 1896 to 596,030. With regard to increase in the metropolitan population, the numbers living in London were less than a million in 1801, but in 1896 they had increased to nearly four and a half millions. He warned his hearers that the water question should be seen to in the near future, and urged them to protest

against the present happy-go-lucky policy of dealing with the water-supply. The late epidemic of typhoid at Maidstone was a lesson which Londoners could not afford to ignore.

CEMENT PIPES.

Pipes for the carriage of water have from time to time been made of all kinds of materials, from the hollowed tree-trunks which are occasionally unearthed in our cities, to the paper contrivances soaked in pitch which have been recommended as efficient in more modern times. A Frenchman has recently invented a novel form of pipe which should be valuable for drainage and other purposes. A trench is dug in the ground where the pipe is required to be laid, and is partly filled in with good cement. Upon this soft substratum is laid a rubber tube covered with canvas and tightly inflated with air. The trench is now filled up with cement, so that the tube is completely covered with an inch or more of the plastic material. As soon as the cement sets, the air is let out of the tube, and it is easily extracted from the pipe of which it for a time formed the core. The tube can then be again inflated to serve for a fresh section of the pipe, which can be as much as six inches in diameter if required. It is said that a cement pipe of this thickness has been successfully laid by the new method at a cost of about one shilling per yard.

A NEW LIFE-BELT.

Swimmers are generally very suspicious with regard to life-belts, for unless these contrivances are well made and properly adjusted they are positively dangerous in use. Some are so bulky that they impede all action. This defect certainly applies to the cork waistcoats adopted by the National Lifeboat Institution, and it will be remembered that in the recent fatal capsizing of a lifeboat at Margate the men had not donned their corks on this very ground. A new kind of belt—known as the Louiton Float—is described and illustrated in a French journal; and it has the appearance of a conger eel with conical ends. Made of sheet rubber, it passes round the neck, across the chest, and round the waist, and can be inflated in one minute by the mouth; and its weight is about one pound. This life-belt or float is flexible, light, and easily placed in position. It can be worn without inconvenience, and is designed among other purposes for the use of swimming schools.

THE TRANSPORT OF LIVING FISH.

Those who have had the opportunity of tasting fish which the cook has been able to get direct from the sea know well what a contrast the food affords to fish which has gone the usual round of markets and shops. A fresh herring, for example, cooked under such conditions is a most delicious morsel. Mr F. G. Maardt, a Danish engineer, recognising the advantage of supplying consumers with fresh fish, has patented an apparatus by which the creatures can be conveyed by rail for any reasonable distance in a live state. This apparatus is fitted to an ordinary railway truck, and consists of a tank of sea-water divided by a partition in such a way that the water, actuated and aerated by pumps, is kept in constant circulation. The fish contained in the tank cannot rest, but have to stem the strong current in the tank, the pumps being worked by a small steam-engine. In a tank capable of holding two thousand pounds of fish, the water will pass through five times in the course of an hour; and although it is stated that the water is re-oxygenised in the process, the means whereby this is done are not detailed. At a recent trial of the apparatus sixteen hundred pounds of fish were kept alive for eight days, although previously they had been kept for three days in ordinary salt-water boxes in the harbour at Frederikshavn. The cost of preserving fish in this manner is said to come to less than one farthing per pound, presumably for each day during which the apparatus is at work.

A NEW MAGAZINE-RIFLE.

There is no finality in the weapons of war: we are constantly finding out improved methods of slaughtering our fellow-creatures. For a long time it was considered that the Martini-Henry rifle performed this work to perfection, until it was discovered that more men could be killed in a given time by the Lee-Metford—the weapon which has now been adopted by the British army. Lately, however, an inventor, who hails from Victoria, in the person of Mr T. R. R. Ashton, has brought forward a rifle which, in competition with the two weapons already named, leaves them far behind in point of weight, speed of firing, and accuracy. The new weapon is at the same time more simple in construction than the others, comprising a less number of parts, and can be more easily cleaned. The Ashton rifle has been submitted to the British War Office, and may supersede the Lee-Metford if the tests here corroborate those which have been made in Australia.

THE THAMES A SALMON RIVER.

Less than a century ago the king of fishes, the salmon, was found in the river Thames; and there is evidence to show that in earlier times it was common in that stream. Since then Father Thames has been badly treated; about thirty years back the water became so charged with sewage and the refuse of factories that it was poisonous not only to fish but to the dwellers on its banks. The upper Thames remained clean, it is true; but this was of no moment to the salmon, whose instincts make them visit the sea at stated

times. So the fish ceased to appear in the metropolitan river. With improved methods of dealing with the sewage, and by the aid of stringent laws against other sources of pollution, the Thames is now comparatively clean once more; and it is believed that the salmon could now live in its waters. An association has therefore been formed to ascertain experimentally whether this is the case; and it is suggested that some two-year-old smolts should be introduced into the upper waters of the river in order to see whether in a few months' time they have made their way to the sea and returned as grilse. Should this be found to be the case, the river would be stocked on a larger scale, and the Thames might once more teem with salmon, as it is said to have done in the past.

THE NEXT POLAR EXPEDITION.

The one great ambition of Lieutenant Peary is to reach the North Pole; and in July next he will start upon that hazardous enterprise. As our readers well know, Lieutenant Peary is no stranger to arctic exploration, and during the past six years he has been the leader of a series of expeditions to Greenland which have accomplished good work. He has thus had plenty of opportunity of thinking out the best method of reaching the Pole, and his plans are now matured. He will first advance to Sherard Osborn Fjörd with a very small crew, but he will pick up on his way several Eskimo whom he has already engaged for the expedition. Here the men and stores will be landed, and the ship will return. From this base he will attempt to cross the sea to the Pole, and will try again and again to accomplish the journey should he not at first succeed. He thinks that possibly there may be islands between Greenland and the Pole, in which case one of these would serve as an advanced base of operations. Each succeeding summer the ship will do its best to reach the original base, so that the brave sledging party will be to some extent in touch with the outer world.

RARE BUTTERFLIES.

In a recent number of the *Scientific American* Mr G. E. Walsh gives some interesting particulars with reference to the capture and cost of rare butterflies in different parts of the world. Some of these insects will fetch the most extraordinary prices, and therefore hunters will run into all kinds of danger in the hope of securing them. It is said, too, that unscrupulous traders will resort to fraud in order to palm off bogus specimens upon the unwary, actually going so far as to dye ordinary varieties, and to make up unique specimens by borrowing the wings from two or three kinds of butterflies. It is said that London firms employ travelling entomologists in every part of the globe, and more especially in out-of-the-way districts far from civilisation. These men go into the great tropical forests, and carry their lives in their hands. They generally unite butterfly-catching with orchid and lizard-hunting, and will carry implements for the capture of all three. Some of the butterflies will flit about the tops of high trees, and much dangerous climbing has to be done to get near them. Others are captured by the aid of decoys—either butterflies of the same species or bits of coloured cloth; others again are snared by sugaring the tree-trunks. The captured butterfly is dropped into a poison bottle, where it quickly dies; and, when opportunity offers, its stiffness is relaxed by its being placed in a box with damp flannel, after which it can be mounted with wings extended, in order to show its beauties to the best advantage. Some collections of these beautiful objects there are which are valued at many thousands of pounds.

AN ALUMINIUM BALLOON.

The metal aluminium has now become so cheap that it is constantly employed where extreme lightness is required; but few would have chosen it as the material for the envelope of a balloon. But a balloon of this character, cigar-shaped, with a body measuring one hundred and thirty-four feet long by forty-six feet in diameter, has been made and tried with sufficient success to make a repetition of the experiment desirable. The inventor was Herr Schwarz of Agram, who died, unfortunately, just before the day of the experimental ascent—November 3. This ascent took place under the auspices of the Royal Prussian Aërial Navigation Department; and it is to be regretted that the officers were under the mistaken impression that the new balloon was too heavy to rise, and stripped the machine of certain appliances, the absence of which eventually led to disaster. One of these was a device for keeping the belt of the engine in place, and another a contrivance to receive the shock on rapid descent to the ground. The balloon went up and attained a good speed; but suddenly the belting slipped, the aeronaut lost his presence of mind, opened the valve, and down came the machine with a force which wrecked it. Another air-ship on the same lines is now to be built under official protection.

HOME-MADE SODA-WATER.

Soda-water, usually consisting of water charged with carbonic acid gas and quite innocent of soda, is such a favourite beverage that a method by which the consumer can compound it for himself is a matter of some interest. Carbonic acid, or—to give it its more modern name—carbon dioxide, assumes a liquid form under comparatively low pressure. In this form it is, for this purpose, contained in steel cylindrical shells, which are about one inch in length and look somewhat like rifle-bullets. These shells, charged with liquid carbon dioxide, will presently be procur-

able, we understand, at the price of about one penny each. One of these is dropped into a special form of bottle which has been previously filled with plain water; and the insertion of a screw stopper, while it closes the vessel, releases the liquefied gas from the shell, which quickly permeates the water and changes it into an effervescing beverage. It is obvious that, instead of plain water, sweetened and flavoured liquids can be employed, or still wines may be changed to sparkling ones. Possibly it has occurred to the manufacturers that hand-grenades on the same principle would be invaluable in coping with an outbreak of fire, for carbon dioxide is a most deadly enemy to combustion, and if quickly applied at the initial stages of a fire might be of much greater service than half-a-dozen steam fire-engines ten minutes later.

THE STORAGE OF FLOUR.

Our military and naval authorities are now submitting to careful test a system of flour storage from which great results are anticipated. It is an old idea to establish national granaries to hold reserves of wheat in case war should shut us out from our usual sources of foreign supply. But great difficulties come in the way of the accomplishment of such a scheme; the grain being, for one thing, liable to germinate and become utterly useless. In a word, grain cannot be kept in good condition in large quantities for any length of time. The new suggestion, now being tested under different climatic conditions, is to take flour, not grain, and to compress it under hydraulic agency into solid blocks or bricks. It is found that such blocks are not assailable by damp, that the heavy pressure destroys all forms of larval life, and that the product is safe from the attacks of insects. Moreover, the bulk of the flour by this treatment is reduced so much that three hundred pounds can be stored in the space which would be filled by one hundred pounds of loose flour. Should this interesting experiment prove to be successful, the system will, as a matter of course, be extended to the handling and sale of flour generally, to the convenience and profit of traders and consumers alike.

A GUN WHICH TAKES TO PIECES.

The transport of heavy ordnance from place to place is one of the most serious difficulties which military authorities have to face, especially when the work has to be accomplished in out-of-the-way districts destitute of railways or roads. For mountain warfare a gun of small calibre has for many years been in use, which can be unscrewed into two pieces for ease of transport by two camels or other available animals, and rapidly put together when required for use; but no attempt has hitherto been made to construct large weapons on the same lines. Mr E. J. Blood of Chicago has, however, now invented a method of building up ordnance in sections, which, should it bear the necessary tests as to stability, &c., will be most valuable in placing guns of heavy calibre in situations which under present conditions could not possibly be defended with such weapons. The new guns are built up of a number of rolled sheet-steel discs, held together between thick plates or cross-heads by steel tie-rods. The breech part of the gun is further strengthened by bolts carried through holes in the discs forming that portion of the weapon. Such a gun could be carried piecemeal by pack-animals, even by porterage, to its destination, and there screwed together by the nuts, tie-rods, and bolts which form an essential feature of its design. The other advantages claimed for this method of construction are that it ensures thorough inspection and ready detection of flaws in the metal at every part, that the time of construction is greatly reduced from the fact that the different parts can be distributed among many workshops, and that the inner barrel can be readily removed and another put in its place in case of corrosion or other accidents.

TO THE NORTH POLE WITH STEAM-RAMS.

Boats described as steam-rams are now in use in ice-locked Russian harbours and rivers, and have proved that they can force their way through thick ice, even with seventy-two degrees of frost. The harbour of Vladivostok, till of late hermetically sealed for four or five months, has since 1893 been kept accessible through the winter; the Finnish port of Hangö is now open to commerce throughout the year. And last winter a similar steam-ram kept up connection with the Ural railway through the ice of the Volga at Saratoff. It is proposed now to keep open, by stronger boats of this kind, the communication of St Petersburg with the sea, and to force a winter connection through the ice from Archangel to the mouth of the Yenisei. Admiral Makarof, addressing the Russian Geographical Society, insists that still more powerful boats of this kind might safely be counted on to cope with polar ice, such as Nansen had to deal with, and to cut a passage to the North Pole.

THE ARTESIAN WELLS OF QUEENSLAND.

In an elaborate paper on Queensland and its resources in the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* for December last, we see it authoritatively affirmed that a large area of Western Queensland, formerly hopelessly arid and useless for pastoral or any other purposes, has been completely transformed by artesian wells, drawing supplies from the water now known to be stored in the Lower Cretaceous formation (which underlies fifty-six per cent. of the whole colony). Of these artesian wells 454 have been sunk, of an average depth of 1168 feet; 317 overflow naturally, and the total produce is stated at over 193,000,000 gallons daily.

On the eastern side of the coastal range there are further thirteen artesian wells, of an aggregate depth of 13,200 feet. Some of these bores yield between three and four million gallons daily.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION ON SHIPBOARD.

At a meeting in September last Mr F. M. Syme addressed the Insurance Institute of Victoria on the subject of 'Causes of Fire,' and gave some very interesting information with regard to what is commonly known as 'the spontaneous combustion of coal cargoes.' This phenomenon, by which many good ships have been destroyed, was at one time attributed either to the oxidation of iron pyrites, an impurity always present in coal, or to the influence of moisture. Experiment has shown that both these theories are untenable, and it is now believed that this mischief is due to the chemical action set up by the absorption in the coal of atmospheric oxygen. Large coal, where the proportion of surface to bulk is comparatively small, is the safest, and any heat that may be evolved is rapidly carried off by the air-spaces between the lumps. But, owing to the rough manner in which coals are generally dumped into a ship's hold, the coal is broken up into fragments, and is prepared, as it were, for spontaneous combustion. It is found, moreover, that the fire invariably begins just below the hatchway, where a cone of broken coal is formed by this rough method of loading. It has also been ascertained that a large bulk of coal is more liable to combustion than a small one, and that loading during a high summer temperature has a direct bearing upon the liability of coal-ships to this form of accident.

HOME-COMING.

By Mrs M. CORBET-SEYMOUR.

AFTER nearly twenty years of life in foreign cities, the home-coming is not an unmingled pleasure. Even the sight of Dover Cliffs does not awaken one's patriotic feelings. We have looked at them several times with more satisfaction when ours has been a holiday-visit to England; a return ticket to London and back setting a limit to our stay. But this is 'coming for good,' as children say; for it has suddenly been borne in upon our inner consciousness that, if we really intend to die in the mother-country (as we have always stoutly declared) it will not do to reside too long on the other side of the Channel.

So here we are. Has our native tongue grown strange to us, or is there something in the Kentish dialect which puzzles us? Did the middle classes speak with more refinement twenty years ago than now? For even in the greetings of well-dressed men and women on the pier, the letter 'h' seems a forgotten quantity, and I hear a pretty girl assuring a friend, whom she has welcomed at the landing-place, that 'the Dover people 'old their 'eads *that* 'igh there's no bearing them.'

We stand at the door of the Customs. We exclaim, 'How much better they manage this at Ostend!' For there the baggage is examined without an instant's delay by a number of waiting officials; while here a solitary man informs you that he is coming to open the door 'in about 'alf an hour;' meanwhile you may cool your heels and grumble *à volonté*.

The search for 'cigars, perfumery, spirits' is over; we have none of these contraband articles. Our trunks are violently hurled on to a truck, the porter receiving our gratuity with a stoicism that wounds us to the quick. In Belgium or in France the coin we offered would have made a *commissionaire's* heart glad within him; a fearful doubt comes that it was contemptible in the eyes of the Briton.

We have secured rooms in Dover under the impression that we shall need a little time to renew our acquaintance with English ways and customs, before the actual 'settling down.' For that purpose, it is as good a place as any other. The sight of Calais on a fine day will be cheering; the coming and going of the Ostend boat will be somewhat like the coming and going of a friend; we are not, after all, so very far away from familiar faces and places.

The smart, white-capped maid shows us into what she calls 'the droring-room;' a well-dressed, florid matron comes to us. Our English appears to puzzle her as much as her English puzzles us; but we shall get used to each other. Our bedrooms look clean and comfortable, yet how strange! Tea is served; a substantial meal, as our landlady expresses a conviction that after a 'bit of a toss' we must be greatly in need of food. As a matter of fact we are not. We drink the tea appreciatively; we enjoy a slice of dry toast, because we have never had any since the days of auld langsyne; but we turn from the cold joint. To-morrow perhaps; not now!

We will go out; look around us, gaze into shop windows, try to like our surroundings. 'Great Bargains' hold us spell-bound; 'Clearance Sales' draw from us exclamations of surprise: surely everything must be cheaper than it was twenty years ago? Before the grocer's window, with its display of sugar, jams, marmalade, pickles, we stand in silent amaze. But we ask ourselves if the rules of English grammar have undergone a change since our day, and if spelling is not

exactly what it used to be? for a huge slab of cake is labelled 'Not to be *beat:* 4d. a pound,' and some unfamiliar sweetmeat is introduced as '*coker*-nut bars.'

We have heard it said abroad that the English have a talent for advertising. We find that saying true; for the sounds of music float upon the breeze, and in our simplicity we take it to mean that one of the regimental bands is coming our way; we wait. A large open wagonette appears, drawn by three horses. Within it are seated six men with various instruments, and as they pause in their labours the driver reins in his steeds, and, rising to his feet, begins to tell of the wondrous bargains in ironmongery and hardware which, for the small price of sixpence per article, can be secured at a certain shop in the town. We walk on, and are conscious of the sound of a bugle. This must mean that the Highlanders are marching, or that there is firing from the fort. We are mistaken; it is only a man with air-balls, whirligigs, and other toys that children affect, which he declares himself willing to give in exchange for empty bottles and jam-pots, or to sell two for a halfpenny.

And talking of children suggests to us the remark that the manners of the rising generation do not seem to have changed for the better. Surely in our day they lived in their homes? whereas now they seem to live in the street when they are not at school, and to riot there as they may choose. We hazard the opinion that the continental police would reduce them speedily to order, greatly to the benefit of the public.

But there is an aspect of prosperity about the working classes which is good to see. No starving misery meets the eye in Dover; even the cats and dogs look well-fed and comfortable. Certainly a few street-songsters appear to desire alms. At this moment a woman is informing us in verse that she is 'all alone, that her friends are gone, that her only joy is her baby boy;' but she is neatly dressed in a black gown, jacket, and hat, while the long-legged girl who shrilly assists her with the melody is quite irreproachable in the matter of pinafore, shoes, and stockings. On our first Sunday, too, a comfortably-clad female indulges the inhabitants of the road with a hymn of many verses. But one halfpenny, so far as we can see, is the pecuniary result, and we are not able to feel any commiseration for her. She does not look in any desperate need.

The Sunday afternoon proves convincingly that the female mind appreciates the military man. Every soldier who passes by our window—and they are many—has a girl on his arm, a glow of satisfaction expressed on her features. The civilians seem to be nowhere; they walk in twos and threes without any 'young lady' to enliven them. Tommy Atkins is in the ascendant; and, out of the different regiments stationed here, the Highlanders are most in favour. Fathers and mothers straggling past with their unruly children dressed in Sunday best; a few parties of Saturday to Monday excursionists stroll along the sea-front—only a few, for the season is at its last gasp; but the soldiers preponderate.

We hear that the annual visitors do not leave until November; but this seems to be a landlady's legend spread abroad for the purpose of keeping up her summer prices, for each day reduces the number of sea-bathers, the invalids in bath-chairs, the nurses and perambulators, the children who paddle in the waves and fill their pails with salt water.

October is kind to us in giving us some hours of sunshine, even though the wind is cold at the beginning and end of each day; still, everything around us tells that winter is coming—our first winter in Old England after so many years of absence. Shall we like it? We are not sure. But we begin to feel some pleasure in being home again; and, packing up our belongings, we move inland, resolved to sigh no more for what we have left on the other side of the sea.

THE COMING OF CUPID.

She spoke no word at first; but, through her tresses,
Look'd up to meet the light in Eden lit;
Hid her hot face away from his caresses,
Which, though they touch'd not yet, emblazon'd it!

All through her childhood's days she had been lonely;
And when young girlhood met her, unawares,
Her heart reserv'd its bitter sorrow; only
'Some one to love me' crept into her prayers.

The leafless branches tapped: a robin twitter'd
Its poor, half-frozen anthem in the snow:
But, in the fading light, a circlet glitter'd,
And Paradise was shining in its glow!

The voice spoke now that said her face was dearest;
The lips had come to comfort, and defend;
The hero of her dreaming held her nearest,
As he would vow to hold her to the end!

So, with the breath of God upon their faces,
And in their hearts the promises of morn,
They watch'd the old wrongs creep from empty places,
The joyless years fall back—for love was born!

Edith Rutter.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st.* All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d.* For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d.* To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th.* Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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THE HUSBAND OF MILLICENT.

By GEORGINA M. SYNGE.

CHAPTER I.

MILLICENT felt dull: she had finished the instalment of literature provided by Mr Mudie. It was a wet day, and she was all alone. Her husband had been suddenly called from home by the illness of his father, and had been away for nearly a week.

Of course he was obliged to go. She herself had urged him to do so. All the same, this did not prevent her from feeling it to be a very disagreeable necessity. That she, a bride of only a few weeks' standing, should be left to herself even in so good a cause was distinctly disagreeable. It was disagreeable and it was unusual. She took care to explain the situation to her friends. Millicent was sensitive as to the world's verdict upon her marriage. She was not particularly good-looking, and she possessed most of the money. That their conjugal relationship, in spite of these drawbacks, should shine forth as ideal was her great desire; that it should be admitted by all observers that she had been married for herself alone. Now Millicent regarded herself very seriously; and she regarded other people very seriously too. The parish, her husband, even the boy who cleaned the boots, were matters to be pondered over; their words and actions had to be seriously considered and weighed. All this of course occupied a good deal of time; and as it is a known fact that words and actions in this disappointing world are seldom consistent, and very rarely agree—except in the case of dull bores or idiots—it was not altogether a satisfactory study.

It had not been altogether satisfactory with regard to her husband. It was not that his conduct left anything to be desired. He was affectionate. He was almost unselfish. He was very kind. It was in himself, in his nature, that the disturbing element lay. There were contradictions in him which she could not understand; they baffled her. She could not classify him, so to speak. She could not arrange him to her mind.

He had many admirable qualities, no doubt. He did his duty. He worked the parish with zeal. There was little mixture of mammon in his life. And yet she felt, she hardly knew why, that he was not altogether and only this. He was something besides. It appeared to her almost as if he were two men.

It was only very occasionally that she caught a glimpse of the other man. As a rule he was entirely the orthodox and conventional rector of an important parish. But just as she had settled herself into admiration of this aspect of his character he would utter a few words which revealed something startlingly opposite.

It disturbed her. She had been accustomed to people whose sentiments and emotions, in ordinary circumstances, could be calculated to a nicety. Given an Irish land-bill, a High Church curate, or an Advanced Woman—and you could rely exactly upon their views.

But she never felt that comfortable certainty about Henry. He appeared sometimes in his soul of souls to have sympathies against his own views. She had sometimes the horrible doubt as to whether he really believed in his views. Sometimes it seemed to her as if he had forgotten them, as if he had mislaid them—as one mislays one's umbrella—and was making use of those belonging to another person. It puzzled her—puzzled her all the more because he was so unmistakably a good man.

Another thing which puzzled her was his reserve. He was frank and outspoken, and yet he was reserved. You could not exactly tell which he was going to be. He would begin to talk about his tastes and his ideas, and would suddenly come to a stop. He would begin some interesting description of a bygone scene in his life, and

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suddenly break off and turn the conversation to other things. It was as if there were something in his memory from which he shied away; something he dreaded which was always looming near and which he must avoid.

She used to wonder about these past years. He had taken orders some while after leaving college, at the wish of his dying mother. How had he spent the intervening time?

A careful perusal of modern literature had convinced her that perfect candour with regard to their mutual past was the only satisfactory foundation upon which to begin married life.

But Henry had revealed curiously little. The small and meagre past which he had unbosomed might have been proclaimed upon the house-tops without any discredit to his cloth. It disappointed her. She was a high-minded woman, and yet it disappointed her. She would have preferred something not exactly black, but perhaps a little gray, not unnaturally and wholly white. It would have made her feel more satisfied that nothing had been held back. She would know the worst; most likely only a mild and easily-forgiven worst. But still she would know it. There would be satisfaction in that.

During the long, lonely week she had brooded a good deal upon all these matters. She felt a curious mixture of feeling—annoyance with her husband for giving cause of annoyance, and with herself for feeling annoyance, being part of this contradictory condition. She felt she was foolish and unreasonable, and yet she could not drive the feeling away. And to-day she had made up her mind that she was altogether foolish and unreasonable—after a couple of hours spent in staring gloomily into the fire, and listening to the rain beating against the window and the howling of the wind outside.

After all she had a very happy, comfortable home. The house was roomy and old-fashioned, and furnished exactly to her taste. The garden was admired by all her friends. The parish was grateful and appreciative. The neighbours more than friendly. And Henry was always good and kind. As she looked at his empty chair opposite her, she saw a vision of him sitting there with his book—large and kindly and anxious to please—and her heart warmed. Yes, she was unmistakably foolish.

Presently a happy thought struck her. Henry had a good many books in his study. Perhaps she might find amongst them something to read. At any rate it would be pleasant to visit his own particular den, and look at his belongings. It would be a pleasant change.

She got up from the comfortable low chair on which she had been sitting, and placed the guard upon the fire; and she opened an inch of the window, and picked up a few leaves which the hydrangeas had shed upon the floor. Then she left the room and walked upstairs.

The study was rather curiously situated. It was at the top of the house, upon a floor which they did not use—a most unusual place for studies. But Henry had explained that he liked plenty of air and light, and that he could not write his sermons in the midst of noises and disturbances, and here certainly was perfect quiet and peace.

It was a cheerful room, with a large bow-window and deep sill in which you could sit and admire the spreading view, carrying your eyes over the little white village on the hill-side and down the far-reaching valley which dipped into the horizon beyond.

She sat down and looked around her, noting every detail with interested eyes. The room was plainly, almost severely, furnished. The only easy-chair was stiffly upholstered in unyielding leather. The floor was oak-stained, and had a simple square of matting in the centre. There were shutters to the windows, but there were no curtains. Bookcases made by the village carpenter covered part of the walls, the rest of which were conspicuous by the absence of pictures of any kind.

Presently Millicent got up. She went to the bookshelves and began to inspect the rows of volumes which they contained. She picked out one or two that she thought she would like, and then she began curiously to examine the rest. Shelf after shelf she scanned, getting up into a chair to view those at the top, and even putting her hands behind on the chance of some discovery. But no. There was nothing of startling interest of any kind. It was an ordinary clergyman's library, nothing more. There were Fathers of the Church, Concordances, Commentaries, Bampton Lectures, Ecclesiastical Histories, the Lives and Works of many eminent persons, and a certain number of volumes 'without which no gentleman's library is complete!'

But somehow they had the look of books which told no tale, books from which the taste of the owner could never be gathered. There appeared to be no special corner for favourites, no worn and much-used copies, no pet edition tucked into a chair or lying at an open page on the table. 'If there were only a stupid yellow-back it would be something,' said Millicent with a little disappointed sigh.

She came and leant over the high back of the oak-chair in front of the writing-table, and stared curiously in front of her. Everything was immaculately neat: the inkstand; the pens; the sermon-paper, which lay in a pile by the blotting-pad; the dictionary, the Concordance, and Dr Liddon's Sermons, which lay ready for use close at hand.

Two photographs, somewhat faded, of his father and mother, in a folding leather frame, were the only ornaments to be seen. There were no college mementoes—no silver cups, no trophies

of athletic days—nothing that gave evidence of any predilection of any kind.

Millicent turned away. She slowly gathered up her books and went out into the passage.

As she did so she remembered that she had never been into the room next to the study. It was locked when she had tried to open it, and she had always forgotten to ask Sarah for the key. It was over the spare-room, and must be a good size. Some day they would have to furnish it. Living there by himself, Henry of course had not required any other rooms upon that floor. There were three of them. One she knew contained boxes, the other was empty, and there was this one that she had not seen. She would look in and see what it was like.

Somewhat to her surprise, however, when she turned the handle of the door she found it was still fastened, nor was there any key in the lock. Just as she was wondering what she should do, she heard Sarah the housemaid coming upstairs, and she leaned over the balustrade to speak to her.

'I want to look into the room near the study; why is it locked and no key?' she inquired.

But Sarah appeared as if she did not hear. She continued her way to the bedrooms, when Millicent called to her again and repeated her question.

The woman came slowly to the foot of the stairs. 'It's always kept locked, ma'am,' she replied, a curious look Millicent could not understand coming over her face.

'Well, where is the key? It ought to be in the door.'

'I don't just remember where it is. I expect it's got mislaid, ma'am.'

'Mislaid! Why, I'm sure I heard you overhead when I was arranging the new toilet-set in the spare-room this morning. Some one was creaking about, and of course it must have been you.'

'Rooms has to be aired,' answered Sarah rather gruffly, as she gave a sidelong glance towards the backstairs.

'Yes; I never said to the contrary. What I mean is, the key can only be lost since this morning, and I shall expect it to be found. I mean to look over the room to-morrow.'

And Millicent, rather vexed at what she looked upon as the whim of an old, spoilt servant—for Sarah had been with her husband's family for many years—walked off with her books and settled herself once more in the cosy Chesterfield sofa by the side of the fire.

The next day, after ordering dinner and attending to various domestic duties, Millicent went up to her room, where Sarah was engaged in dusting.

'Well, I hope you have found that key,' she said rather sharply. 'I am going up there now.'

'I can't say I have, ma'am,' replied the woman as she began re-arranging the set of the curtains.

'Have you looked everywhere, and have you asked the other servants?' demanded her mistress. Sarah's apparent apathy in the matter was most annoying.

'Oh, the girls don't know anything about the room. The master doesn't like them up there, messing round.'

'Well, it's very tiresome losing it like that; and, as you don't seem as if you could find it, I shall call and tell a man to come and fit a new key, when I go to the village this afternoon.'

Sarah turned round with a startled look in her face.

'I wouldn't be doing that if I were you, ma'am,' she said as she began to twist the corner of her duster nervously in her hands.

Millicent stared at her with wide-open eyes of surprise.

'I beg pardon for saying it, ma'am,' she continued reluctantly, as if the words were dragged out of her—'I beg pardon; but I don't think the master would like anybody to open that door.'

'Good gracious! what *do* you mean?' cried Millicent, 'as if that has anything to do with *me!*' She felt nettled at the idea of Sarah imagining anything so preposterous.

'Well, ma'am, I only know what the master said, and that was that the door wasn't to be opened by nobody.'

'How ridiculous you are! That does not in the least apply to me—how should it?' But in spite of herself an undefined feeling of dread was creeping into Millicent's mind.

'It isn't for me to say it, I know, ma'am; but I wouldn't go in if I was you.'

'Why not?' demanded Millicent, in as unconcerned a tone as she could command.

'I can't tell you, ma'am; but the master——' here Sarah stopped short, and waved her duster tragically to supply the place of further words.

Millicent stood staring at the old servant, uncertain what course to take. She felt it would be undignified to question her further on a matter which implied that her husband had hidden something from her. No; no vulgar curiosity would she display. She would wait till Henry's return and he would of course put it all right. That was the most sensible plan. Other women might try to worm it out of the servant or force open the door; but Millicent had too much pride for either one or the other. She preferred to wait.

'It is perfectly ridiculous, and must be all your own imagination,' she said at last, and without waiting for a reply swept out of the room and downstairs into the drawing-room.

But tears were in her eyes as she threw herself into an arm-chair and began to think things quietly over.

There was something in it after all. He had some secret he wished to hide from her—some-

thing he did not wish her to find out. And it was in some way connected with that room. It seemed so mysterious and extraordinary. And to think that a servant should know all about it, whilst his own wife was excluded! The thought made her heart beat in angry thuds. It was so entirely contrary to her views as to what married life should be — the modern improved views; for Millicent was extremely interested in all the new ideas as to the improved position of her sex. The recognition of equality of rights in married life was to her a very serious matter. That there should be reciprocity in confidence as well as interests appeared to her as a most important part of this position.

With all these sentiments Henry had seemingly agreed. He was as modern in his ideas as to a wife's position as she could wish. But now it appeared as if they were merely a cloak. He had his reservations all the same.

At any rate it looked like it.

However, she must not judge too soon. There might be an explanation after all. It would be wiser, no doubt, to wait and see what Henry had to say, and until then not to worry herself about it. It really was absurd to worry, when it might be nothing at all.

She managed to argue herself back into cheerfulness again; and the next day she ate her breakfast in better spirits; and when the parlour-maid brought in a pile of letters she picked out the envelope addressed in her husband's handwriting with a sensation of particular affection.

But when she had broken the seal and scanned the contents her face fell. He said that her father-in-law was worse; it would be impossible to leave him for the present. He had arranged for some one to take his duty on Sunday, and hoped things would go on all right. He was very concerned at leaving her all by herself. Could she not get a friend to come and stay until his return?

Millicent read and re-read it several times. It was very annoying. She felt sorry for her father-in-law, for Henry's anxiety, and for the inconvenience it would entail; but, through it all, she knew she was sorry for herself. She would have to wait perhaps for some while to find out what she so much wanted to know. She felt ashamed of herself for allowing so selfish a thought to influence her at such a time; but there the feeling was, and she could not help being aware of it.

She busied herself that morning in packing up a small portmanteau with things that Henry might want, and paid some visits in the parish to sick people who would be expecting to see him.

The next day the news was no better, and the day after that it was worse; and so another week passed away. Millicent became more and more restless and uneasy. She could not take an interest in her usual occupations, her thoughts kept flying back and back to that mysterious locked door. She felt that at any cost she must gain admittance and see for herself what was there, if only to restore her peace of mind. For whatever it was, she felt she could bear it better if she knew, and that any revelation would be pleasanter than this harassing uncertainty.

At last, after much consideration, she determined what she would do. She would mention it in her next letter — not as if she suspected anything, but casually, in an easy natural manner. There seemed little prospect of his returning for at least another week, and she felt she must have her mind put at rest.

So, after telling him all the parish news and the actual little details about herself and her doings, she said: 'By the way, Sarah has some ridiculous story about your not liking me to go into the room next the study. I believe she has lost the key on purpose. Of course it is all her imagination, and I only mention it to you as I think you will be amused. I am going to have it opened. I want to see if it won't make a nice bachelor's bedroom.'

Millicent read this over with some satisfaction. No one could possibly guess that she thought anything more of it than of a perfectly natural occurrence. She would not for worlds have Henry think that she had any unpleasant thoughts upon the subject, especially as there might be nothing in it at all.

She carefully sealed the letter and took it herself to the post, and awaited an answer with an amount of impatience which she in vain tried to subdue. At last it came. It was a short, little note telling her the news about the invalid, and full of hopes of rejoining her soon. And at the end came a postscript evidently written in a hurry, saying, 'Don't go into the room next the study.'

Millicent gasped. She read and re-read that last sentence again and again. 'Don't go into the room next the study!' So it was true after all! He *had* some secret he wished to conceal from her.

And after all it was not the thing itself, whatever it might be, which angered her. It might be something quite satisfactory and unimportant. It was that her husband should keep it from her knowledge; that he should treat her with such scant courtesy, not to speak of confidence, as to allow a servant to know what was withheld from his wife.

However, her pride came to her rescue in answering the letter, and a woman's instinct for concealing her feelings prevented her from in any way alluding to the subject. Nor did she write less lengthily or affectionately than was her usual custom.

But when it was finished she resumed her injured feelings and brooded over her wrongs, as she at length began to consider them, until their swollen proportions quite obscured all other points of view.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MAGIC-LANTERN.

By T. C. HEPWORTH.

NEARLY forty years ago there appeared in this *Journal* (Vol. XII., July 12, 1859) an article entitled 'Shadows in a New Light,' by Col. J. J. Mellor, M.P. It dealt with what at that time was, in the Midlands at any rate, an astounding novelty—the exhibition of 'illuminated photographs,' or dissolving views, by means of the oxy-hydrogen or 'magic' lantern, as it was then commonly called. The Manchester Mechanics' Institute had during the previous winter inaugurated a series of exhibitions of this character with very great success, and the article referred to points out the educational importance of such a means of portraying distant scenes and objects of art to the multitude.

During the four decades which have elapsed since that article was published, the lantern has become such a very popular instrument in the hands of all teachers that there is certainly no place in the kingdom where it is not regularly, or at least occasionally, employed. It is therefore a matter of some interest to trace its history and to indicate its varied applications.

It has been thought by some writers that this method of projecting pictures upon a sheet or other surface was known and employed some hundreds of years ago, and the chief ground upon which this belief is based appears to be a passage in the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, the Florentine goldsmith and sculptor, who describes a weird experience in the Colosseum of Rome, when, by means of certain incantations, several legions of devils were made to appear before him. Now, it is quite certain that no effects of the kind could be produced in a building of the vast size of the Colosseum without the best of optical appliances and the most brilliant light—both unattainable things in the first half of the sixteenth century. So we must assume that the imps which Cellini saw, or thought he saw, were optical illusions brought about by some other agency than the magic-lantern.

A hundred years later Athanasius Kircher, the learned Jesuit, produced his book on 'the great art of light and shade,' in which he describes and pictures certain contrivances which plainly show that he was fully acquainted with the optical principles upon which the lantern is based, and very possibly if he had had at his disposal a better illuminant than a rush-candle or a smoky oil-lamp he would have reduced theory to practice. For want of an efficient lamp the magic-lantern made little progress beyond toyland till after the year 1826, when Lieutenant Thomas Drummond used in the Irish survey the so-called Drummond Light or lime-light, invented a year or two before by Sir Goldsworthy Gurney.

In the year 1838 the Polytechnic Institution in Regent Street, London, was incorporated by royal charter, and within a few years of its opening we find, by reference to the early catalogues, that 'dissolving views,' shown by the lime-light, formed one of its attractions. It was the province of this institution, the prototype of the many which now exist with wider educational aims, to combine amusement with instruction, or, as the catalogue quaintly puts it, 'The directors have not been unmindful of the inducement which a path of flowers opens to the acquisition of knowledge.' One of the flower-beds was represented by a battery of magic-lanterns, by which hand-painted pictures on glass were projected upon a screen of large size. So long as the pictures for the magic-lantern had to be drawn and painted on glass by hand it could be regarded only as a toy. The form of the Polytechnic instrument was cumbrous, for the pictures measured as much as eight inches across, and the lenses were of proportionate size. (Some of these pictures, by the way, were veritable works of art, and cost as much as twenty pounds apiece.) It is obvious that, under such conditions, the magic-lantern in this, its best form, had but limited use. But directly it became possible to produce pictures of far finer quality, at a fraction of the cost, by means of photography, the toy became a valuable scientific instrument. The photographic pictures, too, were reduced in size to little more than three inches, and this made a general reduction in the dimensions of the lantern possible and desirable. Thus the magic-lantern became a marketable thing, which can be produced at a cheap rate, and pictures adapted to it, illustrating travel in every corner of the globe and every department of science and art, can be purchased for one shilling apiece. The aid it affords to the traveller in rendering more graphic his account of his own experiences is incalculable.

Another very important aid in popularising the optical lantern—for the toy name 'magic' has been dropped in deference to its more exalted uses—is the introduction of compressed oxygen and hydrogen gases. Without these gases the lime-light is impossible; and a few years back the operator was obliged to go through the drudgery of making them himself, and storing them in huge india-rubber wedge-shaped bags, which, placed under pressure, would serve for a couple of hours' exhibition. These bags, their pressure-boards, and heavy weights are now things of the

past, and the lanternist obtains his gases compressed in cylinders of mild steel. The oxygen is produced by chemical process from the atmosphere, and for hydrogen the ordinary gas used for illuminating purposes (carburetted hydrogen) furnishes an efficient substitute. A cylinder little larger than a wine bottle will hold ten feet of gas, which is sufficient for an evening's use. The gas-jet employed for the lime-light is in reality an oxyhydrogen blowpipe, and its flame impinges upon a cylinder of lime, which is thus rendered incandescent. In brilliancy it has but one rival, and that is the electric arc-light.

Now that the electric current is being laid on to our public halls, the use of the arc-light for lantern work is receiving much attention. No one who has not seen the lime-light and electric light each illuminating one-half of a white screen can form any idea of the immense advantage of employing the latter for this purpose of pictorial projection. It is not only far more powerful as an illuminant, but it is much whiter—that is to say, it is much purer in tint. For experiments in which coloured rays enter, it is indispensable, and no one would think of using the prism for spectrum analysis work, if the results are to be projected upon a screen, without its help. It has the advantage also of simplicity, a couple of wires from the house supply of sufficient capacity to carry the necessary current taking the place of the cylinders of gas necessary with the lime-light. At all lecture-halls where the lantern is in constant use the arc-light is superseding the older form of illumination. The incandescent form of electric lamp has been recommended for use in the optical lantern, but the illumination which it affords is far too feeble for use except in a small room; besides, to get the best effect the area of the light-spot must approach as nearly as possible to a point, and not cover a large surface.

The optical lantern is not confined to the exhibition of pictures and diagrams, but can to some extent be employed for showing experiments in the lecture-hall or in the school-room, and it is particularly valuable in this rôle because of its powers of magnification. All science teachers know well that certain experiments of vital importance to the full understanding of the subject under discussion are comprised within such narrow limits that they are confined to the individual eye, and cannot be effectively exhibited to a class. Let us, for example, suppose that a lecturer wishes to show how by means of a magnet a piece of steel can be readily endowed with magnetism. As an illustration he will perhaps take a sewing-needle, rub it with the magnet in the orthodox manner, and show that it will thenceforward attract iron filings — which will cling to its end until it looks like the head of a mop. He may explain all this to his audience, and the students close to the lecture-table will perhaps be able to see the result of the experiment. But put the needle before and after magnetisation on the lantern stage together with the iron filings; it will be magnified to the size of a scaffold pole, and the particles of iron will be seen to fly towards it in a manner impossible to show in any other way.

The lantern is constantly in evidence at the lectures at the Royal Institution, London, and occasionally some very remarkable experiments are shown by its aid. Not long ago Professor Dewar was able to exhibit in this way a frozen soap-bubble floating in a tiny glass tank of liquid air, while a miniature snowstorm was going on in the space above the floating bubble. Here was an experiment, the apparatus necessary to which was comprised within the space of two or three inches, enlarged by the lantern to six feet or more, so that all in the crowded lecture theatre could thoroughly appreciate its beauty.

A modified form of lantern will permit of the exhibition of solid and opaque objects instead of transparent pictures. In this case the object to be shown is very strongly illuminated from the front, and a lens throws its image on the screen. For showing mineral specimens or precious stones in all their natural colours this method is invaluable. It has also been employed for illustrating a lecture on the evolution of the watch, various forms of those timepieces being shown upon the screen *with the wheels in movement*. All kinds of small objects can be shown in this way, and by means of larger apparatus greatly magnified; the human face has also before now formed a curious object on the screen. It must be admitted that this last experiment can only be carried on for a few moments, in mercy to the person to whom the face belongs, for the heat from the powerful lights necessarily used is comparable only to that of a furnace.

The image shown by the ordinary lantern is an inverted one, and in the exhibition of pictures the difficulty is readily met by inserting them in the lantern upside down, a necessity which has again and again led to ludicrous mistakes. But it is obvious that in many of the experiments here detailed inversion is impossible, and in such cases rectifying apparatus has to be employed to show things the right way up.

A special form of microscope can be attached to the optical lantern in order to show ordinary microscopic objects which without it would be only available to the individual eye. Even with the electric arc the effect is poor, for the aperture of a microscope lens is so small that very little light can get through it, and when the image is spread over a large screen that little is naturally much attenuated. It therefore comes about that only those near the screen can see the details of the subject. A far more effective plan is to show in the ordinary lantern enlarged photographs of such objects, photo-micrographs as they are called, and then there is no limit as to light. The

amount of magnification possible by exhibiting microscopic pictures in this manner is almost beyond belief. But let us take an example. The writer has some photographs of this kind in the form of lantern slides which measure two and a-half inches in diameter. In the work of photographing them the original objects have been magnified one thousand diameters. Now, if we place one of these pictures in the lantern, and project its image on a screen measuring fifteen feet, magnifying the picture to that size, we shall stretch it seventy-two diameters, so that the total magnification of the original object is no less than seventy-two thousand times. Suppose that it would be possible to show the image of a half-penny magnified to the same extent, we should require a lantern screen much more than a mile long to exhibit that image in its entirety. For a halfpenny measures exactly one inch, and seventy-two thousand inches are equal to one mile and two hundred and forty yards.

Another adjunct to the lantern which is often called for by the lecturer on science is known as the vertical attachment. By means of this device an object, which from its nature must be kept in a horizontal position, can readily be shown on the screen. It is laid on a glass plate through which the light from the lantern is projected from below by an inclined mirror, the same means being adopted to project the beam once more in a horizontal direction towards the screen or sheet. By this means, and by the help of a glass tank, it becomes possible to perform experiments in chemistry, electricity, &c., so that the results shall be evident to a large audience. The applications of the lantern in this direction are rapidly increasing, and most modern instruments are so made that a large number of experiments can be shown by their aid.

The latest, and one of the most interesting, employments which the optical lantern is called upon to fulfil is the exhibition of cinematograph, or living pictures. The introduction of these pictures has aroused the same kind of enthusiasm as that once accorded to dissolving views; but a consideration of this application of the most popular of optical appliances must be reserved for another article.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE COMING OF THE BRIG 'SEAMAW.'

IT was the third day of April, a day so cool and mild that every one who could was in the open air, that I sat in the little strip of garden behind my lodging. The soft spring wind fluttered the leaves of my book and stirred my hair, so that I found it hard indeed to keep my attention fixed. Some yards behind me Nicol sat cleaning a fishing-rod, for in the idle days he amused himself with trying his skill among the sleepy streams. He was whistling some bars of 'Leezie Lindsay;' and the tune, which I had often heard in Tweeddale, put me much in mind of home and inclined my heart violently to the place I had left. So, soon I found my Plato lying listlessly on my lap, and my thoughts far away over the sea.

Just now, I knew, would be the lambing-time in the Tweed hills, and all the valleys would be filled with the noise of sheep. The shepherds, too, would be burning the bent, and the moors sending up wreaths of pungent smoke. I minded the smell so well that I almost fancied it was in my nostrils in place of the moist perfume of hyacinth and violet. At Dawyck, Marjory would be early abroad, plucking the spring flowers and bringing in armfuls of apple blossom to deck the rooms. The thought of Marjory gave me sudden discomfort. I reflected for the thousandth time that I had heard nothing of her for months, and I fell to wondering greatly at her silence. By-and-by, what with thinking of home and of her, and chafing at her neglect, I found myself in a very pretty state of discontentment.

It was just then that I heard a voice behind me, and turning round saw Nicol approaching in company with another. The stranger was a man of remarkable appearance. He was scarcely the middle height, but his breadth across the shoulders was so great that he seemed almost dwarfish. He had arms of extraordinary length, so long that they reached almost to his knees. His square, weatherbeaten face was filled with much good-humour, and the two eyes which looked out from beneath his shaggy brows were clear and shrewd.

'This is Maister Silas Steen o' the brig *Seamaw*,' said Nicol, making an introduction, 'whae has come frae Scotland this mornin', and says he has letters wi' him for you.' Having delivered himself, my servant retired, and left the new-comer alone with me.

'You'll be Master John Burnet of Barns?' said he, looking at me sharply.

'The same, at your service,' said I. 'May I ask your business with me?'

'It's just a bit letter for you,' and he dived into his pocket and produced a packet.

I took it hastily, for I had some guess who was the writer. Nor was I wrong, for one glance at the superscription told me the truth. And this is how it ran:

'*For Master John Burnet,*
In the house of Mistress Vanderdecker,
near the Breedestraat, at Leyden.

'DEAR JOHN,—I have not written thee for long, and I trust that thereby I have not given thee trouble. I am well and happy when this leaves me, though desiring thy return. I trust your studies are to your satisfaction. Tam Todd from the Barns was over yestreen, and gave a good account of all things there.'

Then came a pause, and the writing was resumed in a hurried, irregular hand.

'I am not free to write my will. O John, dear John, come back to me. I am so unhappy. I cannot survive without thee another day' (this latter word had been scored out and 'month' put in its place). 'I am in dreadful perplexity. Come quick. MARJORY.'

You may imagine into what state of mind the reading of this letter threw me. My lady was in trouble; that was enough for me, and she desired my aid. I guessed that the letter had been written stealthily, and that some trouble had been found in its conveyance, for it bore the marks of much crumpling and haste. I could make no conjecture as to its meaning, and this doubt only the more increased my impatience.

'From whom did you get this?' I asked.

'From a great, thin, swart man, who brought it to me at Leith and bade me deliver it. I came post-haste from Rotterdam this day.'

I ran over in my mind the serving-folk at Dawyck, and could think of none such. Then, like a flash, I remembered Tam Todd. This increased my fears. If Marjory could get no porter for her message save one of my own servants, then the trouble must be at Dawyck itself.

I can find no words for the depths of my anxiety. There and then I resolved on my course.

'Your ship is at Rotterdam?' I asked.

'Yes,' said the captain.

'When does she sail?'

'To-morrow night, when the cargo is on board.'

'I'll give you twenty pieces of gold if you'll sail to-night.'

The captain shook his head. 'It canna be done,' he cried. 'My freight is lace and schiedam worth four times twenty pieces, and I canna have a voyage for naething.'

'Listen,' said I. 'I am in terrible perplexity. I would give you a hundred if I had them; but I promise if you bring me safely to the port of Leith they shall be paid. Ride back to your vessel and ship all the stuff you can, and I will be with you at eleven o'clock this night, ready to sail.'

The fellow shook his head, but said nothing.

'Man,' I cried, 'for God's sake, I implore you. It's a matter to me of desperate import. See, there are twenty pieces, and I'll give you my bond for eighty to be paid when we win to Leith.'

'Tut, Master Burnet,' said he, 'I will not be taking your money. But I'm wae to see you in trouble. I'll tak' you over the nicht for the twenty pieces, and if I lose on the venture you can make it up to me. It's safer carrying you and running straight for the pier than carrying schiedam and dodging about the Bass. And I'm not a man that need count his pennies. Forbye, I see there's a lady in the case, and I deem it my duty to assist you.'

I was at first astonished by the man's ready compliance; but when I saw that he was sincere I thanked him to the best of my power. 'Be sure I shall not forget this service, Captain Steen,' said I, 'and if it is ever in my power to serve you in return you may count on me. You will take some refreshment before you go?' and calling Nicol I bade him see to the stranger's wants.

Meantime it behoved me to be up and doing if I was to sail that night. I knew not what to think of the news I had heard, for as I thought upon the matter it seemed so incredible that aught could have gone wrong that I began to set it all down to mere loneliness and a girl's humours. The strangeness of the letter I explained with all the sophistry of care. She did not wish to disturb me and bring me home before my time. This was what she meant when she said she was not free to write her will. But at the end her desolateness had overmastered her, and she had finished with a piteous appeal. Even so I began to reason, and this casuistry put me in a more hopeful frame of mind. It was right that I should go home, but when I got there I should find no cause for fear. But there was much to be done in the town and the college ere I could take my departure. So, when I had paid all the monies that I owed, and bidden farewell to all my friends (among whom Sir William Crichton and Master Quellinus were greatly affected), I returned to my lodgings. There I found Nicol in great glee preparing my baggage. He was whistling the 'Lawlands of Holland,' and every now and then he would stop to address himself. 'Ye're gaun hame,' I heard him saying, 'ye're gaun hame to the hills and the bonny water o' Tweed, and guid kindly Scots folk after thae frostit Hollanders, and fine tasty parritch and honest whisky after the abominable meats and drinks o' this stawsome hole. And ye'd better watch your steps, Nicol Plenderleith, my man, I'm tellin' ye, and keep a calm sough, for there's a heap o' wark to be dune, and some o' it geyan wanchancy.'

'Good advice, Nicol,' said I, breaking in upon him. 'See that you keep to it.'

'Is that you, Maister John? Ye'll be clean high aboot gaun back. And ye maun mind and put a bottle o' French brandy in your valise, or you'll be awfu' oot on the sea. I think it's likely to be coorse on the water.'

I took my servant's advice; and when all was done to my liking I walked down to the college

gate for one last look at the place. I was in a strange temper—partly glad, partly sad, and wholly excited. When I looked on the gray, peaceful walls, breathing learning and repose, and thought of the wise men who had lived there, and the great books that had been written, and the high thoughts that had been born, I felt a keen pang of regret.

As I left the place there was a cool gray haze over all the gardens and towers, mellow and soft and lucid. But to the north, where lay the sea, there was a broken sky, blue, with fitful clouds passing athwart. It seemed, as it were, the emblem of my life—the tranquil and the unsettled. Yet, in the broken sky there was a promise of sunshine and brilliance, which was not in the even gray; and this mightily heartened me.

So at four that evening we mounted horse and rode forth by the way we had come; and ere the hour of eleven were on the wharf at Rotterdam, sniffing the distant smell of the sea. Captain Steen met me on deck, and greeted me heartily; and soon we dropped down the estuary and set our face seawards.

Of my voyage home I do not purpose to tell at length. On it I met with none of the mishaps which I had encountered before, and the captain I found a friendly, talkative man; from him I had much news of the state of the land whither I was returning. Nor was it of such a sort as to elate me, for it seemed as if in the short time I had been away things had taken many steps to the devil; but my time during the days of our sailing was in the main taken up with thoughts of Marjory. The word I had got still rankled in my mind, and I puzzled my brains with a thousand guesses as to its purport. But as the hours passed this thought grew less vexatious, for was not I on my way home to see my love once more, to help her in perplexity, and by God's help to leave her side never again? Every thought of home made it doubly dear to me. And, more than all else, there was my lady awaiting me, looking for the sight of my horse's head at the long avenue of Dawyck.

Then I fell to thinking of the house of Barns, and of the many things which I should do were I home. There was much need of change in the rooms, which had scarce been touched for years. Also I figured to myself the study I should make and the books which were to fill it. Then, out of doors there was need of planting on the hillsides and thinning in the haugh-lands; and I swore I should have a new cauld made in Tweed above the island for the sake of the fishing. All this and more should I do 'when I rode through Annan Water wi' my bonny bands again.'

We left Rotterdam on the evening of one day, and sailed throughout the day following; and, since we had a fair wind and a stout ship, about noon on the next we rounded the Bass, and entered the Forth. I was filled with great gladness to see my native land once more; and, as for my servant, I could scarce prevail upon him to keep from flinging his hat into the sea or climbing to the masthead in the excess of his delight. The blue Lomonds of Fife, the long ridge of the Lammermoors, and the great battlements of the Pentlands were to me like honey in the mouth, so long had I been used to flat lands. And beyond them I saw the line of the Moorfoots, ending in Dundreich, which is a hill not five miles from the town of Peebles.

About three of the clock we entered Leith Roads and awaited the signals for admission. 'The *Seamaw* lies at the wast harbour for usual,' said the captain; 'but there's something wrong there-aways the day, so we maun e'en run into the east.' So soon, amid a throng of barques at anchor and small boats moving to and fro among them, we steered our course and in a very little lay against the gray sea-washed walls of the east quay. There we landed after bidding farewell to the captain; and as my feet touched the well-worn cobble-stones, and I smelt the smell of tar and herrings, I knew my own land. The broad twang of the fishermen, the shrill yatter of the fishwives, the look of the black, red-tiled houses and the spires of the kirks—all was so familiar that it went straight to my heart; and it was with a cheerful spirit that, followed by my servant, I made for the inn of 'The Three Herrings,' where I purposed to sleep the night ere I rode to Tweeddale on the morrow. So much for man's devices: this was to be to me the last day of quiet life for many months. But as I briskly strode along the harbour walk, little I foresaw of the dangers and troubles which awaited my coming.

MINE-SALTING.

WHAT is known as the 'salting' of mines is much more common than most people imagine. It is practised in every mining district in the world with more or less success, and it is hardly too much to say that fully ten per cent. of the foreign and colonial mines sold to London companies are purchased on salted workings or samples. The methods of salting adopted are almost as various as the mines doctored. The simplest, and probably one of the earliest means of salting in the case of gold-mines, is what is known as the 'nail trick.' In this, the prospector, who is washing a dish of alluvial or crushed quartz, has concealed in his finger-nails some fine particles of gold. Soon

after starting to wash he finds it necessary to puddle the dirt with his hands in order to break up the clayey substances, and of course while he is puddling, the gold is freed and goes into the prospect, eventually making that pretty 'corner' which the speculator so likes to see. Perhaps, however, the nefarious prospector has his nails too short for this trick, and he will then resort to the expedient of shooting fine gold into the dish from his mouth whenever he gets an opportunity of doing so without being observed. Or he will raise a hand to put his hat straight, and at the same time shake into the dish some gold-dust from his hair. But sometimes the speculator or expert present, whose good opinion of the property is wanted, resolves to wash a dish or two himself; and then the prospector has to resort to other tactics. He will, however, probably have provided for the contingency, and will be pretty sure to find some means of salting the new sample or the dish before the water touches it. Supposing that circumstances are against him in this, then he will have recourse to a pipe or cigar properly prepared for the occasion. The chances are that the washer will not notice the apparently accidental falling of tobacco-ash into his dish, and the trick will have succeeded.

The salting of prospects while under process of dishing is, however, fast dying out, prospectors preferring the more solid business of salting the earth or rock as it lies *in situ*, or of bringing stone from other mines and preparing an ingenious pack. Formerly the most common method of salting a barren reef was to fire gold-dust into it from a shot-gun; and many a mine has been sold for a good figure on the strength of a reef faked in this way. But the shooting process is unsatisfactory for many reasons. In the first place, it only answers at all for certain classes of rock; then the reef into which gold has been fired has a patchy appearance, which is not a favourable sign; and again much of the gold fired is lost, while the explosion of the gun in a narrow drive or crosscut is liable to bring down a lot of the ground. All these are serious objections; but what chiefly brought the shooting practice into disrepute among salters was the fact that the prospective buyers of the mines, or their representatives, gradually became suspicious of fair faces, and often insisted upon taking their samples a foot or so back from the face. The biggest coup on record effected by the shooting trick was brought off in Tasmania, where nearly half an acre of sandstone was fusiladed, and a great deal of money made by the salters, the purchasers believing that they had really acquired the biggest gold-mine in the world.

The art of salting is carried to its highest pitch of perfection in the process known as 'stacking.' This is performed by building up a portion of a reef at the end of a drive which has been run underground along the line of the reef. Of course the built-up portion must be made to look like unbroken ground; but this is sometimes a most difficult task to accomplish. Luckily, however, for the salters, few of the best gold-reefs are without very numerous fractures, and indeed they not infrequently look like bands of mullock held together by a clayey substance impregnated with iron oxide. Such reefs, which are not uncommon in Western Australia, are much easier to imitate than the hard white reefs of Ballarat or the wide gold bands of South Africa. Usually the stacking has a depth of from four to five feet, though in exceptional cases it is considerably greater. A well-known London mining engineer discovered a depth of no less than ten feet in a stack prepared for him in Colorado. It need hardly be said that when only the end of a drive is stacked, it is found necessary to timber the roof and keep a judicious supply of water and loose planks on the floor, while of course the original reef is taken out for its entire width. Past masters in the art of stacking hail usually from the States, but Australia has produced two or three prime examples.

Stacking is usually performed in isolated mines, where the operations of the salters are not likely to be watched or interrupted. In cases where there are several mines in the same neighbourhood, the salter generally resorts to doctoring the expert's samples, after perhaps judiciously peppering the workings with damp gold-dust. Occasionally the expert is one who treats every man at a mine as a possible salter, and hence successfully guards his samples; but usually he takes only ordinary precautions, which are of no earthly avail against an experienced salter. If he sends his samples up the shaft open in a bucket, having some one on the surface to look after them, gold-dust is blown into it from an intermediary drive as it is rising, or gently let fall into it from the top just as it reaches the brace. If the expert takes his sample bags down the shaft, with the intention of sealing them up underground, he will not notice with the falling dust from the top and sides of the shaft a fine shower of gold-dust following him down, lodging on his hat and over his clothes; and if for one minute he loses sight of those sample bags when he has returned to the surface, they will be judiciously primed by means of sharp injectors, which leave no trace of their work. Of course all this is supposing a salter is on the watch.

Should the salter fail altogether to tamper with the samples, or to deceive the expert underground, his only chance is to fake the samples at the assay office to which they are taken. This requires a confederate, and is usually very difficult; but it has been done successfully

many times. In one case — the St George mine in Australia — the culprit was discovered, and he received two years' imprisonment; but meantime he had cleared a few thousands of pounds.

Occasionally diamond drills are put to work in gold country to test the value of reefs at great depths. They cannot be considered satisfactory for this purpose, as a drill might just miss a shoot of gold, or else go through a very short one and thus lead to false hopes. Salting these drills has been successfully accomplished on several occasions, the practice being to hammer gold into the interstices of the core, or else to surreptitiously introduce an entirely new piece of core which had been previously prepared. Near Bright, in Victoria, a great deal of money was put into a mine a few years ago on the faith of a salted drill-hole.

Sometimes it happens that a really good property is salted. Thus one of the large mines now working at Broken Hill, and which has turned out an enormous quantity of silver and lead, was originally sold on a salt of several tons of ore conveyed from a neighbouring mine, and carefully stacked about an outcrop. In New South Wales a gold-mine that paid dividends for years was sold in the same way. On the faith of the promising 'surface show,' a shaft was sunk, and at about two hundred feet a splendid body of auriferous stone was struck. In Tasmania an alluvial tin-mine which had been salted led the purchasers to the discovery of a gold-reef which amply repaid them for their outlay.

A few instances of remarkable cases of salting may be interesting.

Many persons will perhaps remember the great tin-mine salting case in Canada, which was probably the most cleverly contrived swindle of its kind on record. The operators, two in number, purchased from time to time some small parcels of tin-ore in Cornwall and shipped it to Toronto, taking care never to send more than a few bags in any one vessel. From Toronto the ore was taken out West some hundreds of miles and carefully planted along a granite ridge, the work of shipping and planting taking about twelve months to accomplish. The salters then left the scene and remained away for some three years. At the end of that time it was suddenly announced at Quebec that what appeared to be a large and rich tin-field had been discovered in the West, and a claim had been put in for the government reward of (I think) sixty thousand dollars, which had been several years on offer for such a discovery. As might be expected, considerable excitement was manifested over the reported find, and when the government expert who was sent to inspect the property pronounced the discovery to be genuine, there was quite a rush of prospectors and speculators to the West, anxious to peg out or to purchase tin claims. Meanwhile a company was formed to work the reward claims; and just when it was ready to commence work, the government, acting on the reports of its skilled advisers, paid over the reward to the claimants, who, with this sum and a further large amount obtained by the sale of their claims, suddenly disappeared and were never afterwards heard of. It is scarcely surprising that the Canadian experts were deceived, as grass and moss and other vegetation had grown over the packed ore, while the denudation of the hillsides had resulted in some of the tin being washed into neighbouring creeks, where it was covered over with sand and debris. The swindle was exploded by a Cornish expert who had been sent for. He recognised the ore as having come from certain Cornish mines, and its sale and shipment were thereupon quickly traced.

The Mount Huxley mine in Tasmania afforded an instance of a most successful salt. A tunnel was put in a hill for a distance of about one hundred feet, and the sides, roof, and floor were well salted with fine gold-dust. The so-called mine was then offered to a Sydney syndicate, who purchased it on the advice of an expert. Indeed his account of the property was so glowing, and the assays made from various samples taken were so good, that the shares in the syndicate went up to an enormous price. Gradually the Mount Huxley mine got to be talked about all over Australia as a possible second Mount Morgan, and preparations were made by the syndicate to float a company on a large scale. But the ardour of the shareholders was suddenly and effectually damped by the report of a government officer who was asked to examine the property, and who declared to the effect that it was no mine at all, but purely a commonplace though rather extensive salt. An attempt was made to prosecute those concerned in the swindle, but no direct evidence could be procured. About £30,000 was lost by Sydney speculators in this venture.

Salters, however, do not always escape punishment. A case occurred in South Australia in 1895 in which a man was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for swindling in this way. The culprit did not, however, tamper with the mine, but carefully salted the bags of samples taken from a shaft by the various experts and speculators who inspected the property. This mine, in which there was undoubtedly a little gold *in situ*, was quite exceptional in one way, inasmuch as all the subscribing shareholders in the company which purchased it were members of the South Australian parliament. Needless to say, the mine was 'dropped like a hot brick' when the fraud was discovered.

In another well-known case, about thirty holes were sunk along a series of alluvial claims in Tasmania, and salted with tin. The property was then offered to a Melbourne syndicate, who had it inspected and eagerly purchased it. It

was only after a company was formed, and big hydraulic machinery erected on the claims, that the swindle was discovered.

One of the most notable Australian salting cases was that connected with the Boomerang mine in South Australia. The culprit, whose name was Marshall, went to work in quite an extensive way, spending a great deal of time and a considerable sum of money in manipulating the venture. He selected a spot of barren mineral country in the Flinders Range, about thirty miles from a habitation, and having pegged out over a hundred acres of ground, he sunk three shafts to a depth of about sixty feet each. He then sent up from Adelaide a party of surveyors, and had elaborate plans drawn showing a systematic series of huge silver lodes; and experts were obtained to give most elaborate and highly-coloured reports upon the property, with the usual lists of remarkable assays of samples 'carefully taken' from the shafts. In fact the Boomerang was reported to be quite equal to the great Broken Hill mine in its initial stage. Armed with his large coloured plans and voluminous reports, Marshall then set about reaping his harvest. He first went to Adelaide, and in a few days sold various small interests in the Boomerang for a total of £1100; then proceeded to Melbourne, where he sold two-sixteenths for £3000 each, and a thirty-second for £1250; and wound up in Sydney, whence, having cleared £2500 more, he took ship under an assumed name for San Francisco. The development of mines is slow work, and it was a couple of months before the purchasers of shares in the Boomerang commenced to wonder why they heard nothing more of the mine. Then of course the swindle was uncovered, but it was too late to get back either Marshall or the money.

The colony of Victoria had a very bad case of salting exposed last year. About three years ago, a certain 'Colonel Morgan' (the title American), who was formerly at Broken Hill, and before that in Nevada, U.S.A., was sent to take charge of a reported valuable silver and lead mine in Gippsland owned by a Melbourne company. The colonel sent down from time to time glowing reports upon the mine, and after some months a few tons of silver-lead ore were forwarded to Melbourne from the property, and sold at a satisfactory price. Strange to say, however, the regular delivery of ore was not maintained, but the colonel explained this by reporting that though there were immense bodies of ore practically exposed, yet the mine wanted properly opening up before the ore could be dealt with on a large scale. Time went on, and funds giving out, the company was reorganised; the splendid reports of the work in hand which reached Melbourne every fortnight rendering it easy to obtain fresh capital. Then one fine day the colonel reported that the mine was sufficiently developed for the erection of machinery, and the directors were specially asked to visit it and see for themselves what a magnificent property they had. The journey was long and difficult; but the visiting party from Melbourne felt themselves well rewarded for their trouble when they examined the workings, and saw on all sides of them, and overhead, and underfoot, magnificent carbonate and sulphide of lead ore rich in silver. In every place exposed there was ore, and judging from appearances there was practically an unlimited supply. The directors returned to town highly pleased, and at once made arrangements for the erection on the mine of concentrating and other machinery. Meanwhile the shares of the company rose high in the market, the result of the directors' visit having become widely known. But suddenly, just when the machinery orders had been placed, it was discovered that the colonel was missing, and that he had sold all his shares, his holding having been pretty large. The reason was immediately forthcoming, for an overseer at the mine confessed, under promise of freedom from prosecution, that he had been a confederate of the colonel in 'stacking' the mine. It turned out that there was actually some ore there, though only a few bunches, and this had been used by the colonel in packing the sides and floors of the workings. It took him many months to do the work, as there was a lot of trouble in procuring sufficient ore, and it is no easy task to pack a drive; but he was eminently successful, as has been seen. It is hardly necessary to add that the colonel has not been heard of since.

Over three hundred ounces of gold were used to salt a mine in New South Wales some few years ago, with the result that the property was purchased by a Sydney syndicate for £30,000. So well was the salting done that expert after expert was deceived, and it was not until the market price of the syndicate shares totalled over £400,000 that the property was proved to have been 'prepared.' The discovery of this fraud gave a blow to mining in New South Wales from which it took a long time to recover.

THE FRENCH AT LAKE CHAD.

THERE is a fascination about the internal lakes of Africa far out of proportion to their value in a commercial sense as waterways. Not only is this the case with the great equatorial lakes, but far away to the north-west, on the borders of the waterless Sahara, Lake Chad has drawn the attention of explorers since the famous journeys of Barth and Nachtigal. Especially has the region had an attraction for our immediate neighbours across the Channel, who have long wished to make of the Chad a French lake. French ambition, in fact, has gone so far as to contemplate the possession of practically the whole of North Africa. But it was not to be expected that the other powers, which have been scrambling for and cutting up the Dark Continent, should acquiesce in this; and the agreements which have delimited the 'spheres of influence' of Great Britain, France, and Germany have brought each of the three nations into touch with the lake. By the agreement of August 1890, the English sphere extends along the west side of the lake southwards from Barua, a place of no importance and now in ruins, which our diplomatists 'in their wisdom' for some reason fixed upon; whilst by a treaty with Germany (15th November 1893), the eastern frontier of the English sphere touches the lake at a supposititious point thirty-seven minutes to the east of the meridian of Kuka, or in longitude fourteen degrees east. The Franco-German boundary (agreement of 4th February 1894) to the east is equally absurd, except so far as it takes the river Shari for the dividing line. No regard is had in this ridiculous arrangement for the political divisions of the native states.

So far as Germany is concerned, the frontage on the lake seems to be a matter of sentiment, for no expedition has yet been sent so far as its shores. From our own Niger possessions an attempt was made in 1889 to open up communication with the lake, when Sir Claude Macdonald was sent by the British government on a mission to the Niger. Starting from Akassa on 26th July, Sir C. Macdonald ascended the Niger and Benuë in the river-steamer *Boussa*, his plan being to steam as quickly as possible to the highest navigable point on the Benuë River (some nine hundred miles from the sea), thence to make a dash in a small launch up the Kebbi River and endeavour to find a waterway to Lake Chad. (See Mockler-Ferryman's *Up the Niger*, 1892.)

The *Boussa* drew six feet of water, and in this Sir Claude Macdonald was able to get as far as Garua, the highest trading station of the Royal Niger Company, some distance above Yola. Here the steamer was left, and the farther ascent was made in a steam-launch drawing only fifteen inches of water. Some ten or twenty miles above Garua, the Benuë receives from the north-east a considerable stream, known as the Kebbi River, which has a width of about two hundred and fifty yards at the junction. Native reports, partly confirmed by Barth, were to the effect that by ascending the Kebbi the Tuburi marshes would be reached, and that in the wet season these marshes communicated with the river of Logon, which flowed into the Shari and then into Lake Chad. The object therefore was to test the supposed waterway from the Benuë to Lake Chad, the course of the Kebbi having hitherto been unexplored.

The third day's steaming brought the little vessel to an open expanse of water, some three miles long by a mile and a half in width, called by the natives Habarat. Hippopotami were splashing about, but a swamp and the high rushes prevented the steamer from approaching the native town on the north shore, and the natives were too timid to approach close in their little canoes. The town was of considerable size and built of quadrangular mud huts, and was afterwards discovered to be named Bifara or Bipara. For some time search failed to find a channel leading beyond this lake, and it almost looked as if the lake was itself the source of the river. After one or two unsuccessful attempts to open up communication with the naked natives on the south shore, who entered the water brandishing their spears above their heads, an interpreter succeeded in gaining their confidence with a present of cloth, and one of the elders of the tribe was persuaded to come on board the little craft and act as pilot on the promise of a liberal present. The naked old savage fairly shivered with fright as he crawled on deck, and never relinquished his hold of a bundle of villainous-looking spears. Dozens of little canoes followed in case of treachery, as the steamer passed into a deep and winding channel, some twenty yards in width, flowing between banks thickly planted with dhurra. But after a few miles of difficult navigation, the length of the launch (sixty feet) prevented its rounding the sharp bends of the stream, the bows frequently running on one bank whilst the rudder suffered from violent contact with the other. This was disappointing, especially as the guide said they would find a little farther broader water again and be able to arrive at a large town called Lere, some twenty miles higher up the stream. There was nothing for it but to turn back, though turn they literally could not in a stream less in width than half the length of the boat, and it was necessary to let the launch drift down, stern foremost, with the current, all hands standing ready with poles to shove off as it bumped against the banks. It was now the

height of the rainy season, the volume of water was inconsiderable, and it was evident that the stream farther would not be practicable for commercial purposes.

More active and persevering attempts to reach Lake Chad have been made by the French from their possessions on the Lower Congo and in the Western Soudan. From the former M. Fourneau ascended the Sanga River and its tributary the Masa in 1891; and farther to the eastward M. Paul Crampel in the same year reached as far as El Kuti, south of Wadai, where he was made prisoner by the sultan and handed over to the adventurer Rabah, together with one hundred and fifty Martini rifles which he had with him. Crampel and many of his men died of fever. M. Jean Dybowski was sent out to ascertain his fate and to punish the evildoers. Starting from Loango, he crossed to Stanley Pool, then ascended the Congo and Ubangi to Bembe and pushed northward through a country rendered difficult through heavy rains until he reached the upper Shari, when want of provisions compelled him to retrace his steps.

A far more important and successful journey was made from Senegal by Lieut.-Col. P. L. Monteil, who started from St Louis in 1890, and after reaching Lake Chad returned across the desert to Tripoli. The account of his journey was published in 1895 in a sumptuous quarto volume *(De St Louis à Tripoli par le Lac Tchad)*.

The Anglo-French convention for the delimitation of the spheres of influence to the west of Lake Chad contained the provision: 'The Government recognises the sphere of France to the south of the Mediterranean up to a line from Say on the Niger to Barua on Lake Tchad, drawn in such a manner as to comprise in the sphere of action of the Royal Niger Company all that fairly belongs to the kingdom of Sokoto.' This convention was signed on 5th August 1890, and on the following day Monteil was commissioned to explore this Say-Barua line. Taking with him ten Senegalese soldiers and a French non-commissioned officer, he on 9th October set out for the interior from St Louis, going by water up the Senegal River to Kayes, the chief town of the French Soudan. From there he travelled overland to the Niger, which he reached at Bamaku. Until beyond Segu he was still within the territory effectually held by the French government, Segu having been taken from Ahmadu by Colonel Archinard only a few months before. From Segu it was Monteil's intention to cross what the French call the buckle of the Niger—that is the land within the great bend—direct to Say. But the country was now much disturbed by the war between the French and the Fulah or Toucouleur leader, Ahmadu, and it was necessary to make a considerable detour to the south by way of Sikasso. From here he again turned his steps eastward, signing treaties with the fama (king) of Bussura, in the Bobo country, and the Almamy of Lanfiera, in Dafina—placing their territories under the French protectorate. Near Lanfiera he crossed the upper waters of the Volta, which was here about forty yards wide and about six feet deep.

At Wagadugu, the capital of Mossi, where he arrived on 28th April 1891, he met with a different reception. The Almamy, whose predecessor had shown himself hostile when Dr Crozat visited the town in the previous year, had recently returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca. Mossi is an important negro state which has not only preserved its independence, but possesses an ancient negro civilisation, differing in this respect from the barbarism which elsewhere attaches to negro institutions. Tradition carries back the origin of the royal family of Mossi to the creation of the world. The first Naba (king) had three hundred and thirty-three children, amongst whom he divided his country on his death, and it is said that this division exists to the present day! The government of the country is well organised, under a number of nabas, all subservient to the Naba of Wagadugu, who takes the title of Naba of Nabas, though his authority is little more than nominal. The country is settled, prosperous and peaceful, and is, Monteil says, the one country of the Soudan where the villages are not fortified. Millet, haricots, cotton, and indigo are cultivated, and the people possess fine horses and donkeys. Weaving is carried on, and the cotton cloths of Mossi are valued throughout the Soudan. It is in Mossi also that are found the cowrie shells which form the medium of exchange in the Soudan. Prosperous and free from outside domination as they were, therefore it is not to be wondered at that the rulers of Mossi resented the intrusion of foreigners. Accordingly the Almamy soon brought Monteil an order from the Naba of Nabas to leave Wagadugu at once, and by the way he had come. In vain did the traveller represent that he was an envoy from the French government, and had presents for the Naba. The only reply was: 'It is the king's order.' And the little party was escorted for some distance along the road it had come, by the men of Mossi, in drenching rain.

Turning more to the northward, Monteil pushed on towards Say, signing treaties with the Fulah Emir of Liptako, and the avaricious king of Zebba, in the Yagha country. At Nadiango, in the Torodi country, the king refused to see him and would have nothing to do with a treaty; but Ibrahima, king of Ouro-Gueladjio, who is said to be the paramount Fulah chief of the country between Say and Liptako, was more amenable, and he accepted a treaty of protectorate (12th August 1891). Seven days later the Niger was reached at Say, where the king also accepted the protectorate as a matter of course. Say is not a town of great commercial importance.

From this point Monteil was entering on the territory which the Anglo-French treaty referred to; and it was generally understood that the countries to the eastward were comprised in the Fulah empire of Sokoto. Not so, says Colonel Monteil, with regard to the districts between Say and the town of Sokoto. Between these two points there are or were, it seems, three states: Djerma, Mauri, and Kabbi, whilst to the south of these is Dendi. Djerma and Dendi are peopled by the Sonrhai (Songhay) race; Mauri and Kabbi by Hausas. The chiefs of these states, whilst independent of each other, recognised the sovereignty of the king of Kabbi. They had been free from the domination of the Emperor of Sokoto for thirty years, and had long proved a thorn in the side of the latter, so that a few months after Monteil's visit the Emperor of Sokoto entered into league with Ibrahima Gueladjio against them, and whilst the former took Argungu the latter took possession of Djerma and Mauri. This took place in the early months of 1892. Monteil considered himself free to negotiate with these states, but the kings of Djerma and of Kabbi would have nothing to do with treaties. At Mauri permission for the travellers to pass through the country was made to depend on the result of a raid by the king against Gandé. As he returned from this raid with a booty of six hundred captives, Monteil was allowed to proceed without molestation.

It was not until within a few stages west of the town that Monteil entered the territory of the powerful Emperor of Sokoto. At the capital he was favourably received by the emperor, who had just succeeded to the throne, and was induced to sign a treaty, although, unknown to him, a treaty had been signed in the preceeding year (1890) between his immediate predecessor and the Royal Niger Company, besides one entered into with Mr Joseph Thomson in 1885. From here Monteil travelled by way of Gandi to Kano, the most important town of the central Soudan. Here he was detained three and a half months, and the king of Kano tried to dissuade him from going to Kuka, the capital of Bornu, telling him that a white man had been sent back from there. This, it afterwards turned out, was Mr Charles Mackintosh, a representative of the Royal Niger Company. Monteil learned that Mackintosh had been turned back from Kuka because he had arrived there without asking permission to enter the town, perhaps also because the Arabs were afraid the whites would take away their trade.

From Kano, Monteil reached Madia, the first village in Bornu, by a route, previously unexplored, between those of Clapperton and Barth. The villages passed by the earlier travellers had in many cases been removed to other situations owing to want of water. Monteil was received with evident want of cordiality by the Ghaladima (king), who was next in power to the Sheik, but was given permission to approach the capital. On arrival at Kuka (9th April 1892), he was met by a body of one hundred and fifty horsemen dressed in coats of mail, who rushed up to him lance in hand, only halting when their weapons were within a few inches of his face and breast. This trying and dangerous ordeal, it turned out, was intended as a great honour. Then the horsemen turned round and escorted him to the gates of the town, where his entry was witnessed by forty thousand people. A day or two after, he was received in grand audience by the Sheik. Having no letter of authorisation, he with a Frenchman's readiness concocted one, which, being in French, no one could read, so that the fraud escaped detection. Here, as everywhere, he had to make numerous presents to the Sheik.

Monteil, unlike Mackintosh, found it easier to get into Kuka than to get out. Desiring to return by way of Tripoli, the Sheik gave his consent for him to do so, but it was three and a half months before he succeeded in leaving the town. It soon became evident that the policy of delay was indulged in with a view to fleecing the travellers. But the day at last came, and on 15th August he set out with a caravan which was returning to Murzuk. Then came the weary ride across the waterless desert, trying alike to man and beast. It was with quite a relief that he again came upon the signs of civilisation. At Murzuk he was comfortably lodged in the house which had been occupied in 1870 by the unfortunate Miss Tinné, whose murder, he learned, was not due to the Tuaregs, as generally supposed, but to an Arab of the Oulad-bon-Sef tribe, named Ethmann-bonn-Badia, who in his turn deservedly met with a violent death twenty years later. Here the Turks have a garrison of five hundred men, and here also Monteil saw a number of Cretan, Armenian, Albanian, and Servian Christian prisoners, who had been sentenced to transportation.

On 10th December 1892, Colonel Monteil was welcomed at Tripoli by the French consul after a journey across the desert of nearly four months, and after carrying out successfully the boast with which he started, 'With ten armed men I could cross Africa.'

It was reported at the end of last year that a French vessel had been afloat on the waters of Lake Chad. M. Gentil in 1896 proceeded to the Shari basin by way of the Ubangi, taking with him a small steamer in sections to place upon the former river. He reached the Nana, a southern tributary of the Shari, and his steamer, the *Léon Blot*, had been put together on the river, and in May last started on its voyage to the lake. A letter, dated July 25, 1897, from a Frenchman in Upper Egypt, announced that the *Léon Blot* had reached Lake Chad. 'We may be proud of that,' said the writer; 'it is the first vessel afloat on the mysterious lake, and it is a French boat.'

BORING OIL-WELLS IN THE SEA.

ACCORDING to the *Scientific American*, the early settlers in California were familiar with indications of the existence of oil which were seen at various points along the coast, while asphaltum, which oozed up from beds at the bottom of the sea, formed an important factor in the household economy of the aborigines, and in almost every burial-place on the coast asphaltum is found. The natives employed it to mend objects which were broken and as a base in which to place ornamental pieces of pearl mosaic. Baskets were fastened to ollas or jars by this means, and it was used for endless purposes in lieu of nails, cordage, and glue. The natives on the islands obtained their supply from the water, and at the present day the rocks at various places can be seen splashed with asphaltum which has drifted in. This is particularly noticeable after an east wind, showing that there is a large area in the deep Santa Catalina channel from which asphaltum oozes up. Off Redondo beach, in Los Angeles County, it is extremely troublesome, oozing out of the sand off-shore and drifting in. Between Santa Monica and Los Angeles there are undoubted deposits, and north of Santa Barbara several enormous ones. That owned by the More estate extends some distance along the shore, so that vessels are run in, and the asphaltum is shovelled on board. The quality of this asphaltum is stated to be equal to that of Trinidad.

Oil-wells were sunk at Santa Paula some years ago; and, later, an oil-producing belt was discovered at Puente, and again at Summerland, below Santa Barbara, where a singular state of affairs exists. It soon became apparent at the latter locality that the oil-bearing stratum stretched out into the sea, and drill scaffolding, looking like windmills without sails, began in a short time to extend down the little cañon, and to creep up the shore in the direction of Santa Barbara. At first they kept along the sides of the hills which breast the sea there; but gradually they turned seawards, until one more adventurous than the rest rose from the water. Work was started at an extremely low tide, and finally the tall scaffolding appeared twenty or thirty feet from the shore, rising from the sea. At present there are three borings, which even at low-tide are in the water, but at flood-tide are completely surrounded, the men working on platforms of various heights, which they successively ascend as the sea rises. So far the structures that have been built in the sea have not yet experienced a strong south-wester; but, as some of them stand in six feet or more of water at high-tide, in a severe storm their existence will become precarious. The drills are worked in the water from an engine on the beach, the fuel being the oil pumped up. This is probably the only place where oil is pumped out of the sea, but undoubtedly the entire coast overlies an oil-producing stratum. Off what is known as More's Wharf, half-a-mile out, oil rises to the surface in several places. A spring of fresh water also rushes up there with such velocity that it can be taken up and used if the slightly brackish taste is not objected to. A similar spring is known to exist on the Florida coast, where, it is said, a vessel can lie alongside the great rush of water and fill her tanks with fresh drinking-water out of the ocean.

Probably one of the strangest sights in oil-wells is seen at Los Angeles. There oil was first discovered in the western district, the choice residential part of the city; but, like magic, the lighthouse-like scaffoldings began to rise until the place appeared fairly to bristle with them. Fine residences were ruined by the proximity of the unsightly objects; and, finally, the whole place was given over to the oil-drills, and at present it resembles certain portions of the oil-region of Pennsylvania. The borings have advanced in a well-defined north-easterly direction, and at present appear to be stopped by the large Catholic cemetery, which overlies the oil stratum. Not far distant is the Los Angeles River, which probably will ultimately be encroached upon and made to give up its hidden riches. The discovery of oil in and about Los Angeles promises soon to supply the long-wished-for power required for manufacturing purposes. The Terminal Railroad has adopted the oil as fuel, and the Southern Pacific is said to be experimenting in the same direction. California is without deposits of coal, if we except lignite beds which crop out in various places, so that oil as a fuel will supply a want long felt at Los Angeles, and become a factor in the rapid development of this growing city.

PERCHANCE.

PERCHANCE some day, when twilight-tide has crept
Across the fens and widening willow-ways,
You will recall those days when passion slept
Unwakened by the kiss that thrills and slays;
You will look forth across the northern sea
And hear its thunder beating towards the bay,
And think of all our love that used to be,
Perchance some day.

Perchance some day, when slowly in the east
The dim, drear dawn is breaking—and the hum
Of busy feet is hushed—of me, the least
Of all your lovers, hallowed thoughts will come.
And I shall dream, and see you—eyes that yearn
Will gaze in yours—our hands will clasp and stay.
And so by spirit-paths you will return
To me—some day.

WALTER THACKWELL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, TENNESSEE.

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN stands in the midst of one of the most historic spots in the United States, and is itself historic. It was our good fortune to visit it a few weeks ago, and it is now our pleasure to write of it. We cannot do the famous old landmark justice, but we can introduce it to many who may never have heard of its existence. Travellers cross oceans, dare extreme perils, undergo discomforts in far lands to catch a glimpse of beauty in a sunrise or a sunset, a cataract or a lake, in snowcapped mountains or in a glacier, and yet leave as much, or more, beauty at home. How applicable this sentiment is to the thousands of Americans who travel away from home in every part of the globe none knows better than the writer. There is no country on earth so rich in natural beauty as the United States; and let the eager eye of the child of Uncle Sam rest on beauty of whatsoever sort it may, yet no human eye will ever compass as much beauty of earth and sky as that to be found in and around old Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Our starting-point was Cincinnati. All along our route south the scenery was quite remarkable. Innumerable lakelets smiled, grave mountains frowned, and bonny rivers laughed, while high bridges awed, and dark tunnels thundered at us, just as it were to make monotony impossible and our enjoyment supreme. After leaving Ohio a run of twelve hours found us at our destination —Chattanooga. The celebrated mountain lies north-west of the picturesque old city.

Early on the morning after our arrival we bestirred ourselves to get the first view of Lookout Mountain. How admiringly did we linger and try to realise his splendid proportions; and how eager we were to scale his almost perpendicular sides! This feat we literally accomplished later in the day. Taking a street car in Chattanooga, a very brief ride brought us to the base of the mountain and to the station of the newest route to the summit. From the foot to the crest by this incline is about one mile. The journey up and down is one of great interest, especially if the traveller be careful to look up. But should he chance to turn his eyes down or across or anywhere but up, he will experience a feeling quite akin to terror, and obtain a view that will certainly impress him. Sheer precipitousness and perpendicularity could go no further. Enough to turn the head of the most tried and thrill the heart of the stoutest and bravest. No admirer, however, of the grand old hill ought to neglect this incline, a wonderful triumph, surely, of human skill. The trip up and down only costs thirty cents; and heroism could not be purchased more cheaply.

The view to be had from the point of arrival at the top of the incline where stands Lookout Inn (a very fine hotel, by the way) is superb. At the time of our visit a quite perceptible haze dimmed the atmosphere; but in spite of this, 'The Preacher,' a young negro guide, pointed out to us no less than seven states, as follows: Tennessee, in which we stood; to the left, Kentucky and Virginia; before us, the Carolinas; to the right, Georgia; and behind, Alabama. In the nearer distance we were able to discern many points of deep historic interest; the battle-ground of Wauhatchee, where a terrific battle was fought between the Union and Confederate troops on October 24, 1863; Orchard Knob, the scene of the second day's battle of Chattanooga, and the headquarters for a time of Generals Grant and Thomas; the whole sweep of Missionary Ridge, where thousands fell; Rossville Gap, through which the Union forces retired to Chattanooga on the evening of the 21st October, after heavy fighting; and the National Cemetery, where lie thirteen thousand heroes, the headstones of five thousand of whom are marked 'Unknown.' Before us lay the still more famous battlefield of Chickamauga, where in a conflict of not quite two days sixty thousand fell. We must also make mention of the fine view we enjoyed of the most famous part of the noble Tennessee River known

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as Moccasin Bend, whose configuration answers exactly to the name it bears. Away to the left of us, after changing our position to Sunset Rock, waves of earth stood still as if in mute amazement at the supreme beauty of which they were, unconsciously, a part, crowned with a luxuriant growth of trees whose changing tints contributed generously to the rare loveliness of that which we beheld. 'Surely,' we mused, 'there is not upon this earth aught grander than this.' Indeed, in the judgment of one of the most travelled of our party, there is not. The mountains of Europe have a charm that is all their own; but he conveyed no disparagement of them when declaring that the view from Lookout Mountain exceeded anything of a similar nature he had seen in Europe. The same has been said of the mountain by all other travellers who have stood on its summit.

Lookout Mountain is seventy-five miles long, terminating abruptly at Chattanooga on the north, and Attalla (Alabama) on the south, crossing the north-west corner of Georgia. Its summit is a tableland, rather narrow for twenty-five miles at the north, and widening out to nine miles where it crosses the Georgia and Alabama line. The crest of the tableland is bounded by precipices for almost its whole length. As we stood gazing upon the craggy face of the mountain we wondered at the bravery and stout-heartedness of those who, upon its slopes, could and did carry on a brilliant fight for home and country and freedom. The advance of an army up its western slope, as one has well said, is a never-ending source of wonder. That a line of battle could have been maintained seems incredible. In his report of the Battle of Lookout Mountain, General Hooker says: 'Viewed from whatever point, Lookout Mountain, with its high palisaded crest, and its steep, rugged, rocky, and deeply-furrowed slopes, presented an imposing barrier to our advance; and when to these natural obstacles were added almost insurmountable, well-planned and well-constructed defences, held by Americans, the assault became an enterprise worthy of the ambition and renown of the troops to whom it was intrusted.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE PIER O' LEITH.

WHEN I came to the door of the 'Three Herrings' I presented an imposing sight, with Nicol at my side and two sailors at my back with my baggage. The landlord made me a civil greeting and placed his hostel at my service, opining that I was a stranger of consequence just come from abroad. So, bidding my servant settle with the men, I followed my host upstairs to a room where a fire was burning and some refreshment laid on the table.

An excellent supper was brought, on which I fell like a hawk, for the sea air had sharpened my hunger, and landward dishes are better than the meat of a ship. I bade the landlord let no one enter save my servant, for that I desired to be alone. Then I fell to summing up my monies and various calculations of a like nature which it was proper to make on my return; and, finally, I pushed away my chair from the table, and, filling my glass, gave myself up to pleasing fancies.

It was near the darkening, as I saw from the window which opened on the back yard, and which at that hour was filled with the red glow of sunset. The chimneys on the tall houses rose like spikes into the still air; and somewhere in the place a bell was ringing for I know not what. Below, in the room, I heard many mingled voices and a high imperious tone, as of one accustomed to authority. I guessed that some body of soldiers was filling the taproom. By-and-by I began to wish for Nicol's presence, and to wonder at his long absence.

I was just approaching a state of irritation with my servant when the door was softly opened and the defaulter appeared. His face struck me with surprise; for, whereas for usual it was merry and careless, it was now filled with grave concernment. He closed the latch quietly behind him, and then slipped the bolt, locked the door, and pocketed the key.

I stared in silent amazement.

'If it comes to the warst,' he said, 'we can fecht for't.'

'What fooling is this?' said I. 'Tell me at once, and have done with it.'

'It's nae fooling, laird, as ye'll be finding oot. Sit still, for I've a long story to tell ye.' And, having first listened for a noise from below, he began his news, while I listened in much trepidation.

'I paid the men as ye tellt me, and syne I gaed doon to my cousin's shop i' the Rope-Walk just to speir if they were a' weel, and then I cam' back to the inn, thinkin' to get a bit quiet gless a' by mysel' i' the chimley-corner. But when I gaed into the room I fund it filled wi' muckle sodger folk, drinkin' and sweerin' like deevils. And the first man I clappit een on was yin Jock Cadder, whae was yince a freend o' mine; so, sittin' doon aside Jock, I fell into crack.

'Weel, I hadna been there mony meenutes when I hears a loud voice frae the ither end ca'in' for a song. And anither voice answered, no' sae loud, but weak and thin. I jumpit up in

my seat, for the voices were weel kenned to me. And there I saw at the ither end o' the table your wanchancy cousin, the captain, sittin' glowrin' wi' his muckle een, and playin' wi' his gless. And aside him was nae ither than Maister Michael Veitch, him o' Dawyck, but no' like what he used to be, but a' red about the een and fozy about the face, like a man that's ower fond o' the bottle.'

My heart leaped with a sudden terror at the news. What on earth was Marjory's brother doing on the Pier o' Leith in the company of my most bitter foe? A great sense of coming ill hung over me as Nicol went on.

'Weel, I was astonished; and speaking quiet in Jock Cadder's ear I asks him what it meant, and what the twae were daein' here? And this is what I heard from him, for Jock never jaloused I had aught to dae wi' ye, but thocht I was aye the same auld hide-i'-the-heather I had been afore. "When our captain cam' back frae furrin pairts," says he, "he gangs off to Tweeddale, your ain countryside, for it seems there's a lassie there he's awfu' fond o'. She's the dochter o' auld Veitch o' Dawyck, rich and by a' accoont terrible bonny. But she's trysted to the captain's cousin, Burnet o' Barns, whae has been in Holland for mair nor a year. It's weel kenned that Maister Gilbert Burnet, when he gets a ploy intil his heid, never stops till he wins his purpose; so he sets himsel' to mak' love to the lass. And he couldna dae this unless he were weel in favour wi' her brother Michael, so he begins by winnin' him ower to his side. Noo, Michael Veitch (that's him up there) was aye uncommon fond o' wine and yill o' a' description, so the captain leads him on and on, by drinkin' wi' him at a' times, till noo the man is fair helpless. But this wasna a', for if John Burnet cam' hame and fund this gaun on he wad mak' a rare camsteery; and by a' accoonts he's a stieve, dour chiel. So Maister Gilbert, whae's high in favour wi' the Privy Council, gangs and tells them o' some daeings o' his cousin's abroad, o' some hobnobbin' and plottin' wi' rebels and outlawed folk, and sending treasonable letters to this land under his name; so he gets a warrant for the lad's arrest as sune as he sets foot on Scots earth — and a'body kens what that means, that he'll no' be troubled muckle mair wi' his cousin in this warld. That's the reason we're doun here the day. We've had word that he's comin' ower i' the *Seamaw*, whilk lies at the Wast Harbour. We've been sendin' doun word thae last 'oors, but she's no' in there yet, and 'ill no' be noo till the morn."

'That was what Jock Cadder tellt me, and I warrant I was in a fine fricht. It was clear the captain had nae mind o' me, for he lookit twae or three times my way and never changed his face. I slips oot the door wi'oot being noticed, and cam' up here wi' a' speed to tell ye the tale. So, laird, ye're in a close hole, and there's just some auld wooden plankin' atween you and the Tolbooth.'

I cared little for the Tolbooth or anything else. One thing and one alone claimed all my attention. My whole soul was filled with a terror of anxiety, of mad jealousy, and desperate fear for my lady's sake. This was the cause of the letter, this the cause of her silence. I ground my teeth in helpless fury, and could have found it in my heart to rush down to Gilbert and choke the life in his throat. I was so appalled by the monstrousness of the thing that I could scarce think. My own danger was nothing; but that Marjory should be the sport of ruffians—the thing overpowered me. It was too fearsome, too monstrous.

One thing was clear—that I must go to her at once. If Gilbert Burnet was on the Pier o' Leith, Marjory Veitch at Dawyck would be quit of his company. Were I once there I could see her and perchance save her. I cannot write down my full trepidation. My fingers clutched at my coat and I could scarce keep my teeth from chattering. It was no fright that did it, but an awful sickening anxiety preying on my vitals. But with an effort I choked down my unrest, and centred all my thoughts on the present. Were I only in Tweeddale I might yet find a way out of the trouble. But woe's me for the change in my prospects. I had come home thinking in the pride of my heart to be welcomed by all and to cut a great figure in my own countryside; and, lo! I found myself an outlawed man, whose love was in peril, and whose own craig was none so sure. The sudden reverse all but turned my wits.

I walked to the window and looked down. The night was now dark, but below a glimmer from the taproom window lit the ground. It was a court paved with cobblestones from the beach, where stood one or two wagons, and at one end of which were the doors of a stable. Beyond that a sloping roof led to a high wall, at the back of which I guessed was a little wynd. Once I were there I might find my way through the back parts of Leith to the country, and borrow a horse and ride to Tweeddale. But all was hazardous and uncertain, and it seemed as if my chance of safety was small indeed. I could but try, and if I must perish, why then so it was fated to be.

'Nicol,' said I, 'bide here the night to keep off suspicion, and come on as soon as you can, for the days have come when I have much need of you.'

'There's but ae thing to be dune, to tak' to the hills; and if ye gang onywhere from the Cheviots to the Kells, Nicol Plenderleith 'ill be wi' ye, and ye need ha'e nae fear. I'll e'en bide here, and if ye ever win to Dawyck I'll no' be lang ahint ye. Oh, if I could only gang wi' ye! But if ye suffer aught, there'll be some o' His Majesty's dragoons that'll dree their weird.'

My servant spoke fiercely, and I was much

affected at the tenderness for me which it betokened.

'If I never see ye again, Nicol, you'll watch over Marjory? Swear, man, swear by all that's sacred that you'll do my bidding.'

'I solemnly swear that if ye come to ony scaith, I'll send the man that did it to Muckle Hell; and I'll see that nae ill comes ower Mistress Marjory. Keep an easy mind, laird; I'll be as guid as my word.'

Without more ado I opened the window and looked out. My servant's talk of taking to the hills seemed an over-soon recourse to desperate remedies. Could I but remove my sweetheart from the clutches of my rival, I trusted to prove my innocence and clear myself in the sight of all. So my thoughts were less despairing than Nicol's, and I embarked on my enterprise with good heart. I saw the ground like a pit of darkness lie stark beneath me. Very carefully I dropped, and, falling on my feet on the cobblestones, made such a clangour beneath the very taproom window that I thought the soldiers would have been out to grip me. As it was, I heard men rise and come to the window; and, crouching far into the lee of the sill, I heard them talk with one another. 'Tut, tut, Jock,' I heard one say, 'it is naething but a drucken cadger come to seek his horse. Let be, and sit down again.' When all was quiet I stole softly over to the other side, that I might scale the wall and reach the wynd, for I dare not pass through the open close into the Harbour Walk lest I should be spied and questioned by the soldiers who were ever lounging about.

But some fortunate impulse led me to open the stable door. A feebly-burning lantern hung on a peg, and there came from the stalls the noise of horses champing corn. They were the raw-boned hacks of the soldiers, sorry beasts, for the increase of the military in the land had led to a dearth of horses. But there was one noble animal at the right, slim of leg and deep of chest, with a head as shapely as a maiden's. I rushed hotly forward, for at the first glance I had known it for my own horse Maisie, the best in all Tweeddale. A fine anger took me again to think that my cousin had taken my steed for his own mount. I had sent it back to Barns, and, forsooth, he must have taken it thence in spite of the vigilant Tam Todd. But I was also glad, for I knew that once I had Maisie forth of the yard, and were on her back and she on the highway, no animal ever foaled could overtake her. So I gave up all my designs on the wall, and fell to thinking how best I could get into the Harbour Walk.

There was but one way, and it was only a chance. But for me it was neck or nothing, my love or a tow in the Grassmarket; so I tossed my plumed hat and my embroidered coat to a heap of hay, tore open my shirt at the neck, put a piece of straw between my lips, and soon was a very tolerable presentment of an ostler or farrier of some kind. So, taking Maisie's bridle—and at my touch she thrilled so that I saw she had not forgotten me—I led her boldly across the court, straddling in my walk to counterfeit some fellow whose work was with horses. My heart beat wildly as I went below the archway and confronted the knots of soldiers, who, sitting on a low bench or leaning against the wall, were engaged in loud talk and wrangling.

'Ho, you, fellow, where are you going with the captain's horse?' cried one. I knew by his tone that the man was a Southron, so I had little fear of detection.

'I'm gaun to tak' it to the smiddy,' said I in my broadest speech. 'The captain sent doun word to my maister, Robin Rattle in the Flesh Wynd, that the beast was to be ta'en doun and shod new, for he was gaun far the neist day. So I cam' up to bring it.'

The man looked satisfied, but a question suggested itself to him.

'How knew you the one if you were never here before?'

'It was the best beast i' the place,' I said simply; and this so put his mind at rest that, with a gratuitous curse, he turned round, and I was suffered to go on unmolested.

Down the Harbour Walk I led him, for I dared not mount lest some stray trooper recognised the horse and sought to interrogate me. Very quietly and circumspectly I went, imitating a stableman by my walk and carriage as I best knew how, till in ten minutes I came to the end, and turned into Leith Walk and the borders of Edinburgh.

LIVING PHOTOGRAPHS.

By T. C. Hepworth.

IN a former article the illusion known by the above title was described as one of the newest and most attractive applications of the optical (or magic) lantern; and, in the same way that we endeavoured to trace the genesis and evolution of the latter instrument, we will now endeavour to watch the gradual growth of this most fascinating phase of photographic art.

As in the case of the optical lantern, the Cinematograph originally came from toy-land, and in its most simple form consisted of a card which could be rapidly twirled between the fingers by means of attached threads. On one side of the card was printed a horse and on the other side

a man, and the two images by this rapid twirling were made to coalesce and appear as a mounted horseman. It is quite evident that if by such simple means we could bring before the eye a succession of cards bearing progressive pictures, a very good idea of movement could be represented. Indeed, the thing has been lately accomplished in little books of pictures sold in the streets, the bent leaves of which can be rapidly released by the finger. And it may be mentioned here that an American contrivance, called the Mutascope, is to be presently introduced, which works on the same principle—the cards, bearing pictures of much larger size, being brought in rapid succession before the eyes by means of mechanism set in motion by a penny-in-the-slot device.

The Zoetrope is another of the old, but more elaborate, instruments for bringing progressive designs before the eye, and so cheating it into the belief that a moving figure is before it; and at one time various other toys on the same principle were submitted to public approval.

More than forty years ago a successful attempt was made to project such images on the lantern-screen, and there must be many persons now living who saw such things done at the old Polytechnic Institution in Regent Street, London. The apparatus was rough compared to that now employed, and the designs were hand-painted on glass, for what is now known as 'instantaneous photography' was not dreamt of in those days. These designs were generally not more than twelve in number, and they described a simple movement, such as a man trying to catch a butterfly with a net—the same cycle of movements being repeated over and over again. It is curious to note that the first instrument of this kind was invented by a blind man, M. Plateau. An improved apparatus was afterwards introduced by Mr Beale, of Greenwich, but he too had to rely upon rough designs painted on glass or cut out, stencil fashion, from thin metal.

The next step forward was by Mr Muybridge, a Californian photographer, who directed his attention to the portraiture of animals in motion, not with any intention of making the pictures into what we now know as 'living photographs,' but with the higher aim of analysing muscular movement in a scientific spirit. He used a battery of cameras, and, by means of a string stretched from each instrument across a kind of racing track, an animal, such as a horse, in running along that path, would break each thread in succession, and cause himself to be photographed in a fraction of a second in the particular attitude which he happened to assume at the moment. Mr Muybridge photographed various animals in this way, and published the pictures in a large volume. He afterwards lectured over here, and carried with him an instrument of the form already described for throwing the progressive images of his photographed animals on a screen. Anschütz in Germany later on worked on the same lines, and produced various excellent studies showing the phases of an animal's gallop, of a bird's flight, &c. But all these clever attempts to combine a number of images on the lantern-screen were hampered by the necessity of employing glass as a support for the pictures. No other material then known had the transparency and whiteness required.

The sudden bound from these instruments, which were little better than toys, to the perfect machines now employed for showing the so-called 'living photographs,' is undoubtedly due to the introduction of a new material for the support of the photographic picture. It is obvious that with such a rigid, and at the same time brittle, substance as glass little could be done in this way; but directly the glass was replaced by a ribbon of flexible, transparent celluloid, half the difficulties at once vanished. The new material offered a ready means of securing consecutive negatives, in a specially-constructed camera, of scenes full of movement, and also of providing a strip of corresponding positive images for exhibition as living photographs.

The two instruments—the camera and the projecting lantern—are indeed so much alike that a description of one will almost serve for the other. But note that the first takes in the daylight, which acts upon a rapidly-moving celluloid ribbon; and that the last transmits the artificial light—preferably that from the electric arc—which forms one of its necessary features.

The camera is furnished with two reels or spools, one of which is charged with, say, fifty feet of celluloid ribbon coated with a photographic emulsion sensitive to light. The other reel receives the ribbon after it has been exposed to the action of the lens. This lens forms a picture of the scene in front of the camera not much larger than a postage-stamp, on that portion of the ribbon which happens for the time to be in its focal plane. By turning a handle the operator causes the film to travel between the two reels, and by suitable mechanism to stop fifteen times in each second, a dark screen shutting off the light between each such exposure. The result is a series of pictures one above the other on a continuous ribbon of celluloid, the number being proportionate to its length. Each picture is a trifle different from the one which precedes and follows it; for instance, a moving train will show a gradual advance in each one of the series. In this way the negative image is produced, and from such a negative a series of positive pictures is obtained for use in the projecting apparatus or lantern.

In this latter instrument precisely the same means are adopted for projecting upon a screen or sheet the pictures in the same order in which they were taken, and those quickly following so merge into one another that the impression of an actually moving scene is reproduced with astonishing fidelity.

All instruments of this kind depend upon a peculiar property of the human eye known as 'persistence of vision,' by which the image of an object perceived remains impressed upon the retina for about the tenth-part of a second. It is possible to refer to a number of illustrations which will make this readily understood, but a few will suffice. We, most of us, unconsciously wink our eyes several times in each minute, and were it not for the image of things looked at 'persisting' on the retina we should each time have the disagreeable sensation of darkness, which we certainly have not. Again, the boy who twirls a stick with a glowing end round and round makes, in the dark, circles of fire—at least so they appear to be, although we well know that there is only one point of light. When we are travelling by rail and a train rapidly passes ours in the opposite direction we can see the landscape through its windows without any apparent break. By the same law, pictures passed before the eye with sufficient frequency, and occupying the same position, will merge one into the other, and give us the impression of a single, unbroken design.

The first instrument which employed the celluloid ribbon as a support for the pictures was Edison's Kinetoscope, which took the form of a cabinet into which the spectator looked through two eyeholes in the top. By very clever mechanism, actuated by an electric motor, the various pictures were brought into view in rapid succession, and the idea of movement was faithfully attained. But this instrument had but a brief popularity, possibly because only one person could see it at one time: it was merely a question of mechanics to apply the same principle to the projecting lantern, and this was speedily accomplished.

The expense and trouble involved in taking a series of negatives for one of these animated photographs is considerable, although the actual operation occupies little more than a minute of time. The cost of the sensitised ribbon of celluloid is about 30s., a similar ribbon for the corresponding positive bringing up this item to £3. After exposure in the camera, the ribbon, or film, as it is called, must be developed, and to develop a strip of material many yards long is no light undertaking. It is in fact wound upon a drum, and the drum is rotated in a bath of the developing fluid until the pictures make their appearance; after which it is fixed, washed, and dried before being removed from its support. Then from this negative the positive has to be carefully printed by the action of light on a similar ribbon, and this new film too must be developed, washed, and dried; operations in which the risk of failure creeps in at every point. The enterprise could never be made to pay were it not for the circumstance that a single negative film will yield any number of positives, and that there is a great demand for productions of the kind.

But even in the initial stage of the work, the taking of the pictures in a camera, accidents will happen. For example, the operator may be photographing some notable scene, such as the Lord Mayor's Show. He has chosen the most interesting part of the procession for his pictures, and sets the apparatus going, when an individual suddenly interposes his broad back, all unconscious of the harm he is doing, in front of the instrument, with the result that the expensive film is wasted upon a series of uninteresting and valueless studies of a man's head and shoulders.

There are many different forms of apparatus for exhibiting these animated photographs—all working on much the same lines, and differing only in details of mechanism. They mostly are adapted for pictures of the size already mentioned, little larger than a postage-stamp. The American Biograph stands alone in utilising pictures covering about nine square inches, and a French inventor has adopted an intermediate size.

By common consent the American instrument is judged to be the finest yet produced, and its superiority is principally due to the circumstance that its pictures are so large in area. This is easily understood when it is remembered that the whole of the light which projects the picture from the lantern to the screen must go through the picture—and a large one will necessarily pass a great deal more light than a small one will. In the result the pictures can be shown on a very large scale, and become most life-like in their effect; but the increase in the area of the film, which is roughly from one to nine, of course makes a proportional increase in the cost of producing the pictures.

A most ludicrous effect is produced upon the screen by reversing the natural order in which the pictures are passed through the projecting apparatus. Thus, the picture may represent a plunge bath, and we see one swimmer after another take a header from a high spring-board and note the splash and tumult in the water as each man dives below its surface. Now, when this picture is passed through the lantern in the reverse order, a most comical state of things comes about. First the still water, next a splash, and then a diver emerges feet first from that splash, and, in a graceful backward curve through the air, alights upon the diving-board—retiring backwards to make room for some one else who goes through the same inane performance.

It is only fitting that the art of photography, which found its birth about the year 1837, when our Empress-Queen was crowned, should be exhibited in its latest triumphant phase sixty years later on the occasion of the diamond jubilee of Her Most Gracious Majesty. On the day of that great public procession a large number of the newly-contrived cameras were at work, and

some miles of celluloid film were passed through those instruments. Many successful pictures were obtained, and have been shown all over the country in the form of living photographs. These will be a precious legacy to posterity. Would that we had the opportunity of viewing in the same way some of those events of the past which go to make up our national history!

THE HUSBAND OF MILLICENT.

CHAPTER II.

THE next day she felt a little more cheerful. The weather was bright and sunny, and, as she had an excellent digestion, her spirits rose in spite of herself.

After some consideration she decided she would go and lunch with an aunt who lived about five miles distant, and at whose house she had been staying when she first met her husband—it would distract her thoughts.

Of course she would not let a word of what was troubling her pass her lips; it would be most undignified. Still, there was the consolation of knowing that unbounded sympathy might be hers if she chose to requisition it; for she knew that her aunt always sided with her own sex at heart, whatever she might feel it her duty to verbally affirm.

About half-past twelve the phaeton and cob came round, and she drove off down the chestnut drive, up the Church Hill, and along the winding village street. But Millicent did not heed the parish to-day. She was lost in thought. She neither remembered to nod to old Jenkins, who stood blinking in the sun at the corner of the blacksmith's shop, nor to stop and inquire after Mrs Ingram's ninth baby, which was suffering from some infantile disorder.

She hardly noticed the beautiful russets and reds of the late autumn, massed in lavish colour on either side of the country lanes through which she passed. She drove mechanically, avoiding the ruts and the patches of newly-laid stones more by instinct than by observation.

Her uncle greeted her at the hall-door as she arrived. 'Delighted to see you, my dear; you are just in time for luncheon. The gong has sounded, but we have not begun. Your aunt will be so pleased to see you.'

He helped her to divest herself of her driving coat, and they crossed the hall and went into the dining-room together.

Mrs Jermingham was seated at her place at the table. She jumped up to welcome her favourite niece.

'Oh Millicent!' she cried as she kissed her warmly upon each cheek, 'I am so glad you have come. How are you, dear? Come here and sit by me. Cold chicken and tongue? You will like that salad. Your uncle made the sauce. It takes seven minutes to drop the oil; he is so very particular. Is Henry still away? It seems a long time. Oh yes, I know; of course he must look after his father. The only child left. Poor old man. He won't recover, I should say, at his age. Oh yes, George, I know what you are going to remark; but you have always considered your liver, and are so abstemious. Few men are like you. I hear the property is very much let down, and——'

'Will you be so good as to pass the potatoes, Sophia?' interrupted her husband, who for upwards of forty years had acted as conversation-quencher to his wife without entire success.

'I always said Henry was an excellent son,' continued Mrs Jermingham in an unperturbed voice. She always made a point of praising husbands before newly-married wives. 'They say his devotion to his mother upon her deathbed was quite a thing to see.'

'Yes, I dare say,' said Millicent absently, as she helped herself to some salt.

'And a good son makes a good husband,' added her aunt, with a smile in her niece's direction.

'Except when he doesn't,' observed Mr Jermingham jocosely, as he munched his celery.

'Your uncle is only joking, dear; he knows quite well that what I say is true. He was a good son himself.'

'And is a model of husbandly virtue now,' interrupted that gentleman blandly.

'Well, as aunt always gives in to you, it's easy enough,' cried Millicent, a touch of asperity in her voice. She disapproved of her uncle as a husband, and rather prided herself upon her courage in letting him know it.

'Of course, my dear,' interrupted her aunt hastily. 'It's one's duty. I always agree with your uncle as my duty—a wife's duty. And I also prefer it.'

Millicent looked at her aunt with commiseration in her eyes. It was bad enough to call it duty—but to hug her chain!—to pretend to herself she liked it! It was really very sad.

'Oh yes, I know you women—you're very deep; you give in so meekly, and get your own way all the same. I know you!' Mr Jermingham leaned back in his chair and laughed, with the air of a man who knows he is master, but enjoys playing with the opposite idea.

'I don't give in,' said Millicent stolidly. 'I should think it quite wrong to do so. Women don't nowadays. They expect to be treated on equal terms.'

Mrs Jermingham looked a little nervously at her niece. She wished she would not take up these strange upsetting ideas. And then, too, to snatch away her crown of glory — her forty years of self-repression—was not kind.

'How is the parish getting on, dear?' she asked, a little timidly. She felt it was rather a sudden break upon the conversation; but she wanted to return to more comfortable ground.

'Oh, pretty well. We have a man to help with the Sunday duty, and I do what I can in visiting the people, and that sort of thing.'

'I am sure you make a most excellent substitute, my dear,' said her uncle, as he replenished her glass with claret. 'That hat is most becoming. I have always held that a clergyman's wife should have an attractive exterior—it paves the way so pleasantly.'

'My dear George, I am sure you don't mean what you say. You know quite well that people ought to dress quietly when they visit the poor, and set a good example. Especially a clergyman's wife.'

Millicent had not an over-abundant sense of humour, but she felt her aunt was a trifle matter-of-fact. She smiled good-humouredly at her uncle, and turned the conversation by inquiring about the garden. 'You must show me round after lunch, aunt,' she said. 'I want to know all about autumn plants.'

Mrs Jermingham's eyes brightened. She was a born gardener, and needed little encouragement to launch forth upon the subject of bulbs and cuttings and hot-house management, and other horticultural information. But though Millicent's face smiled attentively as they walked up and down the old-fashioned garden-walks afterwards, her thoughts were not there. They had flown back to her troubles; and when at last, laden with spoil in the shape of plants and flowers, they returned to the house together, she made up her mind what she would do. She must confide in somebody—some one who would sympathise, who would be sure to take her part.

She would confide in her aunt. Mrs Jermingham might not be the best person in the world to go to for advice, but she was sure to be sympathetic. That was the important point. It would no doubt be more dignified to bear her trouble alone; but dignity is poor consolation in distress. She would sacrifice it this once.

'Come upstairs, dear; I have something to show you,' said her aunt, as she deposited the basket of flowers upon the hall-table, and began to take off her garden gloves. 'It's a new mantle,' she whispered as they walked up the broad oak staircase together; 'don't say anything about it to your uncle. He thinks that women over a certain age don't want new clothes. But really, dear, the white and blue horsecloths he got the other day cost ever so much more.'

They passed down a long, dimly-lighted passage, at the end of which was Mrs Jermingham's room.

'Aunt,' said Millicent as they entered, 'don't get out the mantle yet; I have something to tell you, something that's bothering me dreadfully. Sit down here and I'll tell you what it is.'

Mrs Jermingham turned round, in the midst of unlocking the wardrobe, with a mixed expression of anxious inquiry and pleasurable anticipation upon her face.

'Yes, dear; what is it?' she said eagerly, as she settled herself on the low sofa by her niece's side.

Millicent gave a minute account of the whole affair. She described her injured feelings so graphically that she was quite moved for herself afresh. Her eyes were almost tearful as she came to a pause at the end.

'What can it be? What would you do?' she said as she looked questioningly at her aunt.

Mrs Jermingham had listened with breathless attention. 'Poor darling! it is most extraordinary. I do feel for you,' she cried.

'I knew you'd take my part, that's why I told you,' said Millicent, in a slightly-gratified voice.

'Yes, but—you know, dear, it may not be anything very bad; and there are so many things about men we can't understand that—that'——

'Oh yes, I know all that. Of course, if Henry were a different sort of man I should say it had to do with a woman. All men's secrets have to do with women as a rule.' Millicent folded her arms and looked at her aunt with an air of exhaustive worldly wisdom.

'My dear, what dreadful things you say. Young women know so much more nowadays than when I was young. It takes one's breath away. I am sure it is something harmless—perfectly harmless—knowing Henry as I do. And no doubt he will tell you by-and-by.'

'He has no business to have secrets from me, harmless or not—secrets which a servant knows! that's the annoying part. I don't care if it is harmless, I ought to know.' She leaned back in the sofa, and stared angrily in front of her.

'One can't expect to know everything about a man,' said Mrs Jermingham in a qualifying tone. 'One would hardly wish to.'

'One expects to when one marries him,' answered her niece with some asperity—'at any rate I do.'

Mrs Jermingham looked pained. She was just about to remonstrate with this heterodox view when an idea seized her.

'Millicent,' she said impressively, 'I believe I know. I think I can guess what it is. It is something harmless — at least it is not exactly harmless—I should think it very wrong—but'——

'Yes—what is it?' interrupted Millicent eagerly.

'Well, you know, dear, my views, and how pained I have been at the surpliced choir and flowers, and calling it the altar, and that sort of thing?'

'Yes—well?'

'Several things have made me feel lately that Henry has tendencies towards—towards'—— Mrs Jermingham paused, and looked impressively at her niece.

'Towards what? Oh aunt, how mysterious you are!'

'Towards Rome!'

'Towards Rome! What do you mean?' cried Millicent, as she stared wonderingly at her aunt.

'Of course he would not like it to get about—the bishop being evangelical too.'

'But what on earth has that to do with the room?' interrupted her niece impatiently.

'I think, dear, it might be—it very likely is—a—private oratory.' She whispered the last words and looked nervously around as if she feared she might be overheard.

'Oh, is that all?' said Millicent indifferently. 'I'm sure I don't care if it is; only I won't have anything kept from me.'

Mrs Jermingham looked disappointed. She was accustomed, however, to have her suggestions somewhat slighted, and her voice was quite good-humoured as she answered: 'I wish you were more decided in your views, dear. I think it would be very dreadful if it were true—but still, I admit it might be worse, and'——

'I don't think it's that at all,' interrupted Millicent moodily. 'It is the curate who is High. Henry lets him go his own way. I think myself Henry is Broad.'

She frowned down upon the floor, and considered things for a few moments.

'I know what I shall do,' she said presently. 'I shall go and stay away with a friend, just to show what I think; that's what I shall do.'

'My dear, I don't think you had better do that. Henry will expect to find you here when he returns. Wait a little and see what happens. That is my advice.'

'Well, let him expect. It will do him good to be disappointed for once.' 'If she had disappointed uncle sometimes he would not be such a tyrant now,' she added to herself as encouragement. The idea worked in her mind as they returned to the drawing-room for tea, and fluttered before her as she said good-bye.

By the time she reached home it had so enlarged itself that she had quite made up her mind what to do. She would go up to town. She would go and stay with Jessie Waldegrave, her particular friend. Jessie lived with her sister in Kensington Square, and studied at the Slade Schools. They would both be delighted to see her. She knew that. It could easily be arranged. She would leave a note for Henry saying—she was not quite sure what. But that she could decide later on. It would be two days before she received Jessie's reply, and then she could make up her mind. Something dignified—that would touch his conscience—that would arouse his self-reproach.

Meanwhile she would get everything ready.

A ROUMANIAN BRINDISI.

By D. T. Timins, B.A.

IF a map of Europe were opened before the ordinary magazine reader and he were offered a large reward for pointing out Küstendje without a moment's hesitation, most probably the reward would not change hands. Possibly some few travellers, whose wanderings in eastern Europe had led them into the wilds of Roumania, and a few geographers, whose profession obliges them to keep the whereabouts of the most out-of-the-way spots at their fingers' ends, would fulfil the required conditions. The ordinary man would gaze helplessly at Norway, Russia, or elsewhere for inspiration; and he would have every excuse for his ignorance.

Küstendje is the Turkish spelling of the name of the Roumanian port on the Black Sea which (since 1878) the Roumanians spell Constanza and Constantza—a town of eight thousand inhabitants, believed to stand on the site of the Roman *Constantiana*. Roumania boasts of but few ports, as she has a very limited seaboard; nevertheless, those which she does possess enjoy a very large export trade, principally in grain. The customs tariff is too high to admit of a correspondingly large import traffic.

It may well be asked what possible interest this comparatively obscure place can possess for English readers. The answer is, that if the efforts of the Roumanian government are crowned with success, Englishmen will have a very vital concern indeed in the fate of Küstendje, for there is no less a project on foot than the ousting of Brindisi from its pride of place as first recipient of the home-coming Indian, Australian, and Oriental mails, and the substitution in its stead of this hitherto little-known seaport. The idea at first sight appears almost preposterous, but there are few people who know the enormous amount of money that has already been spent in endeavouring to further this ambitious scheme, or the extent of the negotiations which the Roumanian government have set on foot for the carrying out of their plans.

It has been an open secret for a long time past that Brindisi fails to give satisfaction as the selected European port of call for the P. & O. liners on their outward and homeward voyages.

The great inconvenience and delay which

travellers experience who embark or disembark at Brindisi, are perhaps more potent considerations in favour of a change being made than is the question of the expediting of the mails, for the latter are conveyed across Europe with fairly reasonable rapidity. The journey from Calais to Brindisi is known to be the most uncomfortable on the Continent, and the Italian railway companies, by their stubbornness at one time and their supineness at another, are mainly responsible for this state of things. The feud which existed between the Italian companies and the other European railway companies concerned in the carriage of the through mails to the East, down to a very recent date, caused all ocean-going travellers to avoid Brindisi as far as possible; and it was then that Marseilles came into favour, and its popularity is, moreover, steadily increasing.

While all this was going on, it occurred to an exceedingly astute Roumanian minister that it might be possible to devise a route for the Indian mail-train which should pass through Roumania and still be able to compete in point of time with the existing service *vid* Brindisi. It was not to be supposed that the P. & O. liners could be induced to steam up the Black Sea as far as the Roumanian coast, and therefore it became necessary to hit on some other expedient. Constantinople naturally suggested itself as being the most likely and suitable place for the purpose, but the government had no idea of letting Turkey reap more benefit than they could help from extraneous enterprise, and the same remark applied to Bulgaria. It thus became increasingly evident that, if the project were to be profitable to Roumania, that country must have entire control over all sections of the proposed through route, and also that such through route must inevitably terminate at Küstendje. For a railway already ran in an almost straight line from Bucharest to the banks of the Danube opposite Tchernavoda, and then continued on again from Tchernavoda to Küstendje. The first thing to do was evidently to construct a bridge over the Danube at the former place, and so do away with the necessity for ferrying over this river from the one station to the other. This bridge was built at an enormous cost, and formally opened in June 1892, at which time the first through trains ran between Bucharest and Küstendje.

The link to Constantinople was completed by means of two twenty-one knot passenger-steamers chartered for the purpose. Roumania cannot be characterised as exactly a maritime power, seeing that she possesses a navy consisting of but four ships, and it was therefore not surprising that she could not furnish suitable steamers from her own mercantile marine. It was very necessary that the steamers should be exceedingly speedy, inasmuch as they were practically competing with the Orient Express train, which was already running overland to Constantinople, though, fortunately for Roumania, its timing was—and still is—very slow during its transit through Turkey and Bulgaria.

The entire chain of communication was now complete, and it only remained to accelerate the journey to an extent which should attract travellers and bring the whole scheme before the English public. Negotiations were accordingly opened with the International Sleeping Car Company, which resulted in an arrangement being come to whereby, in consideration of the payment of a large subsidy, the Orient Express should run direct from Vienna to Küstendje on one day of the week and connect there with one of the new fast steamers to Constantinople. Not content with this, the government shortly afterwards, by promise of a further subsidy, induced the Sleeping Car Company to do the same with the newly-established Ostend-Vienna Express.

Here then was a real result from the labours of the government. Two of the most important and comfortable express trains in Europe now ran to Küstendje, giving through communication between that place and Paris, Vienna, Munich, Brussels, Cologne, Frankfort, &c.—in short, all the most important towns on the Continent; while they in their turn were afforded a new and more frequent service to Constantinople. So far so good.

Everything was now ready for the conveyance of the prospective traveller from London to Constantinople *vid* Küstendje, and it only remained for him to show his appreciation of this, the most recent addition to the travelling facilities of Europe, by patronising it in his thousands.

Unfortunately for the realisation of the rose-coloured dreams of the Roumanian government, the passenger booking-office gave a new illustration of that oft-quoted process known as 'summoning spirits from the vasty deep,' and Küstendje station echoes but to the fitful footfalls of the booking-clerk, while the splendid train of sleeping-cars stands by in mournful desolation until bidden by the omnipotent 'toot-toot' of the guard's horn to speed on its way—*empty!* It is a melancholy fact that there are scarcely any travellers by these trains, and that they frequently run empty, or with at most but one passenger, as far as Bucharest. Whether it be that the inhospitable billows of the Black Sea shake their crests too forbiddingly at the would-be traveller, or whether it be that the number of persons in search of the beauties and joys of the 'Golden Horn' or the Turkish cigarette is not sufficiently numerous to overflow from the existing direct route of the Orient Express *vid* Belgrade into the supplementary steamer route *vid* Küstendje, time alone can show. Suffice it for the present that the Roumanian government have already lost £60,000 over the experiment, according to the latest published returns, and it can only be in the event of their scheme ultimately finding favour in the eyes both of the English government and of the P. & O. Company that they can hope to recoup themselves for their enormous initial

outlay and the subsequent unexpected loss which it has entailed. It speaks volumes for the desire of the government to benefit the country that they should be willing to risk so large a sum of money and to continue to bear so heavy a burden in the interests of this slightly chimerical undertaking.

Let us see how the route actually compares at the present time with that *vid* Brindisi, and what saving could be effected by a subsequent reasonable acceleration, if the necessity arose for making one, and if a sufficient inducement were offered so to do. The boat train which conveys passengers for the Eastern mail steamers *vid* Calais and Brindisi leaves Victoria and Charing Cross at 9.0 P.M. on Friday night, and reaches Brindisi at 5.35 P.M. on the Sunday night following. The timing of this train, which is known as the Peninsular Express, is as follows:

London.....depart 9.0 P.M. Friday.
Calais.....depart 1.0 A.M. Saturday.
Brindisi.....arrive 5.35 P.M. Sunday.

Time—44 hours 35 minutes.

The portion of the journey which concerns us is that from Calais to Brindisi, as the connecting service from London to Calais would still remain the same whether the train were proceeding to Brindisi or to Küstendje. The run from Calais to Brindisi, then, occupies 40 hours 35 minutes.

The present through time-table to Constantinople *vid* Küstendje is as follows:

ORIENT EXPRESS.

	London	depart	11.0 A.M.	
	Calais	arrive	2.20 P.M.	
	"	depart	2.50 "	
Change	Rheims	arrive	8.16 "	Thursday.
	"	depart	8.32 "	
Change	Châlons	arrive	9.20 "	
	"	depart	9.26 "	
	Vienna	arrive	6.52 "	Friday.
	"	depart	7.36 "	
	Küstendje	arrive	11.50 "	Saturday.
Steamer	"	depart	12.30 A.M.	Sunday.
	Constantinople	arrive	3.30 P.M.	

Time from London—76 hours 30 minutes.
Time from Calais—72 hours 40 minutes.

OSTEND-KÜSTENDJE EXPRESS.

	London	depart	10.0 A.M.	
	Ostend	arrive	3.40 P.M.	Tuesday.
	"	depart	4.21 "	
	Vienna	arrive	4.30 "	Wednesday.
	"	depart	5.34 "	
	Küstendje	arrive	9.35 "	Thursday.
Steamer	"	depart	10.0 "	
	Constantinople	arrive	11.0 A.M.	Friday.

Time from London—73 hours.
Time from Ostend—67 hours 20 minutes.

Thus the Brindisi train holds an advantage of 26 hours 40 minutes over the Ostend-Küstendje Express and of 32 hours 5 minutes over the Orient Express. But against this must be set off the time occupied by the P. & O. boat in steaming from Port Saïd to Brindisi as compared with that which a connecting steamer would take in voyaging from Port Saïd to Constantinople. The point at which the two different routes would once more converge is the entrance to the Straits of Messina, and therefore this place has been selected as one of the terminal points for certain measurements, as will be seen in the subjoined table:

Port Saïd to Brindisi	1140 miles.
Port Saïd to Constantinople	920 "
Difference in favour of Constantinople	220 "
Straits of Messina to Brindisi	335 "
Straits of Messina to Constantinople	930 "
Total distance Port Saïd to Straits of Messina *vid* Brindisi	1475 "
Total distance Port Saïd to Straits of Messina *vid* Constantinople	1850 "

Therefore assuming that a P. & O. boat steams (as they normally do) at the rate of about 350 miles per day, the mails will be landed at Constantinople fifteen hours before they could be put ashore at Brindisi. The steamers between Constantinople and Küstendje at present perform the journey in thirteen hours, but this is very considerably below their contract speed, and if there were the slightest reason for them to make a quick passage they could easily shorten the time to ten hours. One of them, the *Carolus I.*, has already got well inside even this time. Therefore, allowing thirty minutes for the transhipment of the mails at Constantinople, Küstendje is reached with a clear advantage of 4 hours 30 minutes over Brindisi. Moreover, if the run from Port Saïd to Constantinople were performed, as it most probably would be, by separate steamers connecting at Port Saïd with the P. & O. liners, there would be no need to tranship the mails at Constantinople, for the connecting boats could proceed direct to Küstendje, thereby effecting a further saving in time to the extent of at least half an hour. And now for the land journey.

Taking the times at present given in the official time-tables, and assuming the Ostend-Küstendje Express to run from Küstendje to Calais *vid* Cologne, instead of to Ostend, and to be timed from Cologne to Calais to run at the same speed as does the Nord Express from Berlin, we get:

Küstendje to Cologne	46 hours.
Cologne to Calais	8 hours 20 minutes.
Total	54 hours 20 minutes.
Plus sea journey from Constantinople	10 hours.
Total	64 hours 20 minutes.
Deduct from this, time gained on voyage from Port Saïd	15 hours.
	49 hours 20 minutes.

This result apparently gives pride of place to the Brindisi route; but the relative speed of the two trains must be looked into. They are neither of them by any means fliers.

PENINSULAR EXPRESS.

Miles.			Speed.
1400	Calais.....depart 1.0 A.M. Saturday.		35 miles per hour.
	Brindisi.....arrive 5.35 P.M. Sunday.		

PROPOSED CALAIS-KÜSTENDJE EXPRESS.
(According to present timing of Nord Express and Ostend-Vienna Express.)

Miles.			Speed.
1535	Calais.....depart 2.37 P.M. Tuesday.		28½ miles per hour.
	Küstendje....arrive 9.45 " Thursday.		

But are we to suppose that travellers will rest content with these speeds?

Does not every month bring about some new acceleration of train services, and can we believe that so important an express as this one would be, could for long travel at so mean a speed? Such a thing is not to be thought of for one moment. In 1896 the Orient Express was accelerated as between Vienna and Küstendje by two hours, and its time could just as easily be shortened by a further two hours without even then running the train with any undue haste! The rich Indian mail-train subsidy is a prize well worth making a big effort to gain; and seeing that the Orient Express is owned by the English Post-office, they could kill two birds with one stone and effect a big saving to themselves by running it as the Indian Mail on one day of the week. Moreover, instead of having to deal with the lazy and obstructive private Italian railway companies, whose policy would justify any one in supposing that they were bent on killing the golden goose—that is, the Brindisi steamship traffic—the Post-office authorities would enjoy the hearty co-operation of an energetic government, whose whole action is one of vigorous reform and improvement, and who would meet them half-way in any scheme which would be of benefit to Roumania.

Here then is the time-table of the future Indian mail-train *vid* Küstendje, assuming it to run at the very moderate journey speed of forty miles an hour (no trains in England which run at a lower speed being characterised as 'express'):

NEW INDIAN MAIL-TRAIN.

Miles.		
	Calais.....depart.....2.40 P.M. Friday.	
1535	Küstendje.....arrive.....5.2 A.M. Sunday.	
	" .....depart (steamer) 5.30 A.M.	"
210	Constantinople....arrive " 3.30 P.M.	"

Time to Küstendje—38 hours 22 minutes. Speed, 40 miles an hour.

Through time, Calais to Constantinople.....48 hr. 50 min.
" " Brindisi.....40 hr. 35 min.

Difference in favour of Brindisi..... 8 hr. 15 min.

But deduct gain on voyage from Port Saïd to Küstendje over that from Port Saïd to Brindisi.....15 hours.

Difference in favour of Küstendje..... 7 hours.

This does not at first sight appear a very large gain, but it must be borne in mind that these calculations are based on the routes followed by existing trains. A very much shorter route could be arranged between Calais and Vienna than that *vid* Brussels, Cologne, and Frankfort without constructing a single mile of new railway. Moreover, a comparatively low rate of speed has been assumed for the whole journey.

But a gain of even seven hours is by no means inconsiderable where mail traffic is concerned, and this particular gain is capable of a large increase. If the lines east of Buda-Pesth were re-laid with heavier rails and doubled in a few places, there would be nothing to prevent the train from easily attaining a speed of sixty miles an hour over the flat plains of Roumania.

The whole project is no doubt very ambitious, but it possesses the three great elements indispensable to the success of any scheme—namely, feasibility, practicability, and superiority over existing conditions.

Now that the authorities at Brindisi are proposing to berth the P. & O. boats in a still less accessible and more unhealthy part of the harbour, there is all the greater reason for making a change; and if the Roumanian government are quick to seize the opportunity we may yet see the parti-coloured house-flag floating at the Golden Horn. The speedy consummation of any scheme which will deliver them from the terrors and discomforts of Brindisi will no doubt be devoutly prayed for by all Indian travellers.

But for the present we must cry in Roumanian, *Distoul!* (Enough!)

CORNERED.

By GEORGE G. FARQUHAR.

THE two shots rang out almost together; but that half-wink of time just made all the difference, for the Big Britisher's bullet got home somewhere in Cy Maskew's chest, while Cy's revolver simply spat its lead into the air without so much as winging a fly. Cy himself drops there, flat and limp, his face going bluey-gray, and a dark blotch spreading over the front of his woollen shirt.

Guess the Britisher didn't suspicion he had so heavy a finger on a trigger neither, or he wouldn't have stood there with his mouth open, staring at the body, for close on a minute before he stirred; yet, when he did move, he—well, he

just *moved*. Two dozen strides brought him to Jake Miller's shanty, where Jake's mare was hitched up, ready saddled—Jake having been over to the sawmill that very afternoon. Before you could have yelled 'Hail, Columbia!' the Britisher was up and pelting down the trail for all he was worth.

Of course I didn't know what the shindy had been about. I'd ridden over from Themis City with a message from dad for Uncle Ned, overseer of the lumbermen at the new camp, and the first thing I clapped my eyes on when I came near the cabins had been this smart pistol practice. 'Most all the men were still up in the ranges felling timber, and nobody 'cept me had seen anything of the affair. It was sprung on me so slick and unexpected, too, that I could do nary thing but gape and gurgle like a sick hen—me being then only a lanky lath of a galoot, rising fifteen, and never over and above cute-witted, I 'm told.

Hows'ever, the noise of the shooting rousted the storekeeper out of a quiet snooze; then Jake Miller waddles out of his hut, holding the pannikin he'd just been swigging at after his dusty ride. The news soon got round, the 'boys' hurrying up till there was quite a tidy crowd hanging over the wounded logger.

'Poor Cy!' said one of them, solemn-like. 'I'm afeared he's nigh about dead-meat already. I always *did* think he carried it too far with the Britisher. 'Course, it was on'y his bounce—he meant nothing by it; but Britishers is tetchy customers, some of 'em.'

'Anyways, this one's got the clean drop on Cy, an' that's a fact,' replied the storekeeper. 'I don't hold with chaffin' no man 'bout his nationality myself, being a thing he can't help, even if—— But clear away there! Here comes the Doc.'

Now the Doc. wasn't rightly a doctor at all; it was the name they'd christened him in the camp because he made out he'd learned a pokeful about ailments and physic while he was coachman to a real live medico somewhere way back in Illinois. My opinion, he knew no more about chemicals and such than my little finger.

'A serious case!' said he, stroking his chin and looking mighty wise. 'It's his right lung. No, a whole hospital of physicians couldn't pull him through this bout.'

'Is it so bad as that?' asked my uncle, who'd just happened along.

'Hopeless!' said the Doc. 'He's booked for Jordan's shore this trip, safe. I give him twenty minutes, not more—or, say, twenty-five!'

They toted Cy into his shack hut, tender as if he was a china ornament, laying him in his bunk decent and comfortable—him moaning and gasping a bit between whiles, as Uncle Ned set to sponging and dressing the bullet-hole. You bet Uncle Ned wasn't going to take the Doc.'s word for gospel any more'n me. He meant to try all he knew to pull Cy Maskew from under the very coffin-lid itself.

Outside, the boys were talking low and excited, looking black as thunder. I joined them to ferret out what they was confabbing over.

'We've got to lay out after him,' Steve Hicks was remarking like a judge. 'We've got to haul the Britisher back here to take his trial reg'lar. Not that I'm sayin' it's murder, mind you! No, I don't say that. But we've got to do the square an' legal towards poor Cy what's dyin' in there, for the sake of how it looks. That's legislation, ain't it, boys?'

'Wal, I dunno,' Tom Snell growled. ''Pears to me it was a fair fight enough. They'd both lugged out their shooting-irons, an' 'twas first bead that won. What's wrong in that?'

'Yes—yes,' shouted Jake Miller, who'd been stamping and raving round like mad. 'But nobody seems to care a red cent 'bout my mare. How'm I to stand over that loss, hey? Don't it strike you, mates, as the derned Britisher is worse'n a murderer?—he's a pesky horse-thief as well!'

This put things in a fresh light altogether, in a manner of speaking. The boys hadn't thought about that before, and soon they was all wild to saddle up and start. You see, one man may kill another—provided the fightin's done honourable—and small blame to him sometimes, maybe; but to be a sneaking, ornery, no-account thiever of cattle is—well, it's a risky trade out in Shona County. The more civilised a neighbourhood is, the riskier the business becomes; and Judson's Camp was always reckoned in the front rank for gilt-edged progress. You may gamble there's no specks on civilisation in that community.

Before long, half-a-dozen lumbermen rode out from the camp, meaning to hunt down the runaway even if so be it took all night and all next day to catch up with him. Steve Hicks, I noticed, carried a long coil of rope over his Mexican saddle.

'Say, Jack,' I inquired of the storekeeper, 'what's Steve doing with that lasso? Are they 'feared the Britisher'll break loose again if he isn't trussed up tight?'

The storekeeper winked.

'Don't 'spect they'll worry to bring him along at all,' said he. 'Don't 'spect they will.'

Then I tumbled to the game. Judge Lynch was in that outfit!

The boys had not returned when I left the camp to trot back home next morning. I could have liked well to stop and hear what they had to say when they did show up; but Uncle Ned wouldn't listen to me.

'No, Pete,' he objected. 'Bein' as how there's nigh thirty miles in front of you, you'd best be travellin'. You'll have your father in a rampin'

tantrum if you don't get home right smart now. He's dead nails on onpunctuality, is brother Ephraim.'

I knew it. Many's the larruping dad's give me for being what he calls 'dawdly as a down-Easter;' and the old man owns to a plaguy heavy hand with a hickory switch. So I judged it best not to wait.

For half the distance I kept to the usual track at the bottom of the gulch, and then, seeing I could cut off a good three miles by bearing over a hump of the hills, I put my pony's nose to the ascent. At the top, halting to give the animal a breather, I thought I caught sight of something stirring among the spruce pines a hundred feet below me. I couldn't be certain; it came and went quick as a flash.

'Hullo, there—hullo!' I shouted.

Like as not I'd been mistaken; either 'twas my fancy only, or the sun slanting on a leaf, or maybe the gray scut of a skeered jack-rabbit. Anyways, not getting so much as an echo in reply, I started my mount down the farther dip, which hereabouts, besides being steep as a roof, is covered with loose shingly stones that make it nasty going. I dare say I was a trifle careless—perhaps figuring in my mind about the thing I'd seen flit among the trees, and letting the horse pick his way as best he pleased — when, of a sudden, his fore-feet slid out over a flat boulder, and 'snap!' went the rotten stirrup leather. Over I pitched, plumb onter the top of my head.

Reckon I must have swooned right away then, for I can sense nothing after, till I found myself raised with my back resting against somebody's knee and somebody's arm round my shoulder. A whisky-flask was at my lips.

'That was an ugly spill, my lad,' said the owner of the knee, arm, and flask. 'How do you feel now? Better, eh? Ah, that's the ticket!'

I ogled up at the man out of the tail of my eye. It was the Big Britisher! While I lay studying what to say, he began bandaging my head with his handkerchief.

'Your cranium must be pretty tough, youngster,' he said presently, 'to have stood a tumble of that sort.'

Now there's not a white man kicking that's got a harder skull than me; but still I didn't see the Britisher had any call to mention it quite so chirpy.

'Anyhow,' says I, when my tongue came loose, 'sometimes a tough windpipe is better even than a tough head. Sometimes, I say, Britisher—'specially when there's a rope round it.'

You should have seen his jaw drop. My land, a buck nigger in full gape was a fool to him.

'What d'you mean—what d'you mean by that?' shouts he. 'Ha, now I recollect! You are the nipper who happened upon us when I—Maskew—— Boss Judson's nephew, aren't you?'

'That's me—Pete Judson! I'm not 'shamed to own up to *my* name, no time.'

'No, of course—no,' agreed he, speaking sorter dreamy-like. 'Never disgraced it! Neither sorrows, heart-ache, nor remorse; no—— Pshaw, dash it all, what a confounded sniveller I'm getting! So they're out,' says he, gulping in his throat—'*out* after me! Is that it?'

I nodded. 'With a strip of raw-hide!' I added, nodding again.

The Britisher took to thinking hard, staring away at the high cliff on our right as if trying to look clean through the hillside.

'Well, they'll have their hands full, I fancy,' he muttered quietly. 'I'm willing to answer in a court of justice for what I've done, but I will never tamely submit to be handled and strung up by a gang of half-savage ruffians. If it comes to fighting I shall show fight in self-defence—now, as I did against Cy Maskew.'

''Pears to me you've jumped the chute, mister,' I started in to explain. ''Tain't for Cy you're to hang, but for stealing Jake Miller's mare. Last time I saw you, you was scuttling outer the camp fast as six legs could carry you. And Jake, he holds as four of 'em belonged to him by rights. Perhaps he's wrong—I'm not saying either way myself'——

'No,' says he—sharp, just like that—'No! By this time the horse is safe in the keeping of its owner again. You don't understand? Well, some hours after that—that—after I'd loaned the animal, when I came to think over my position, I saw how foolish I'd been not to face the trouble. At once I decided to turn the mare loose and let her find her way back home, while I proceeded on foot to surrender myself to the sheriff at Themis City. Yes, by now I'm sure Jake must be satisfied.—But, by Jove, look down there! See them?'

I squinted where his finger pointed—across to the clearing on the far side of the gully, rather under half-a-mile away in a bee-line. Straight enough, it was the Vigilance Executive, the whole tot of them—Steve riding at their head, with the rope slung over his saddle, Tom Snell, Dandy José, and Chip Ward; old Hagen brought up the rear, leading a spare mustang by the bridle. They'd spotted us, too, soon as we saw them.

'Hands up, Britisher!' roared Steve, spurring his horse to the climb. 'The game's played out! Hands up, ye dolgarned thief!'

After the way he'd been swaggering to me I expected to hear the tenderfoot answer this order with a cracking six-shooter; but he never made a sound. I looked back to see whether he was going to funk it or freeze to what he'd said. He wasn't there. He'd clean gone—lit out—vamoosed! Right then I saw 'twas all empty boasts—pure brag!

'Is it, though?' I sang out, a minute later.

'No, b' gosh, it ain't, neither! There's going to be fun after all!'

Just here the hillside went sheer up for fifty feet or more, like the bluff in a cañon, its base doubling back to the shape of a wide-mouthed V; at the corner so made, a low-topped hollow was scooped out of the cliff, scarcely seen from below because of the bushes overhanging it and the fallen rocks in front. Into this handy shelter the Britisher had scrambled. Now, only one of the boys at a time would be able to wriggle along the narrow ledge leading to this cave; and, as there was no kind of cover to hide behind while they were doing it, the Britisher would be in a position to riddle anybody who might attempt to hustle him out of his hole that way. And, so far as I sized it up, they couldn't tackle him any other.

Mighty quick the Vigilantes must have figured it out at that too; for they'd reined up just beyond pistol-range, gesturing and pow-wowing like they was pretty wroth about things.

'Reckon the Britisher comes out on top, up to now,' I said, grinning to myself. 'He's got his headpiece screwed on level, has the Britisher. Yes, he's real in-and-in grit all through, I'll go bail!'

After a spell, Steve began whistling and beckoning for me. I sluttered down the slope, limping to where they all stood ready to swarm round me like flies round molasses.

'Here, kid!' cried Steve, catching me by the arm, and jerking his left thumb over his shoulder. 'What's he say to it?'

'Who—the Britisher?' I asked carelessly. 'Lemme see now, what *did* he say? Oh!—"If they want me bad," says he, "tell 'em to fetch me, but"—says he, an' you should have seen his eyes then—"but," says he, "never alive! Never alive!" says he—an' I 'low he meant it.'

'H'm!' grunted Steve, middling upset. 'An' how's he served for weapons, now? Did you notice?'

'Two irons.'

'An' amm'nition?'

'His belt and pockets chockful of cartridges.'

That made them look bluer'n ever about the gills, and Chip Ward—who, I'd a notion, had grown white-livered all at once—he out with this:

'Wal, mates, we can't come at him from up above thar, nor so much as see his nose from down here. An' if we tried to rush him, why he'd simply plug the whole bilin' of us 'fore we got twenty yards, easy as winkin'. Ask me, he's just about got the fair bulge on us this time, boys.'

'Oh, I dessay—I dessay!' sneered Steve, tossing open his arms. 'That's the idea, is it? Ugh!'

'As you're so set on taking him, Steve,' I pops in, innocent as a Chinky; 'don't you think you might show 'em how, yourself? There'd be some sport in that, at any rate. An' even if he did hole you, I dunno as Shona County would lose a deal of beauty, whether it'——

'None of your durn sass, young 'un!' yelled he, in a power of a temper. 'Keep your jaw civil an' respectful, or I'll tie it up for you. Blight me, if I don't!'

Most of the boys sniggered; but I turned away, hurt-like, to speak to Chip Ward.

'What's this picnic want with the Britisher, anyway?' I inquired. 'Can't say I know rightly.'

'But you was in the camp yesterday? Why, 'twas you saw him skedaddle with Jake's mare, wasn't it?'

I pointed slantways to where old Hagen stood with the spare mustang.

'Seems to me that ewe-neck looks wonderful like Jake's nag,' I muttered aloud. 'There's the gray star over her nose, the white stocking on the fore-leg, the rat-tail, an' ribs like a wagon-cover'——

'So 'tis—so 'tis; we know that, kid; we don't want no teachin'. That's where the Britisher thought to double on us with his artfulness. On'y it didn't wash—you see, it didn't wash! Like so, now! Last night, after follerin' in his tracks for close onter six hours, we saw he'd branched off as if he'd took into his head to make for the river 'stead of the hills; two hours more along this new route an' we came plumb on Jake's mare, with an empty saddle, an' no signs of the Britisher anywhere. But it didn't take us long to bottom that dodge, sonnie. Findin' it was gettin' too hot for him, he'd meant to gain time, to throw us off the scent altogether, by cumfoozlin' us inter goin' in one direction while he loped off on foot in another. Still, we weren't to be done; that trick made us keener set'n ever on ropin' him. So we fetched back to the turn-off, picked up his trail there again, an'—an'—wal, here we are!'

'Oh, that's it—oh!' I said, solemn as a lawyer. 'An' supposin' you'd let the mare alone—supposin' you hadn't brung her right along with you—where do you think she'd be now? Not back at the camp, mebbe, hey?'

'Ain't thought nothin' about such supposin's. But—yes, I 'low she'd have worked her way back to the camp after a while, safe enough.'

'An' by this time,' I went on, dotting the arguments down on my fingers—'by this time Jake would have got his animal back; he'd have had no complaint against the Britisher; consequent you'd have had nothing against him neither. An', come to figure it out, there'd have been no stolen horse at all!'

The boys were flummoxed over that logic; it hadn't struck them like that before. Then, as a clincher, I chipped in with the Englishman's yarn just as he'd told it to me.

'Sounds kinder reasonable, too,' Tom Snell

agreed, when I finished. 'Blow me, if we haven't been a sight too hasty on the man. Can't see we've anything against him now—not to speak of, mates.'

'Quit this tom-fool talk,' old Steve blurted out, choky with rage. 'What're we here for? Is this a meetin' of slack-jaw congressers, or is it for business? We shall be laughed outer the camp if we go back 'thout doing what we set out to do. No; we came here to hang—an', 'struth, hang we will!'

'Bravo, Steve!' I put in. 'That's good hearing, if you mean to begin on yourself.'

'Shut it, you young limb!' he snarled, glaring at me. 'But for your blame interferencin' we'd have done our duty on the Britisher an hour since. Even if what you say is book-truth—an' I've my doubts—that don't clear the skunk, does it? Didn't he kill poor Cy? Now ain't that murder? An' ain't a murderer to swing? Ain't that accordin' to high-tone law?'

'Dunno much 'bout law,' growled Tom, shrugging his shoulders. 'From what I made out, it was fair an' honest shootin' between Cy an' the Britisher. Anyways, that's not our department. We ain't no sheriff's posse yet. An' besides, if 'tis law—bust me, 'tain't sense!'

''Nother thing—'tain't true, either,' I interrupted, slapping down my trump card. ''Tain't true—not about the Britisher being a murderer! 'Cause why? 'Cause Cy ain't any more dead 'n you are!'

I waited till they had found their breath again.

'Listen to this now!' I went on. 'Directly after you had started out yesterday, Uncle Ned gets Sam Hindes into the saddle an' told him to ride like blazes for the surgeon at Themis City. Four o'clock this morning, when they came back into camp, the sawbones hooks the bullet out of Cy's ribs, patches him up, an' says he'll be right as razors in less 'n a week. Cy dead? Shucks, if you'd heard his language you wouldn't ask! When they told him you were out after the Britisher, he ups an' rips an' cusses the whole caboodle of you for a crowd of tarnation idiots. An' the words he laid his tongue round were real blisterers'——

'Us! He cussed us? What for?'

'For meddling with his concerns at all. He 'lowed he was to blame all through—him having monkeyed with the Britisher about his nationality, an' where he was raised, on purpose to get the tenderfoot's wool off. Well, at last he did it. The Britisher hits him a fillip with his fist like the kick of a colt's hind-leg, which stretched Cy out straight an' set his head going like a buzz-saw. You bet Cy must have been hurt an' riled above a bit or he would never have drawn on a man that was walking away. Hows'ever, just then the Britisher happened to look back an' see how things was shaping; his hand whips round to his hip-pocket—an' that's how! Cy's willing to apologise handsome as soon as—— Hullo, Steve, what's up now?'

Steve never spoke, but just climbed into his saddle and shoved his horse round for home. Yet he hadn't gone far before he thought better of it and came back. I never saw a man look more disgusted in my life.

'Strikes me, boys,' he snorted, 'as how thishyer funeral party is an all-fired fizzle. Somebody 's been playin' it a'mighty low down on us. I don't remark who 'tis—on'y somebody. Say, kid, just you skip up an' tell the Britisher we're all friends here. Tell him to come outer that; tell him we want to shake. Then, rot it, let's git!'

OUR CHILDREN.

We learned from our wistful mothers
To call Old England 'home.'—*Kipling.*

'MOTHER, the spring is coming!
Down by the vlei-side now
You can see the green on the willow,
The gold on the wattle-bough;
You can watch the cups on the blue-gums
Swinging against the sky;
By-and-by they will scatter
Their sweet white tufts from high.

'The aloes are out on the kopjes,
The "soldiers" yellow and red,
And between the dry thorn-bushes
The veldt-lily shows its head.
Mother, the spring is lovely!
See, we found in our roam
Cotton-pods, green and silky—
Is it just as lovely at home?'

'Children,' the mother answers
(And her eyes see across the years),
'At home the sweet spring country
Is green with April's tears.
There are daffodils in the meadows,
There are violets in the lane:
The cuckoo calls thro' the orchards
'Midst blossoms that fall like rain.

'The bluebells swing in the breezes,
The cowslip scents the air,
The primrose and the foxglove
Make every hedgerow fair.
At home the happy children,
All thro' the sweet spring day,
Weave garlands for their crowning
In ever-changing play.'

'We do not know of the cuckoo,'
Our children make reply;
'But we see the great asvogels
Apoise in the cloudless sky.
We cannot gather the primrose,
Nor cowslip garlands wear;
But our golden melon-blossoms—
Have they flowers at home so fair?'

O children! O happy children!
You will never know what you miss.
A child's pure heart for ever
Makes its own world of bliss!
And you, O wistful mother!
Tho' afar in fancy you roam
To the sweet spring-land o'er the water,
Yet your heart stays here in its home.

B. M. BROMLEY.

Orange Free State.

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SIXTH SERIES.

LIVERPOOL:

ITS PRIVATEERS AND ITS SLAVE-TRADE.

LIVERPOOL, now ranking as the second city of the empire, is in some departments of enterprise hardly second to the metropolis itself. At the end of the seventeenth century it had but 5000 inhabitants. Its extraordinary growth next century was due to the rapid development of its foreign trade, and is illustrated by the fact that, whereas in 1697 the port possessed only eighty ships, in 1760 the number was 1245. The northern port was rapidly superseding Bristol. Two very important elements of Bristol's maritime enterprise were privateering and the slave-trade; in both departments Liverpool was destined greatly to outshine its older rival. The history of these two sources of Liverpool's wealth and prestige, as related by Mr Gomer Williams in his book on *Liverpool Privateering and the Liverpool Slave-Trade*, is curious and instructive, not only in reference to Liverpool itself, but to the country at large.

The first mention of privateering—possibly in this case piracy—in connection with Liverpool is in the year 1563, when a ship belonging to Sir Thomas Stanley, son of the Earl of Derby, brought a prize into the Mersey amid 'great rejoicings.' It was in the reign of George II., however, that privateering was taken up as a business enterprise by the Liverpool merchants. From an early period of the reign British merchant-ships—mostly engaged in contraband trade, it must be admitted—had been plundered and their crews maltreated by the Guarda Costas of Spanish America. These outrages, committed for some years without remonstrance from the British government, at length roused the indignation of the whole country. The government were forced to take the matter up, and demands for compensation were made to the Spanish Court. These demands were rejected, and Letters of Marque and Reprisal, authorising British subjects to seize and take the vessels and goods of the enemies of Great Britain, were granted against the Spaniards; who, on their part, set about vigorously to defend themselves. The declaration of war against Spain in 1739 was the result, and in 1744 France joined in the conflict against England. In the latter year Liverpool possessed four privateers, which, during the war, captured about a dozen ships—a small set-off, however, to the round hundred sailing to and from Liverpool taken by the enemy.

The breaking out of the Seven Years' War in 1756 came as a blow to Liverpool, whose trade in 'black ivory' had been making prodigious strides. Swarms of French privateers found their way into the Irish Sea, and at one time actually blockaded the town for several weeks. Insurance rates went up enormously, and trade was practically at a standstill. The merchants, however, did not wait for ruin with folded hands. Taking the hint from the enemy, they not only fitted out their useless ships as privateers, but built new vessels for the service. These they let loose on the enemy's commerce, and the result was remarkable. One of the first privateers to leave the port returned in a few weeks with a French West Indiaman worth £20,000; other equally valuable prizes followed in quick succession. 'Then the whole country became mad after privateering,' and the mania even spread to the Colonies. The French were equally energetic, and the result was that the seas became infested with privateers, capturing, plundering, and destroying merchantmen, and also each other. The Liverpool privateersmen, second to none in courage and seamanship, made many prizes; but on the whole the result of the war to the merchants was disastrous. In the first four years alone one hundred and forty-three vessels belonging to the port were captured by the French; and this more than counterbalanced the gains of the privateers.

The experiences of the Seven Years' War were repeated during the American War of Independence. The Americans at the outset sent forth a fleet of privateers, and soon the trade of Liverpool sank to small dimensions. Yet it was only when

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the French and Spaniards joined in the war that Liverpool entered with its old energy into the privateering business. But, once started, so great was the zeal displayed that between August 1778 and April 1779 one hundred and twenty private cruisers were fitted out. An entire stop was put to the commercial progress of the port, however; and 'beyond the occasional bustle of numerous sales by auction of the cargoes of prizes taken from the enemy, there was little business transacted.' It was, indeed, only the activity and success of the privateers that saved many of the Liverpool merchants from ruin.

After the close of the war Liverpool recovered itself with a bound; but only for ten years did peace endure, and the breaking out of the war with France brought back all the old dangers. Says Mr Williams: 'The old fighting instinct of Liverpool was revived in full force; but it does not appear that privateering was carried on to so great an extent, comparatively, from the port as during the American Revolutionary War. Many acts of bravery were, however, performed, and valuable prizes taken, by the officers and crews of Liverpool privateers and armed merchant-ships during this long war.' By July 1793 sixty-seven privateers were fitted out, and many more afterwards, with the result that an unprecedented number of prizes were taken. The French had their hands too full on land to devote much attention to the sea, and in three or four years their commerce was swept from the ocean.

The second American war (1812–14) was the last war in which Letters of Marque were granted by the British government, and by the Declaration of Paris in 1856 privateering was abolished. All civilised nations have now acceded to the Declaration except the United States, Spain, and Mexico.

The greatest of Liverpool's privateering heroes —and there were many who might be styled heroes—was a personage famous in his day, and not yet utterly forgotten—namely, Captain Fortunatus Wright. Soon after the outbreak of the war with France in 1744, he, conjointly with some English merchants in Leghorn, fitted out the *Fame* privateer to cruise against the French. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for December 1746 stated that the *Fame*, Captain Wright, had captured sixteen French ships in the Levant, worth £400,000. Captain Wright's most remarkable achievement, however, was in 1756, when the renewal of the war with France became imminent. In that year he built a small vessel at Leghorn, called the *St George*, to cruise against the enemy. His project becoming known, a French xebec of sixteen guns and two hundred and eighty men bore down upon Leghorn, and hovered outside the harbour in order to capture him when he came out. So much injury had Wright done to French commerce during the last war that the French king had promised the honour of knighthood, a pension of 3000 livres per annum for life, and the command of a sloop-of-war to whoever should bring him into France alive or dead. The candidate for knighthood, therefore, impatiently waited for him. The Tuscan government, being at this time in close sympathy with the French, would not allow Wright to leave the port with more than four guns and twenty-five men. With this armament he left the harbour on the 25th of July, having three other small vessels under convoy. No sooner was he clear of the harbour, however, than he took on board other eight guns, which had been secretly stowed by the convoy for his use. He also prevailed upon fifty-five of their men, composed of Slavonians, Venetians, Italians, Swiss, and a few Englishmen, to enter on board his ship. Next morning the Frenchman bore down upon him, and at twelve o'clock the engagement began, in sight of about three thousand well-wishers of the French. In three-quarters of an hour the xebec was so maltreated that she was *hors de combat*, with the loss of her captain, lieutenant, and eighty-eight men killed, seventy more being wounded. There being no wind, she escaped with the aid of her sweeps, else she would have fallen a prey to the victor. Wright had only lost his lieutenant and four men killed, and eight wounded. The disgusted Tuscan authorities immediately seized the *St George*, and refused to give her up; but the appearance at Leghorn of Admiral Hawke, with two line-of-battle ships, speedily induced them to a more complaisant frame of mind. After further distinguishing himself at the expense of the French, the brave Captain Fortunatus Wright was lost with his ship in a storm, in March 1757, while on a voyage from Malta to Leghorn.

Privateering was not a profession calculated to instil a love of law and order among its votaries. The privateersmen, when they came into port, were the terror of the town, and committed many excesses. So outrageous did their conduct become that, in 1778, the Mayor of Liverpool issued a proclamation cautioning these lawless persons that he would in future call in the aid of the military for the protection of the lives and property of the peaceable inhabitants. This had the desired effect. The service was popular; the men shipped on board privateers being safe from impressment, the most dashing and daring of the sailors came out of their hiding-holes to enter on board them. These doughty old sons of Liverpool are thus described by one who wrote from personal observation: 'They were a reckless, dreadnought, dare-devil collection of human beings, half-disciplined, but yet ready to obey every order, the more desperate the better. Your true privateersman was a sort of half-horse, half-alligator, with a streak of lightning in his composition—something like a man-of-warsman, but much more like a pirate—generally with a superabundance of whisker, as if he held with Samson that his strength was in the quantity of his hair.'

A privateer captain was not permitted to range the ocean at his own sweet will in search of booty. His owners selected his 'beat' for him—one, of course, frequented by passing vessels.

'Did privateering pay?' is a question asked by Mr Williams. In individual cases sometimes it did, and sometimes it did not; for it must not be forgotten that privateers themselves were often captured or roughly handled without any return for the damage done. 'A victory or a defeat made a man who was rich in the morning poor at night, or suddenly raised another from poverty to riches.' It was, in fact, a lottery. In the aggregate, it is doubtful if privateering was a paying enterprise, except in so far as it enabled the merchants to partially recoup themselves for losses suffered at the hands of the enemy.

There is no question, however, that the other branch of Liverpool's enterprise, the slave-trade, was a paying industry, especially in its later years. The first Englishman who engaged in the African slave-trade was Sir John Hawkins, but it was not until 1623 that it was taken up extensively as a regular business. The great wealth of the merchants of London and Bristol enabled these cities for some time to enjoy a practical monopoly of the traffic. Liverpool during the seventeenth century was too poor to participate; but early in the next century a successful rivalry with Bristol in exporting provisions and Manchester goods to the West Indies caused a decline in Bristol's West India trade. Bristol, to make up for this loss, entered the more eagerly into the slave-trade, and quickly caused a serious decline in the London slave-trade, so that the Severn became the headquarters of the traffic in Great Britain. Liverpool, meanwhile, had developed an extensive and most profitable contraband trade with the West Indies, but this was put a stop to by the Grenville treaty in 1747. No sooner was one door closed to the Liverpool merchants than they opened another; they entered into the slave-trade with a zest which in time bore heavily upon Bristol. 'For a period of seventy-seven years,' says Mr Williams, 'they carried on the trade with a characteristic vigour and ability that outdistanced every competitor, and won for Liverpool the unenviable distinction of being the chief slaving town of the Old World.' The chief cause of this predominance was that the Liverpool merchants, by what might be called a cheeseparing policy in the fitting out of their slavers, in the wages of their seamen, and in various other directions, were enabled to dispose of their 'prime negroes' at from £4 to £5 per head less than the merchants of Bristol and London. In 1752 Liverpool possessed eighty-seven slavers, with a carrying capacity of 25,000 negroes; but 'the number shipped, if not actually delivered, "in good order and condition," was probably much higher, as it was then customary to overload, with the most frightful results.

But the traffic was not confined to the Colonies and foreign parts. Slaves were imported into and sold in England itself. In the newspapers of the period were many advertisements of sales of negroes by auction. A Liverpool paper in 1766 announced: 'To be sold at the Exchange Coffee-House in Water Street, this day, the 12th instant September, at one o'clock precisely, eleven negroes, imported per the *Angola*.' Slavery in England was abolished in 1772 by the famous dictum of Lord Mansfield in the case of the negro Somerset, who had deserted from his master's service: 'As soon as a slave sets foot on the soil of the British Islands he becomes free.'

The slave-trade itself died hard. The movement for abolition began to take form about 1770, and in 1788 the Abolition Society had its foot in Liverpool. Naturally those interested in the traffic were up in arms, and the contest grew fierce. As the power of the abolitionists grew, the resentment against them became more bitter, until their lives were not safe in the streets of Liverpool. None were more active in resisting the movement than the Corporation, who considered the vital interests of their city at stake. They granted annuities, presented the freedom of the city, and did other honours to the champions of their cause. In October 1799 the Recorder, with a committee of the Council, attended at St James's Palace, and presented H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV.) with the freedom of the borough, 'in grateful sense of his active and able exertions in Parliament' on behalf of the slave-trade.

The slave-trade was declared illegal in 1807, and it was thought that Liverpool was ruined. 'The whole community were terror-stricken. The docks were to become fish-ponds, the warehouses to moulder into ruins, grass was to grow on the local Rialto, the streets were to be ploughed up, and Liverpool's glorious merchant navy . . . was to dwindle into a fishing-vessel or two.'

As has already been hinted, the emoluments of the traffic were large. Mr Williams calculates that during the eleven years 1783–93 the net amount remitted from the West Indies to the Liverpool merchants for 305,737 slaves was £12,294,116, or an average of £1,117,647 per year. To give an instance of individual profit: one firm, importing 2850 slaves, received a net profit in one year of £26,849. The former net sum does not take account of the prime cost of the slaves on the African coast. In the later years of the traffic a slave sold for about—after deducting factor's commission (five per cent.) and other expenses—£40, 10s.; the prime cost was £27, 5s.; freight and maintenance, £3, 15s.—making £31, which left a profit of £9, 10s. Certainly a profit of about thirty per cent. was a handsome one.

A bill of lading for slaves was a curiosity in its way. The following extract is from one dated 1st February 1766: 'SHIPPED, by the Grace of

God in good order and well conditioned, by James ——, in and upon the good ship called the *Mary Borough*, whereof is master, under God, for this present voyage, Captain David Morton, and now riding at anchor at the Barr of Senegal, and by God's grace bound for Georgey, in South Carolina, to say, twenty-four prime slaves, six prime women slaves,' &c. It ends with the pious wish that 'God send the good ship to her desired port in safety. Amen.' However impious it may appear to us to associate the name of God with the iniquitous traffic, still it was looked upon by many as a divine institution, directly sanctioned by the Bible. The famous slave-trading captain, John Newton, afterwards to be the Rev. John Newton of Olney, hymn-writer and friend of Cowper, did by no means see it to be his duty to change his profession immediately after his conversion, though he ultimately became an abolitionist; he carried on slave-trading for years after he was a devout Christian, giving thanks in the Liverpool churches for the success of his last venture, and imploring God's blessing on his next.

The horrors of the middle passage have been so often painted that it is needless to dwell upon them here, except that the worst that can be said of them is in no way exaggerated. Still, one instance of atrocity may be worth giving. In 1783, in a case in which the underwriters were the defenders, it came out in evidence that the 'cargo' of a slave-ship called the *Zong* was very sickly. The captain proposed to the mate to throw the sickly slaves overboard, as, if they died a natural death, the loss would fall upon the owners, whereas if they were thrown into the sea the loss would fall upon the underwriters. The suggestion was carried out. One hundred and thirty-two of the most sickly were selected, fifty-four were thrown overboard, and forty-two the next day. A few days later the remaining thirty-six followed the rest.

It must not be supposed that, because the slave traffic was an atrocious institution, all who engaged in it were monsters of iniquity. On the contrary, many of the owners of slave-ships were upright and public-spirited men, just and humane in their dealings with their fellow-men. They saw no wrong in the slave-trade. As Mr Williams says: 'However we may detest the trade and shudder at the horrors which necessarily accompanied it, even when most rigorously supervised and conducted by the most humane instruments; though we know that no casuistry can convert wrong into right, yet must we remember that custom has a wonderful effect in blinding the moral perceptions; that men's standard of morality is being raised as the leaven of Christianity spreads.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XIX.—HOW I RODE TO THE SOUTH.

THE night was full of wind, light spring airs which rustled and whistled down every street and brought a promise of the hills and the green country. The stars winked and sparkled above me; but I had no mind to them, or aught else, save a gray house in a wood and a girl sitting there with a heavy heart. Faith, my own was heavy enough as I led Maisie through the West Vennel, shunning all but the darkest streets, for I knew not when I might be challenged and recognised, losing my way often, but nearing always to the outskirts of the town. Children brawled on the pavement; lights twinkled from window and doorway; the smell of supper came out of chink and cranny. But such things were not for me, and soon I was past all, and near the hamlet of Liberton and the highway to Tweeddale.

Now there was safety for me to mount, and it was blessed to feel the life between my knees and the touch of my horse's neck. By good luck I had found her saddled and bridled, as if some careless, rascally groom had left her untouched since her arrival. But I would have cared little had there been no equipment save a bridle-rope. I could guide a horse on the darkest night by the sway of my body, and it was not for nothing that I had scrambled bareback about the hills of Barns. Maisie took the road with long, supple strides, as light and graceful as a bird. The big mass of the Pentlands loomed black before me; then in a little it fell over to the right as we advanced on our way. The little wayside cottages went past like so many beehives; through hamlet and village we clattered, waking the echoes of the place, but tarrying not a moment, for the horse was mettlesome and the rider had the best cause in the world for his speed.

Now this errand, which seems so light, was in reality the hardest and most dangerous that could be found. For you are to remember that I was a man proscribed and all but outlawed; that any chance wayfarer might arrest me; and since in these troubled times any rider was suspected, what was a man to say if he saw one dressed in gentleman's apparel, riding a blood-horse, coatless and hatless? Then, more—all the way to Peebles lay through dangerous land, for it was the road to the south-west and the Whigs of Galloway; and since the Pentland Rising that part had been none of the quietest. Also, it was my own country, where I was a well-kenned man, known to nearly every one; so what might have

been my safety in other times was my danger in these. This, too, was the road which my cousin Gilbert had travelled from Barns, and well watched it was like to be if Gilbert had aught to do with the matter. But the motion of my horse was so free, the air so fine, the night so fair, and my own heart so passionate, that I declare I had forgotten all about danger, and would have ridden down the High Street of Edinburgh, if need had been, in my great absence of mind.

I was recalled to my senses by a sudden warning. A man on horseback sprang out from the shelter of a plantation and gripped my bridle. I saw by the starlight the gleam of a pistol-barrel in his hand.

'Stop, man, stop! There's nae sic great hurry. You and me 'ill ha'e some words. What ha'e ye in your pouches?'

Now I was unarmed, save for my sword, and the footpad before me was a man of considerable stature and girth. I had some remnants of sense left in me, and I saw that I had no time to draw my weapon. I foresaw, too, that if I closed with him, besides the possibility of getting a bullet in my heart, the contest would take much time and would have an uncertain ending. I was fairly at my wits'-end, what with hurry and vexation, when the thought struck me that the law and military which I dreaded were also the terror of such men as this. I made up my mind to throw myself on his mercy. Forby, being a south-country man, the odds were great that my name would be known to him.

'I have no money,' I said, 'for I came off this night hot-speed, with a regiment of dragoons waiting behind me. I am the laird of Barns in Tweeddale, and this day an outlaw and a masterless man. So I pray you not to detain me, for there's nothing on me worth the picking. I have not a groat of silver, and, as you see, I ride in my shirt.'

'Are ye the laird o' Barns?' said the man, staring. 'Man, I never kent it, or I wadna ha'e been sae unceevil as to stop ye. Be sure that I'm wi' ye, and sae are a' guid fellows that likena thae lang-nebbit dragoons and thae meddlesome brocks o' lawyers in Embro'. Gang your ways for me. But stop; ye've nae airms. This 'ill never dae. Tak' yin o' my pistols, for I'll never miss it. And see, gin ye tak' my advice, and gin ye're gaun to Barns, gang off the Peebles road at Leadburn, and haud doun by the Brochtoun and Newlands ways, for a' the way atween Leadburn and Peebles is hotchin' wi' sodgers and what-ye-may-ca'-thems. Guid-e'en to ye, and a safe journey.' The man rode off, and almost instantly was lost to my sight; but his act gave me assurance that there was still some good left in the world, though in the most unlikely places.

And now I saw before me the black woods of Roslin and Hawthornden, and in the near distance the roofs of the clachan of Penicuik. There I knew danger would await me; so, taking a random turning to the right, I struck towards the hills in the direction of Glencorse. The place was rough and moory and full of runlets of water; but Maisie was well used to such land, for it was no worse than the haughs of Manor, and level turf compared with the brow of the Deid Wife or the shoulder of Scrape. So in a little, when the lights of Penicuik were well on the left, I came to the Hawes Burn, which passes the inn of Leadburn, and tracking it downward, came to the bald white house which does duty for a hostel.

I dared not enter, though I was woefully thirsty, but kept straight on to the cross-roads, where the two paths to Tweeddale part. One—the way by which I had gone when I set out on my travels—goes over the moor and down by the springs of the Eddleston Water, through the village of that name, and thence down the vale to Peebles. The other, longer and more circuitous, cuts straight over the rough moorlands to the little village of Newlands, then over much wild country to Kirkurd and the high hills which hem in the hamlet of Broughton, whence it is but five miles to the house of Dawyck. It is a road which I have always hated as being dismal and wild beyond any of my knowledge; but now I was glad to be on it, for every step brought me nearer to my love.

In a little I saw a hill-top, which by its broad, flat shape I knew for the Black Mount, which lies above the village of Dolphinton on the way to the west country. This is a landmark of great note in the countryside, and now I could guess my whereabouts. I made out that I must be scarce two miles from the jumble of houses lining the highway which is named Kirkurd, at which spot the road fords the deep, sullen stream of Tarth. Now this same Tarth a little way down flows into the Lyne, which enters the Tweed almost opposite the house of Barns. At other times I had ridden the path down its side, for it is many miles the shorter way. But I knew well that Barns would be watched like the courtyard of the Parliament House, and I durst not for my life venture near it. I deemed it unprofitable to run the risk of capture for the sake of an hour or two saved; so, after passing Kirkurd, I held straight on over the black moors which lie towards the watershed of the Broughton Burn.

Now, by good luck, I had dismounted just after the bridge, and buckled Maisie's girth tight and eased the saddle, for I suspected that now I was entering a more dangerous country. The issue showed that I had guessed rightly, for, just at the sharp turn of the road over the Hell's Cleuch burn, I came near to my end. I was riding carelessly at a rapid pace through the thick wood of pines which cloaks the turn, when suddenly, ere ever I knew, I was into the middle of a detachment of horse riding leisurely in the same direction.

I do not well know how I acted, save that my

pistol went off in the *mêlée*, and I saw a man clap his hand to his shoulder in a vast hurry and swear freely. Half-a-dozen hands were stretched to my bridle; half-a-dozen pistols covered me at once. Now I had no leave to move my sword, my pistol I had fired, so I was wholly at their mercy. What happened I can only guess, for I was in too great a flurry to have any clear remembrance of the thing. I was conscious of striking one man fiercely on the cheek with my empty pistol, and of kicking another on the shins with all my might. But my sudden appearance had startled the horses so thoroughly that all the dragoons' time was taken up in curbing them, so they had no leisure to take aim at me. A dozen shots cracked around me, all going high into the air, and in a second I was through them and on the high-road beyond, some twenty paces in advance.

But by this time they were getting their horses under, and I felt that there was no time to be lost if I wished to see many more days on earth. I patted Maisie's neck, which to a horse of her spirit was the best encouragement, and set myself to a race for life. I kicked off my great boots to ease her, and then leaning forward, the trial of speed began. Behind me I heard shouting and the beat of horses getting into their stride. Before me was the long, thin highway, and black hills, and endless peat mosses. I had half a mind to leave the road and ride for the hills, where I made sure no man of them could ever follow me. But I reflected that this would shut for me the way to Dawyck, and I should have to lie hid in these regions for weeks, for when my path was once seen they would guard it more closely. My only chance was to outstrip them, and so keep the country open before me.

Now began the most terrible and desperate race that I was ever engaged in. I had tried my cousin Gilbert and beaten him on the side of Scrape; now his men were taking revenge for that episode in good earnest.

Maisie responded gallantly to my call. I felt her long, supple swing below me, and the vibration of her limbs. I began to glory in the exhilaration of the thing, and my spirits rose at a bound. The keen, cool air blew about my face, the moonlight danced on the horse's neck, and the way in front was a long strip of light.

But this braggadocio exhilaration soon passed, and in its place came some measure of forethought. I reflected that, though I might distance my pursuers and win to Dawyck, I would surely be tracked, and so bring misfortune on my mistress and myself. I had as yet no clear plans for the future. I had already all but burned my boats, for this night's work was like to get me into trouble on its own account. The wild notion of fleeing to the hills and trusting to God for the rest commended itself to me more and more. But one thing I must do—abide at Dawyck till such time as Nicol should be able to join us. I had the most perfect trust in him; I had proved him a hundred times, and I knew well that, if mortal man could do aught to mend my fortunes, he could do it. So with this thought I matured a plan for the present. I must put forth all my speed and win clean away from my pursuers. Now at Broughton there was an inn where abode an honest man, one Joshua Watson, who had oft had dealings with me in the past. He was an old retainer of our house, and I knew that he would see his roof and gear in a blaze before his eyes ere he would let any harm come to a laird of Barns. To him I purposed to go and hide till the dragoons had passed. They had not recognised me; this I knew, for they were not men of our countryside, and if left to themselves would keep the highway to Moffat and have never a thought of turning aside into Tweeddale.

I whispered something to Maisie, and the good mare set herself to the task. She was still unjaded, for I had used her to long wanderings, and she had not forgotten the lesson. I listened to her steady, rhythmical breath and the measured beat of her hoofs, and I thanked Heaven that I had chanced on her. At first the dragoons were maybe an eighth of a mile behind. Soon the distance increased, little by little at first, then by more and more as my mare got into her long gallop and their coarse beasts began to tire. We passed the little, lonely cot of Lochurd, nestling under great green hills, where the sheep bleat and the plovers cry alway. Then on by the lonely bog where men came once to dig marl and have left a monstrous wide pit filled with black water and with no bottom. I paused for a second to let Maisie drink from a burn which comes down from the Mount Hill. Soon we were at the turning where the road to Biggar and the west goes off from the highway. Here I stopped to listen for a moment. Far off and faint I heard the noise of my pursuers, and judged they were near a mile distant. Then off again; and now the road inclines downward, and as one rises over the crest of brae which the shepherds call the Rickle End, there bursts on the sight all the vast circle of hills, crowded and piled together, which marks the course of the Tweed. Down the little glen of Broughton I rode, while the burn made music by the highway, and it was hard to think that death awaited a little behind. Soon the moors sank into fields, trees and cottages appeared, a great stone mill rose by the water, and I clattered into the village of Broughton.

The place was asleep, and as I drew up at the inn but one light was apparent. I hammered rudely at the door till the landlord came, sleepy and yawning and bearing a candle in his hand. At the sight of me he started, for my danger was known over all Tweeddale. In a few words I told him of my pursuit and my request. He was a man of sparing speech, and, saying nothing, he

led me to the barn and showed me a hole in a great bank of straw. Maisie he took to the stable. 'Ha'e nae fear,' he said. 'Trust me; I'll settle the hash o' thae gentry.'

Sure enough, I had not been two minutes in the place when I heard voices and the sound of horses, and, creeping to the narrow unglazed window, saw the dragoons draw up at the inn-door. Much shouting brought down the landlord, who made a great show of weariness, and looked like one just aroused from sleep.

'Heard you or saw you any man pass on horseback about five minutes syne?' they asked.

'I dare say I did,' said he. 'At ony rate I heard the sound o' a horse, and it's verra likely it was on the Moffat road. There's a hantle o' folk pass by here at a' 'oors.'

'Ye're sure he didna come in here?' they said again. 'We'll search the house to see.'

'Weel,' said the landlord, 'ye can dae as ye like, but it seems a gey fule's errand. I tell ye it's lang past midnight, and we've a' been asleep here, and naebody could ha'e gotten in unless I had opened the door, for I ha'e a' the keys. But come and look, gentlemen, and I'll fetch ye some yill.'

They drank the ale, and then seemed to think better of their purpose, for they remounted. 'He'll be aff to the hills at the heid o' Tweed,' they said. 'He would never, gin he had ony sense, gang doon Tweeddale, where there's nae hiding for man or beast.' So, with many wanton oaths, they set off again at a lazy gallop.

THE WASTED WIND.

THERE are mighty rivers of air sweeping incessantly over the face of continent and ocean. The winds have neither source, shore, nor destination; they cannot be separately named and set down upon the map; so that we easily forget their vast extent and immeasurable force.

We live most of our time among walls; our homes are set in hollows among the hills; our gardens are sheltered by trees. All the conditions of our life tend to hide us from the wind. We underestimate its power and its constancy a hundredfold. Yet a large proportion of the heat which comes to the earth from the sun goes to make wind, and the air flows with every variation of temperature.

There are three principal forms in which the heat of the sun is made available for mechanical work. It built up plants long ago which are now converted into coal; and when this is burned, the energy may again be taken out in the form of work. Then, the sun distils the ocean into rain, and this, descending in the streams, can be made to do work through water-wheels. And, lastly, the changing heat disturbs the air, and drives it over sea and land, to fill the sails of ships and to turn the arms of the windmill. The heat-engine, the water-engine, and the wind-engine are at present the three practical instruments of mechanical force. They are the only prime movers which have any economic use.

Of these three sources of work—*coal*, *water*, and *wind*—the last is the only one which can any longer be called the free gift of nature. In the article in *Chambers's Journal* for January entitled 'Water: the Modern Rival of Coal,' the action of the first two prime movers was described.

Coal must be bought, and water does not flow everywhere; but the wind goes everywhere, and no man owns it or can make a charge for its use. It is a river which is as wide as our country; it is an inexhaustible source of work. Yet this wind is wasted; you may travel fifty miles through the country without seeing an attempt to make use of it.

It is, indeed, used plentifully at sea. Innumerable ships are moving over all waters impelled neither by machinery nor by human effort. Many a well-built sailing-vessel will travel, in a good breeze, at speeds which come near to those attained by steam. The heat-engine has not yet driven sails from the sea; it will probably never succeed in doing so. But the use of wind at sea is attended by certain disadvantages which do not affect its use by a stationary wind-engine. A ship needs a crew, and the sails must be shifted to suit the direction of the breeze; they must be reefed as its strength increases. A crew, or any hired labour, is a very expensive element in the utilisation of force. Every man employed absorbs the interest on from one to three thousand pounds, and adds just so much to the capital sunk in the adventure. But a wind-engine needs no crew. It turns itself to face the wind without interrupting its action. It reefs its own sails when the breeze increases in force, and spreads them again to their full extent as the wind falls lighter. Oil it once or twice in the month, and your labour is done.

In point of fact, the wind-engine is the most economical of all prime movers. The coal and the water which work the others are, comparatively speaking, monopolies; the wind is free. But the motive-power of wind is subject to a special disadvantage. It does not always blow. From time to time, and for an indefinite number of hours, the wheel refuses to move at all. This cessation of work is quite irregular; it may happen at any time; its occurrence and its duration cannot be foretold. The great majority of people are

ready to condemn wind-engines at once on this ground alone. But it would be wiser to find out exactly how serious this undoubted drawback is; whether it is not vastly exaggerated, and whether it may not be overcome in such a manner that the wind-power shall still retain its character as the cheapest source of work.

The wind is fickle, but it is not so treacherous as is commonly supposed. Let us take a wind of ten miles an hour as the lowest 'working wind.' This is a breeze which we should call pleasant and brisk; it is sufficient to keep a loaded windmill continuously at work, though it will not develop its full power. Although many well-made wind-engines do a considerable proportion of their work under lighter winds, we must allow a ten mile breeze for a wheel which is running its normal load. We shall therefore neglect all winds of lower speed.

Now, there is a working wind for considerably over half the number of hours in a year. In some places there is such a wind for three-quarters of the whole time, while on the summits of the higher hills we get a still greater proportion of the year as suitable for the work of wind-engines. The following figures, calculated from Mr A. L. Morley's tables, will give us a more definite idea of the power which is available for work.

The records of Greenwich Observatory, at a height of 211 feet above sea-level, over a period of five successive years, show that the wind blew at a speed of ten miles an hour and upwards for 4824 hours out of the 8760 hours of the year. At Falmouth, at the same height and over a similar period, the wind blew ten miles and over for 6182 of the 8760 hours. At Edgbaston, at a height of 625 feet, over a period of six consecutive years, there was a wind of more than ten miles an hour for 5600 hours out of the 8760. That is to say, at Greenwich more than half, and at Falmouth nearly three-quarters, of the year consisted of working hours.

Similarly, one may reckon, as a rule, on an average of over eight hours a day of wind at sixteen miles an hour; and this supply of wind is well distributed throughout the twelve months. Thus, at Falmouth the wind is found to blow at a rate of sixteen miles an hour and upwards, as follows:

January	339	hours, or about	11	hours a day.
February	279	"	10	"
March	354	"	11	"
April	295	"	10	"
May	262	"	8	"
June	191	"	6	"
July	274	"	9	"
August	274	"	9	"
September	191	"	6	"
October	257	"	8	"
November	286	"	9	"
December	350	"	11	"

It may therefore be regarded as certain that there is no lack of wind at any part of the year; and it is interesting to notice, in connection with electric lighting by wind-power, which is beginning to be recognised as an economical method, that the wind blows most in those months when most work is required of it.

To those who have no experience of the working of windmills, the motive-power appears to be too gusty and irregular to keep machinery going at that equal speed which is necessary both for its efficient working and for its preservation. But this objection is erroneous. In proportion to the elevation, the wind becomes comparatively smooth and equal. The gusts and squalls are mostly, although not altogether, due to irregularities and obstructions on the earth's surface, and at a height of even twenty feet, in an open position, they are largely eliminated. A ship at sea will preserve a constant inclination for many hours, and the clouds sail with a regular movement.

Further, the engine itself is a huge flywheel, with great inertia, and temporary fluctuations in the strength of the wind have no effect on the regularity of its revolutions. On a day when the wind seems to consist of a succession of squalls, a windmill may be seen to turn as steadily as the balance-wheel of a steam-engine. Again, a dynamo has recently been constructed which may be run with considerable variations of speed without impairing its efficiency.

The old-fashioned Dutch mill is well known as the type of wind-engine which was formerly common in many parts of Britain, and may still be seen at work in considerable numbers in the south and east. Its great arms, set in the form of a cross upon a huge shaft, are often forty or fifty feet in length. These 'whips' are fitted with frames covered with canvas, and the sails are reefed by the action of a governor, similar in principle to that of a steam-engine.

The tower, which forms the body of the mill, is divided into several stories, and is surmounted by a dome which is free to travel round on rollers, to bring the sails into the wind. This is effected automatically by means of a tail-wheel, or small set of sails carried on the dome at the side opposite to the axle. When the wind strikes the face of the tail-wheel its revolution brings the dome round upon the tower, until the great sails are set square to the wind. The 'wind-shaft' which carries the whips turns a vertical shaft, set in the midst of the tower, and so transmits its motion to the mill-stones and other machinery below. Mills of this type, although they develop good power—often as much as eight horse-power in an average breeze—are very inferior to the modern engine. The latter is at once lighter, stronger, and cheaper for the work which it will do.

Instead of four arms, it presents to the wind a circular sail, called the wind-wheel. This wheel is formed of from six to twelve radial arms,

which are joined by frames. It carries from twenty to over one hundred vanes or slats, each of which lies in the radial position, and is set at an oblique angle to the wind. A much greater surface is thus afforded for the motive-power than was the case in the older type of mill.

The wheel is kept facing the wind by means of a rudder, which is a single large vane projecting behind the wheel, and is driven from the wind like the vane of a weathercock; or, as is usual in the case of larger engines, a tail-wheel or rotating set of vanes is employed, like those familiar to us in the Dutch mill.

There are several methods by which the modern machine may be reefed. The whole wheel may turn bodily away from the wind, in proportion to the increasing pressure, as in the case of the 'Little Briton' wheel; or the frames containing the slats may be drawn back at their inner ends by the action of a governor. This method is often employed in America.

But probably the most sensitive, and quite the strongest, method is that employed in Titt's Simplex Engine, in which each slat is separately hinged at its two ends, and is automatically turned by any excess of wind. In a sharp gale only the edges of the slats are offered to the pressure, and the air rushes harmlessly through a skeleton wheel. The slats may also be turned in the same way by a lever at the foot of the tower, so as to keep them at any desired angle, or to throw the surface completely open, and thus to stop the wheel altogether. The best angle of the slats depends upon the force of wind, the load of the engine, and the desired speed; and it is important that this angle, in certain classes of work, should be capable of easy modification by the wheel-master. This wheel is started, regulated, and stopped as easily as a steam-engine.

Wind-wheels may be erected on the roofs of buildings, or on steel trellis towers, or on wooden masts. It is important that the machine should be as free as possible from the shelter of neighbouring trees and houses; and in any case a certain elevation is desirable, because the wind is always considerably stronger twenty feet from the ground than at six or eight feet. In good situations a tower of from twenty to thirty feet is sufficiently high.

The vertical driving shaft descends to within a few feet of the ground, where it is geared, by means of bevelled cogs, to the horizontal shaft which drives the machinery by means of belts or other gearing. It is well to see that the shafting and gearing is as light as possible, for energy may easily be wasted in ill-fitting belts or unnecessarily massive shafts; every ton of shafting absorbs at least one horse-power to move it. The driving shaft is usually fitted with a movable coupling, so that the machinery may, at any moment, be thrown instantly out of connection with the wheel.

The power of the wind may be profitably applied to many purposes. A small wheel, for instance, of sixteen or twenty feet in diameter, on an estate or farm, will drive the sawmill and do all the cutting, crushing, and grinding by means of the barn machinery, thus saving much labour of men and horses. In the island of Barbadoes, which is devoted to sugar-growing, there is a windmill at every plantation, and all the machinery of the factory is driven by its means. Wherever there is work which may be done when the working wind is blowing, and left during periods of calm, the wind-wheel, directly geared to the machinery, is by far the cheapest mover.

The wheel is most largely used, however, for pumping water. Thousands may be seen along American railway lines raising water into the tanks at the stations; and this method of securing a constant supply at almost no cost is beginning to make its way in Britain. For instance, the problem of supplying the village of Hopeman, near Elgin, with water has been solved by means of the adoption of the Rollason Wind Motor, which in twenty-four hours had pumped 56,000 gallons of water into the water-tank to supply the village. 'In some single cities of America,' says Wolff, 'over five thousand windmills are manufactured, on an average, each year.'

The same author finds, from the study of the actual performances of a great number of wheels, that the 25-foot engine will raise 12,743 gallons of water to a height of 25 feet in one hour of a sixteen mile breeze; and that it will do this for an average of eight hours a day, with no further expense than the interest on its first cost and the depreciation on a durable machine. Labour is limited to the filling of its oil-cups once or twice in the month. Mr Titt, of Warminster, who is the best authority on the subject in this country, finds that the 14-foot wheel will deliver daily 10,000 gallons of water at a height of 100 feet. Since a 25-foot wheel, with its tower, costs about £180, and the 14-foot wheel, with its tower, costs £75, it must be admitted that these results are obtained at very small cost. In the case of the larger wheels, developing from five to thirty or more horse-power, the economy is proportionally greater.

The following pumping-wheel is described fully in the journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England for June 1897. It is on the estate of Lord Spencer, in Northamptonshire. It is 30 feet in diameter; it raises water from a boring 200 feet deep, for the water-supply of two villages one mile apart and for the adjacent pastures. This engine has been running for four years without any danger of failure of water through failure of wind-power. With a wind of sixteen miles, it raises 1350 gallons per hour from this great depth, and it works continuously with a wind of ten miles. It is estimated to raise, in

the course of a year a total supply of nearly six million gallons to a height of 200 feet. The cost of this tower and wheel was £275; it involves practically no expense for attendance.

Such recorded performances are sufficient proof of the incomparable cheapness of wind-power for all such purposes as pumping water-supplies, irrigation, or the draining of marshy ground. One may say, indeed, that this is the only economical method of raising water; for the hydraulic ram cannot, in the majority of cases, be applied. And the secret of its cheapness is threefold: a simple and durable machine, no fuel, no attendance.

But we may perhaps look for the greatest future development of wind-power, not so much in the direct driving of machinery or pumps as in the generating of electricity by means of the dynamo. The recent improvements in the transmission of electric power have opened up an immense field for an economic prime mover; and the wide utilisation of the wind-wheel for this purpose, suggested by Lord Kelvin in 1881, has already come into the region of practical possibility. It is now possible to erect the machine on the most favourable site, and to transmit the energy which it develops to the places where it is to be used. The supply can be sent to motors or to lighting installations at a distance from one another in the proportions in which it is needed. During the periods of working wind the surplus energy is stored in accumulators against the time of calm.

The cheapness of the electrical transmission and subdivision of power consists in several advantages, but chiefly in the fact that no more power is used than is actually needed. In a steam-driven factory the engine must be kept going whether it is fully loaded or whether only a small proportion of the machinery is actually running. The shafting is driven all the time, the boiler has to be kept at its proper pressure, and there is always a serious leak of power in belting. The total loss of power is often considerably over fifty per cent.; in not a few cases it has been found to exceed seventy per cent. But where a motor is used for each machine no unnecessary work is done. If only one machine is being run no more power than is sufficient to drive it is consumed; if twenty machines are started there is immediately enough power for them all.

A further economy is secured by the ease with which power can be carried to a distance, so that work may be done in any required place. A good example is found in the electric plough, which, in certain German experiments, has proved itself very economical. An insulated cable is laid temporarily across the fields to where the plough is working, and power is transmitted to it from the home dynamo. Wind-driven electric stations in rural districts would find no lack of demand for power over an area of two or three miles' radius, and its distribution would be comparatively simple and inexpensive.

Since the Post Office has employed motor-cars in a daily service, and electric cabs are running in London streets, it may be assumed that these vehicles have entered on a serious stage of their development. The electric car is that form which is at once the safest, quietest, and the least subject to vibration. But its extensive use is hindered by the impossibility of obtaining power except in the largest centres of population. There is no doubt that before long there will be a large demand for the supply of electricity at stations in the smaller towns and at intervals along the great roads. If this comes about, it is likely that the supply will be obtained from the only source of power which is equally obtainable all over the country.

Installations of this kind are already at work, and have proved themselves to be successful and economical. There is, for instance, near a country house in the Midlands a 35-foot wheel of the Simplex pattern. This engine supplies light to two hundred sixteen-candle power incandescent lamps, and by means of several motors works stable and dairy machinery, pumps water for the house, and drives various agricultural machines at a farm half-a-mile away. A ten-horse-power dynamo is used, and is found to run at its normal speed for an average of over eight hours in the day.

THE HUSBAND OF MILLICENT.

CHAPTER III.

MILLICENT packed her portmanteau, taking a good many more things than were necessary for only a few days. 'One never knows what one may want,' she said to herself in excuse.

She settled any business connected with the parish, and gave the servants directions about cleaning the rooms. 'They want turning out badly,' she said, a little bit apologetically, to Sarah; 'you will do it better if I am away.'

Everything was ready, and she had about half-an-hour to wait before the dogcart would come round. She sat down in the drawing-room and took up a book, and tried to feel cool and composed.

She assured herself she was doing a most sensible thing—a wise and well-considered act of which every one, if they knew, would approve.

They could not fail to approve, at least all persons of new and enlightened ideas. Several important writers had lately shown how dignified it was on such occasions to *go away*. The day of patient Griseldas was past.

She was in the midst of these reflections when the afternoon post came in. Amongst the letters was one in her husband's handwriting. She looked at it for a moment. She felt half-inclined to put it in her pocket and read it in the train. She had a lurking fear that some sentimental feeling for the writer might be aroused and make her repent her decision. On second thoughts, however, she opened it, and rather impatiently scanned the contents.

Her father-in-law was still very ill. Henry hoped, however, to get away soon for a day or two. Some one was coming to take his place. He mentioned a few other matters, and asked some questions about the parish. And then came something which made her hands tremble and the colour mount to her cheeks: 'You mentioned the locked room next the study in one of your letters. I was in a hurry when I answered. I believe I asked you not to go in. I wanted to show it to you myself. Well, I will tell you about it. I have often been on the point of doing so; but it is connected with a part of my life which I have to shut away. I try not to think about it. You know I entered the Church at my mother's wish. My brother was alive then. The second son has always gone into the Church in our family. She was dying, and I would have promised her anything she asked. But I did not know how hard it would be. I tried serving two masters at first. But it would not do. I had to give it entirely up. I hope she knows what it has been. I think perhaps it is better to write and tell you all this. You will understand how I was obliged to lock it all away. I do not often go there, only now and then, and dream of what I might have done. I allow myself that. Go yourself and see. The key is in my writing-table drawer, at the back.'

Millicent sat quite still for a few moments, the letter clasped between her two hands. Presently she got up and went out into the hall. She listened for an instant; then she walked upstairs to the study.

She found the key and fitted it into the lock. The door opened and she went into the room. The shutters were closed, and only streaks of light filtered through the chinks. She hastily undid them and threw them open. Then she looked around. What should she see?

It was very simple. It had the appearance of an artist's studio for many years disused. The dust lay thick upon everything, and there was a faint, hardly perceptible smell from the neglected bottles of oil and varnish which stood in rows upon the mantelpiece.

Leaning against the sides of the room were innumerable canvases and stretchers, many of them turned away so that only their backs were visible. Amongst them were several studies of heads and unfinished portraits, showing considerable feeling and power. Upon the walls were some finished works in frames—an old man's head, some Venetian girls, some portraits of children.

A litter of charcoal sketches lay upon a table; there was a palette covered with dingy daubs of colour, cracked, dusty, and dry; and there were brushes and tubes of paint and implements of various kinds.

Upon the floor were some old Eastern rugs, and lying in a heap upon a sofa were some faded draperies and pieces of embroidery. Upon a ledge which ran around one side of the room was a row of plaster casts.

And there were books—shelves filled with books—books on art, French novels, books that had been books of the day; and near the fireplace was a low, luxurious arm-chair, with a pipe-rack and cigar-box close at hand, and a quaint old carved ash-tray.

Millicent scanned everything. She noted every detail with eager, curious eyes. Her cheeks were flushed. The reaction from the state of mind in which she had been made her brain feel quite numb.

'So this is his secret. I have been very—foolish,' she said to herself at last. And then she came suddenly to a pause. She had forgotten time and everything since she entered the room.. Now her ear caught the sound of wheels coming round; and, going quickly to the window, she saw the dogcart draw up at the hall-door.

There was her box ready to be put behind, and Sarah standing on the steps with her bag and her fur cloak. And who was that talking to Jackson? The angle of the jutting-out wall below hid some one who had just come up. A sudden curiosity seized her. She opened the window cautiously and looked out.

It was Henry—he had actually come home! There he was, looking at her box, and asking who was going away. They were telling him!

Millicent gasped. What should she do? What would he think?

And there was the cold, little reproachful note she had written to him, lying upon the hall-table! It was too late to get it back. He would see it now. He would see it; and what would he think?

She stood for a moment helpless and miserable, staring blankly out of the window.

'How can I ever explain?' she muttered to herself. 'How could I have been so wicked? It will look as if I was running away—almost eloping,' she added under her breath. 'Leaving

the parish just when I was most wanted; and the Sunday schools, and the Mothers' Meeting, and the sick people. He will never think anything of me again.

'At any rate I will take off my things,' she said after a pause; and she hastily went down to her bedroom.

She removed her hat and jacket and put them away. Then she stood in the middle of the floor and listened. He had gone into the drawing-room. He had come out into the hall. 'Where is your mistress?' she heard him ask one of the servants.

Then he came upstairs—two steps at a time. He came into the room.

'O Henry!—I didn't know you were returning,' she said brokenly. 'I'——

But he came up to her and kissed her quite in his usual way. 'I suppose not. I hear my telegram never arrived. I sent it by a chance boy, which was rash. My uncle came unexpectedly for a few days, which enabled me to get away.'

He threw himself into an arm-chair. She glanced at him furtively. He looked anxious and worn.

'Is he better?' she asked in a low voice.

'Yes, slightly. But it has been very terrible. His mind quite gone. No one able to manage him but me.'

'Oh,' cried Millicent, 'how dreadful for you! How could I'—— But she stopped.

'Yes; I did not tell you. I did not want to distress you. It was all so hopeless and so sad. He may last for some while. Something will have to be arranged. I can't be away from the parish much longer.'

He got up and paced up and down the room with knitted brows. Suddenly he paused opposite her. She looked up at him and her heart beat fast. 'You were just going away, were you not?' he asked.

'Yes. O Henry, can you ever forgive me? I don't deserve it, I know.' She clasped her hands tightly together and her voice choked.

'What do you mean?' asked her husband as he looked at her in a slightly perplexed manner.

'Why, I was going away—to stay away, to—to—leave for some while. I don't know when I was coming back,' she answered feebly, her cheeks very pale and her eyes full of tears.

He stooped and kissed her. 'Poor darling, you must have been very lonely. I meant to have suggested to you to stay away with some of your friends. Much the best thing to do.'

Millicent stared speechlessly at him. Her quickened perceptions saw things in a curiously broadened light. It gave her something of a shock. She perceived, as with a sudden flash of insight, that Henry could not understand—would never understand anything so mean and petty and foolish. If she told him all, explained never so eloquently, yet he would not understand. It would not convey to him the truth. He would very likely think she was not quite well, and was not herself to-day. That was all. She felt as if a great gulf yawned between them—between his nature and hers.

'And, by the way,' he went on, 'I picked up a note in the hall for me in your handwriting. Now you can *tell* me instead—much nicer.'

'Oh, it is nothing,' said Millicent. 'I—I wrote it to tell you I was going away—and—do you mind giving it to me?'

He threw it into her lap, and then he came near her and stroked her hair. 'We'll go away together for a few days as soon as I can arrange it,' he said. 'You've been doing too much in the parish, I expect. You look quite pale. We'll go and get a breath of sea air.'

'No, I haven't done much at all,' said Millicent miserably.

She watched him wonderingly, as he walked to the window and leaned out, the long sprays of Virginia creeper waving over him in crimson festoons. He was far ahead of her. It was she who had fallen short, who had altogether failed—failed in the most elementary part of the new creed. She could never talk of mutual faith again. She would have to relinquish any such exalted rôle, and recognise that she was merely commonplace. It was very depressing.

'Have you been—into the room yet?' said her husband presently.

He had given some directions to the gardener who was working below upon one of the flower-beds.

'Yes; just before you came. And—O Henry—I do feel for you—ever so much. It must have been so hard!'

She was not a demonstrative woman, but she came up to him and put an arm around him, and leant her head against his.

He kissed her in a grateful, tender way. 'Yes,' he said; 'I knew you would. I can't think why I didn't tell you before. But I always put off explaining things—especially about myself. Laziness, I suppose. And besides, I try not to think about it. Regretful thoughts are bad for the work. One mustn't look back. Anyhow, I knew you would understand—and I'm so glad you know. It's all right now.'

There was perfect confidence in his tone. She would always understand, whether he explained himself or whether he didn't—she would understand. That was what was in his tone. She looked at him silently for a moment. Her eyes gleamed.

'Yes,' she answered in a low voice; 'I think it is all right now.'

THE END.

THE STRANGE STORY OF LADY DUNDEE.

JOHN GRAHAM of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, fell in the hour of victory at Killiecrankie, 27th July 1689, and his remains were buried in Old Blair church, Blair Athole, where exactly two hundred years later the Duke of Athole placed a tablet to his memory. The village of Blair in early times was on the hillside adjoining and behind Blair Castle. The present village of Blair Athole lies in the middle of the strath watered by the Garry; its church was the first Presbyterian place of worship attended by the Queen in Scotland. What used to be the old inn, a rambling building in the line of the old coach-road, is now the factor's house. The old church is roofless, and when its dust was disturbed to bury the sixth Duke of Athole in 1866, among the bones disturbed were found some twenty-nine skulls. It appears that when the dust was disturbed at an earlier period, in 1794, some remains of the armour of Claverhouse were found. The gravedigger is reported to have sold these remains to a party of travelling tinkers, who bought them for the sake of the brass which they contained. General Robertson of Lude rescued part of a steel cap from the tinkers, and a portion of Dundee's corslet has been preserved at Blair Castle. Some bones removed in 1852 to the church of St Drostan at Deer, in Aberdeenshire, were believed at the time by not a few persons to have been part of Dundee's bones. But this was strongly disputed, and is not the accepted view.

The following is the text of the memorial placed over the dust of Claverhouse in September 1889: 'Within the vault beneath are interred the remains of John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, who fell at the battle of Killiecrankie, 27th July 1689, aged forty-six. This memorial is placed here by John, seventh Duke of Athole, K.T., 1889.'

Romance and tragedy mingle over the life and death of the Viscountess of Dundee, afterwards Lady Kilsyth. Jean, daughter of William Lord Cochrane, married Claverhouse at the height of his persecuting career, against the will of her mother, in 1684. 'Had she [not] been right principled she would never, in despite of her mother and relations, have made choice of a persecutor, as they call me,' wrote Claverhouse. It appears that Lady Dundee's infant boy only survived three months after the fatal news from Killiecrankie. While on a visit to Colzium, the seat of the family of Kilsyth, she met William Livingstone, afterwards Viscount Kilsyth, who became her second husband in 1694. The plain gold ring which he presented to her on the day of their betrothal was dropped in the garden, and this was at once set down as an evil omen. This ring was afterwards discovered, when the tenant was digging potatoes in 1796, nearly a century afterwards. Another ring was found which Lady Dundee may have given her husband, and it bore the inscription, 'Yours till death.' The inscription on the first ring was, 'Yours for ever.' Livingstone had to retire with his wife to Holland for political reasons, and it was there that, in 1695, the following tragic event took place. During the night the turf roof of the house in which they were residing fell and buried the Viscountess and her son, and a Mrs Melville, her lady's-maid. Kilsyth was for three-quarters of an hour beneath the rubbish, but both he and his friend escaped unhurt. Not so his wife, who perished along with her maid and son, being suffocated ere they could be relieved. The bodies of mother and son were embalmed and sent to Scotland for burial in Kilsyth church. Exactly a century later, in May 1795, some students from Glasgow went down to visit the Kilsyth vault; and, prompted by curiosity, one of them tore up the lid of the leaden coffin, with the result we have to relate.

Dr Rennie, parish minister, who drew up an account of the circumstance, relates the sequel. He tells us that the body had been embalmed in Holland, landed at Leith, lay for a time in a cellar there until conveyed to Kilsyth, and was buried according to the rites of the Church of England. The body was enclosed first in a coffin of fir; next in one of lead carefully cemented, but without inscription. This was again covered with a strong wooden coffin. The space between the two coffins was filled up with white matter, of the colour and consistency of putty, apparently composed of gums and perfumes, for it had a rich aromatic smell. Dr Rennie had frequently seen the coffin before, as the vault was often opened. The outer wooden coffin and the lead, it was observed, had begun to decay. The students who laid sacrilegious hands upon Lady Dundee's coffin in 1795 had disclosed the inner coffin of fir, which was found as fresh as if newly made; and the cover, being loose, was easily removed. With astonishment visible on their features, they looked on the body of Lady Kilsyth and her child in perfect preservation. On 12th June of that year, the matter having been noised abroad, great crowds came at all hours, and would not be denied admittance to the vault. Dr Rennie, narrating what he saw, says he found the body was in perfect preservation, and quite entire. 'Every feature and every limb was as full—nay, the very shroud was as clean and fresh, and the colours of the ribbons as bright, as the day they were lodged in the tomb. What rendered the scene more striking and truly interesting was, that the body of her son and only child, the natural heir of the title and estates of Kilsyth,

lay at her knees. His features were as composed as if only asleep. His colour was as fresh and his flesh as plump and full as in the perfect glow of health. The smile of infancy and innocence sat on his lips. His shroud was not only entire but perfectly clean, without a particle of dust upon it. He seems to have been only a few months old. The body of Lady Kilsyth was equally well preserved; and at a little distance, with the feeble light of a taper, it would not have been easy to distinguish whether she was dead or alive. The features—nay, the very expression of the countenance—were marked and distinct, and it was only in a certain light that you could distinguish anything like ghastly and agonising traits of a violent death.' A wound still visible on the right temple may have been sufficient to cause the death of Lady Kilsyth. Some medical gentlemen seem to have gone further than look on, for an incision made into the arm of the infant disclosed the fact that the flesh was quite firm.

At a later date there was vandalism around the tomb of Lady Kilsyth. About 1822 the old church was pulled down, and a new one built in a different situation. The vault was, however, preserved intact, the factors of Sir A. Edmonstone, the proprietor of Colzium, being buried there. On the death of one of them, about 1851, when the vault was again opened, it was found that the sexton had removed the body of Lady Kilsyth, to put that of the factor in its place. Sir Archibald Edmonstone, who then saw the body of Lady Kilsyth, says that it was perfectly shrivelled and discoloured, and the child, which before had been seen lying at her feet, was now lying on her breast. Impressed by a feeling of reverence for the remains, Sir Archibald immediately ordered the body to be walled up within the vault, so that it could never again be exposed, and he also put a memorial inscription over the spot.

A tragic interest thus attended the last resting-places of both Viscount and Lady Dundee, though they were laid so far apart. William Livingstone of Kilsyth, who succeeded his brother as fifth Earl of Kilsyth, engaged in the rebellion of 1715, was attainted, and died at Rome in 1733.

AN ANGLO-INDIAN'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EDINBURGH MEDICAL SCHOOL.

FROM UNDER THE PUNKAH AT TRICHINOPOLY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

'IT'S a far cry to Loch Awe,' but not so far as from Trichinopoly to the North Brig o' Auld Reekie; yet here I am sweltering in the former and thinking only of the latter.

I have come back from early parade with the Royal Horse Artillery, had my tub, and find it too hot even to sit idle in a long Madras-chair under a punkah, almost too hot to think, but not quite; and my thoughts have flown back to the North Bridge *en route* for the University—and I'm thinking—I'm thinking of my medical student days till I determine to try and forget the heat in scribbling.

The time I write of is from the end of the 'fifties till the never-to-be-forgotten graduation day of 1st August 1863. Think of the teachers in the University at that time—gods, not men—Syme, Simpson, Goodsir, Christison, Hughes-Bennett, Playfair, Douglas Maclagan, 'Woody,' Laycock, and the rest—every man among them leaving his mark and making history. How earnest they all were in their teaching, and yet how different! Let me try to sketch some of them. We had better start for a nine o'clock morning class — Materia Medica. Rather sharp work to be in the class-room by nine when you were regularly reading till two every morning. Poor old Davie Simpson and I generally met about the top of Hanover Street to walk up together to the University; and we *had* to walk, I can tell you, as we generally looked behind us just before getting on to the Bridge, expecting to see, and seeing, a handsome, tall, slight figure, tightly buttoned up in a black frock-coat, a fine face with grizzled whiskers underneath a well-brushed hat, a throat open to the breeze in a wide collar, and a pair of shapely legs, well extended, full of spring and life, coming along at something over four miles an hour. You know who it is, of course—Christison. Davie and I never knew quite if he really meant racing us up to the University; but the same thing took place morning after morning, and we had all our work cut out to keep in front of Sir Robert. Nor were we always able to do so; and there was a sly little twinkle in the eye of the Professor on the occasions when he caught us up and sailed past us as we lifted our hats. But the twinkle was all gone a few minutes later when he was seated in his professorial chair, the personification of dignity and the very type of the high-bred physician. Still, I do think there was a twinkle in his eye on the Bridge, and I thought I saw it once on another awful occasion when I was feeling—well,

as I never want to feel again—viz., as I appeared before him for examination. I think he recognised in me one of the youngsters who used so undauntedly to race him up to the University; and if so, he could scarcely have helped twinkling on recognising in the dejected, trembling, pallid youth, sitting lonely before him at the examination-table, the rather boisterous young man, bursting with health and spirit, who had the temerity to try conclusions with him on the North Bridge morning after morning.

Hughes-Bennett and Sir James Y. Simpson.

Say that we now go to Hughes-Bennett at ten. Quite a different style of man here—a man that his students feared, while they loved and respected him as one of the grandest teachers and most severe examiners in the University. No nonsense in this class. If any man in the class hopes to pass his examination, he must listen to every word; nay more, he must make use at examination of the very words used in the lecture, in order to give clear definitions. Why, I suppose all of us attending Physiology at that time would to-day define the difference between 'sensation' and 'sensibility' in the very words John Hughes-Bennett used in 1860—difficult to find any others absolutely correct. What a terrible examiner he was! He looked like stone. He asked you a question, let you talk, and gave not the slightest sign as to whether you were perfectly right or talking absolute nonsense. I have no doubt this was done to make you self-reliant, but it was agony and so hopeless. I know I left his examination-table with a full conviction that I was plucked and had made unwittingly some terrible exhibition of myself; and the reaction was almost too great for me when, being recalled from the 'funking-room,' where we all had to await our marks being made up, I was told by the Dean of the Faculty that I had passed, and saw on the face of Hughes-Bennett a sort of half-smile, as much as to say, 'What were you afraid of? You were all right; I never said you were wrong;' but if he had only favoured me with even a half-shadow of that half-smile at the examination-table, what agony he might have saved me! Now I see how right he was; it is no use a man being right if he be not confident in his opinion and self-reliant; and even a student's opinion should not be liable to alteration or modification at the smile or frown of the examiner. What has this severe teacher and examiner done, not only for university teaching in Edinburgh, but also in London, where his system of teaching was carried on by Murchison and others, and to-day is still carried on by those who learned in the old Infirmary wards of John Hughes-Bennett? Once I did see Bennett with a full, broad smile, which, however, he instantly banished, and immediately put on the severe look which he kept for students in general. It came about in this way: Twelve o'clock was the hospital hour, and the students collected in the wards to await the advent of the Professor. A group of us had gathered ourselves at the end of Bennett's first ward, and there was a good deal of laughing and joking going on; there was no very bad case in this ward, and the patients were mostly sitting up in bed, amused with the fun going on amongst the students. I was always more or less an adept at getting musical sounds out of the most unlikely things, and on this occasion I was in full blast upon my stethoscope, playing 'Home, Sweet Home' with much feeling and tremolo, as if the stethoscope were a cornet, greatly to the edification of the students and patients, when suddenly in walked Bennett with his quick step and caught me *in flagrante delicto*. The solo could scarcely have recommended itself to his highly-cultivated musical ear, but the ridiculous situation did catch him for a second, and caused a distinct smile, hidden, however, immediately under the usual severe look. I wished I could have sunk through the floor, but nothing was said; and in five minutes more I was examining a new case before Bennett and all the students, beginning with the inevitable first two questions, 'How long have you been ill?' 'Where do you feel pain?' and without these two preliminary questions no student of Hughes-Bennett was allowed to proceed.

However, that story has taken us to the Infirmary at twelve o'clock, and I have not accounted for the hour from eleven to twelve. Let us go to the great Professor J. Y. Simpson, afterwards Sir James.

Well, this is a class in which you really require two full sessions to get through the work properly. The first session should be devoted to copying all these closely-written blackboards into your note-book. There is very little time to listen to the lecture; you must get the boards this session and listen to the lecture next winter. I suppose there is hardly a student who attended Simpson's lectures who has not his copy of these blackboards treasured to this day. I know I have mine, and would not take their weight in gold for them. What a delight they have been to me in almost all parts of the world! I knew them by heart at one time, if indeed I do not do so now. A crowded class to-day—possibly a 'Simpson story' is expected. The little door opens, and in walks the dear old Professor, with his massive head, his long hair, his twinkling eyes, and broad, benevolent face. Then he begins to speak in his rather small voice through smiling lips; he rests both hands upon a long pointer, and his head rests a little sideways upon his hands. Is it possible this little, stout, good-humoured-looking man is the great Simpson, at whose feet the medical world has learnt its lessons; the man who perhaps has done more for

humanity in general than any other before or since, by giving freely that blessed drug chloroform, with its power to relieve suffering? Think of it! Think what it was in years before Simpson and chloroform. Think of the operations in hospitals, on the battlefields, in the cockpits on board our ships in action, when these operations were performed without chloroform.

Well, there stands the little man, or great god, who brought to mankind the greatest blessing of the age—chloroform. What a combination of qualities in one man!—kindliness, charity, perseverance, intellect, devoutness, skill, grand common-sense, gentleness, courage, and, I think, every other great quality of mind that one can think of, keenly alive to a joke, and with a very pretty turn of sarcasm.

Will you excuse another story, and that a personal one? At the time I write of a system existed with regard to the examinations—I do not say whether it was good or bad, but if a student at the written examination did an exceptionally good paper he was excused his *vivâ voce* exam., and this was equivalent to passing with honours. I have before said I knew Simpson's blackboards by heart, and as they contained the whole of Simpson's subject, it was not difficult for me to give in a good paper. The real difficulty was to know where to stop. Well, I had been told from a private source I was to have no *vivâ voce*, but I was not supposed to know this till I went into the examination-room.

When I took my seat at the examination-table Simpson had not arrived, but one of the assessors, by no means a friend of mine from private reasons, had arrived, and began to examine and 'heckle' me. I knew he was doing this 'unlawfully,' having previously been told I was to have no *vivâ voce;* but knowing Simpson's boards so well, I was not to be frightened by this Jack-in-office, and I dare say gave him as good as I got. Presently in walked Simpson, with his broad-brimmed hat and long hair flowing out. I saw him take in the situation in an instant as I jumped up from my chair and stood respectfully at attention. The Jack-in-office, finding himself caught doing a dirty trick, made a lame apology, saying, 'Oh, this is Mr Rowe, Professor; I am just asking him a few questions, but it is very easy work. Would you like to examine him?' Dear old Simpson, taking off his hat and pushing back his hair, with a wicked little twinkle in his eye to me, said, 'Oh no; Mr Rowe is far too good for *me*,' with a very distinct accent on the 'me,' as much as to say, 'and I fancy a great deal too good for *you*.' The Professor then sat down, and motioning me to my chair opposite him, said, 'Mr Rowe, you gave me an excellent paper, and I am much pleased with your thesis on chloroform which I am reading. How is your father? Has he been catching any more salmon lately?' The rest of the time we spent in talking of salmon-fishing, and Jack-in-office, I fancy, felt rather 'out of it.'

Such was the kindly man who conferred on mankind the inestimable boon of chloroform, with its power to give freedom from pain and suffering even during the most prolonged and severe operations. To-day, when you cannot take up a medical paper without finding a record of two or three deaths during the preceding week from chloroform, it is almost becoming a question if the boon is as great as it appeared. We did not have these deaths in the old days. How can we explain all this? In my time at Edinburgh every one got chloroform, and almost any quantity. We hardly ever used a stethoscope to examine the heart, or felt the pulse, and the patients did not die. One thing we certainly never did—we never used an inhaler; and I suppose to this day in Scotland and Ireland 'inhalers' are almost unknown. Imagine, if you can, the expression on the face of Simpson or Syme if any 'London body' had proposed giving a patient of theirs chloroform through an inhaler! Both Simpson and Syme taught that chloroform should be inhaled from being sprinkled on a towel, the two golden rules being to see that the vapour was properly diluted by the surrounding air, and to watch the breathing, holding the towel some inches from the face. It may be a coincidence merely; but if so, it is remarkably strange that, while the chloroform has not changed, while the constitutions of the patients have not changed, where the use of an inhaler is the rule there are frequent deaths from chloroform; whilst in Scotland and Ireland, where the use of an inhaler is the exception, deaths are proportionately rare.

THE NIGHTINGALE'S SONG.

I WANDER musing 'neath the trees,
Watch'd by the queen-moon's tender eye,
And there comes floating on the breeze
A rich and wondrous melody.

Now joyous as a marriage song,
Now mournful as a funeral wail,
It rings through the hush'd night-hours long—
The passion of the Nightingale.

Upward it floats, now sinks again,
Low, like a dying man's last word;
Anon the mingled joy and pain
Rises from the full-throated bird.

O night, how beautiful thou art!
Dark-arched above, around the glow
Of Dian; in my musing heart
The song of Nightingale below.

WILLIAM COWAN.

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THE CHUSAN ISLANDS.

THE beginning of 1840 saw affairs in the Near and Far East very much what they are just now. We had recently succeeded in suppressing sedition at Kurnool; we had an army in Afghanistan; the Indian press was teeming with accounts of the unsettled state of our N.W. frontier, then the kingdoms of the Sikhs and Nepalese; a body of Russians was advancing on Bokhara with the ostensible purport of releasing some Russian slaves confined there; and affairs in China were beginning to assume a threatening aspect.

In China and the Far East matters progressed so rapidly that in early May five men-of-war and several transports were anchored, as a first instalment, in the capacious harbour of the appointed rendezvous for the necessary expedition, Singapore, which we purchased from a native chief in 1819 for sixty thousand dollars, at which time it boasted only one hundred and fifty inhabitants. By the 30th May numerous other vessels having arrived, the signal was given for all to weigh anchor for the Canton River, opposite the mouth of which they were all riding by midday of 23d June.

Life on a sailing transport was very different sixty years ago from what it is now on a fine steamer. *Ex uno disce omnes.* On board the *John Adams*, from Madras, of only four hundred and ninety tons, four hundred and twenty men were packed like African slaves, five officers (one a relation of the writer) being stowed away on the lower deck with their men, in a small aft cabin recently used as a store for ghee, tobacco, and other savoury substances provided for the native crew. It required no less than five vessels to carry one regiment, the 49th, and four to convey the 26th. In calm weather the officers in one ship would row over, and dine with those on another as they were sailing along; while as to navigation in those dangerous and but little-known waters, many of the transports were unprovided with charts; and this naturally often proved exceedingly awkward when they got separated from the rest of the flotilla.

After a couple of days' ride in a very unsafe anchorage opposite the Canton River, during which dragging of anchors and consequent collisions were frequent, a boat from H.M.S. *Algerine*, a ten-gun brig, was sent round ordering the squadron to proceed to Chusan. By Sunday, 5th July, the whole force was assembled before the suburb of the principal island, which fell into our hands without the land forces discharging a musket, a few round-shot from the men-of-war sufficing to drive the Chinese out of two apologies for batteries, and to scatter them in all directions. Behind the suburb was a five hundred yards stretch of low swampy ground given over to the cultivation of rice, in rear of which lay the city, surrounded, like every other in that country, by a high wall. To scale this wall all was in readiness by next daybreak; but, to the great disappointment of the force, the city was found to have been deserted during the night. Unfortunately an immense supply of sham-shoo, a highly-intoxicating liquor, was found in the various houses, and the scene of drunkenness and pillage that ensued was awful. In one regiment alone over three hundred men were rendered incapable, and it was found necessary to re-embark the whole battalion; but there was one notable exception in the 26th Cameronians, who conducted themselves in every respect with the greatest sobriety. So serious was the general debauch that the inhabitants reported to the emperor that the sure way to conquer the barbarians was to place liquor in their way. The city is backed by a range of hills intersected with valleys, but is too far from the harbour, so that our men had to encamp on low marshy ground, which swarmed with mosquitoes, and produced a great deal of diarrhœa and sickness. The first to succumb was General Oglander, a fine old warrior belonging to the 26th, who had been on many a hard-fought field.

One of this group of islands, named Potoy or 'The Worshipping Island,' a bare, rocky spot

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measuring some four by two and a half miles, is worthy of mention. Its inhabitants are all priests, with the exception of a few labourers who cultivate vegetables and rear poultry for them, as they are not permitted to eat meat; nor are any females allowed on the island. The temples, which are built in the midst of the few trees here and there, are some of them very spacious and handsome structures, adorned with gods and goddesses of grotesque forms. Some of the religious rites and usages have points of resemblance to those of the Catholic Church, as has been elsewhere noted in Buddhist regions. The priests are shaved, and clad in long, flowing yellow robes, while the devotees prostrate themselves before images, throwing up incense, and counting their prayers on beads. These temples or jhos-houses are supported by the government and by the donations of those who go to worship. Large junks on passing usually put in to ask whether or no their voyage will be propitious. The priest gives the inquirer some pieces of stick marked with cabalistic signs which he has to shake about in his hands until one falls out, the symbol on which no doubt admits of interpretation according to the amount of sycee silver deposited.

On 28th September, after an absence of two months from Chusan, Admiral Elliot, who was in supreme command of the expedition, returned from the Gulf of Pe-chi-li, where he had gone to treat with the Chinese authorities, his demands including the permanent cession of an island to England and the opening of all ports to British trade; to the former of which they readily agreed, but to the latter raised strong objection. A truce was proclaimed for consideration of these terms; and most opportunely for the health of the troops, which was just then appalling, not one-half of the three thousand three hundred and fifty-three, who in July landed in perfect health, being fit for duty. The Cameronians had five hundred and sixty men in hospital, and every regiment was losing two or three daily. The truce induced the natives to return to the city in considerable numbers, and to open shops for the sale of meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, and fruit; they had been forbidden by the mandarins previously to traffic in any way with the barbarians, or to supply them with food under pain of death. Amongst other things they set up a Punch and Judy show, an exact counterpart of that exhibited in England, even to the tone of Punch's voice, insomuch as to suggest that we may have derived this form of entertainment from China.

Unfortunately at this juncture the armed transport *Kite* struck on a quicksand in the Yang-tse-kiang River and capsized, the master, Captain Noble, being jerked overboard and drowned, and his wife, after being tossed about in an open boat with some others for three days and nights, was picked up by the Chinese and taken as a hostage to Ningpo. On application being made for the unfortunate woman's release, a 'chop' was sent back that they would give up no one until we gave up Chusan, and that unless we did so immediately she, together with the other prisoners, would be carried down to Canton. Amongst them was Lieutenant Anstruther of the artillery, who had been kidnapped some time before while making a survey of the islands. All were, however, being well treated and allowed to communicate with their friends, as well as to receive clothes, books, cigars, &c., sent to them.

Not until the following February, 1841, was it notified to the force that Hongkong was the island to be ceded and that Chusan was to be given up, after an occupation of seven dreary months, which had cost us the lives of nearly a thousand gallant fellows, more than a quarter of the whole land-force engaged. Some engineer officers were at once sent down to Hongkong to commence the erection of barracks; but it appeared that, after all, the treaty had not been signed, the emperor having disavowed the acts of his agents, and that it was only a ruse of the heathen Chinee to get us away from Chusan, which unfortunately succeeded. They, however, kept faith in restoring all prisoners, as promised.

During March and April the Chinese began to be so troublesome that it was found necessary to despatch to Canton a large force, which, on the 25th of the latter month, took possession of the heights north of that city. Our force landed was two thousand against ninety thousand, our loss one hundred and five killed and wounded; that of the enemy fifteen hundred. We remained on the heights till the 30th, when the inhabitants paid six million dollars in order that their city might be spared, in addition to three lakhs of dollars for injury done to the British factories, and ten thousand for ill-treatment of the crew of a small vessel, the *Black Joke*. In fact, they were willing in those days to pay any sum rather than cede an inch of territory.

This severe lesson was soon forgotten, as on 21st August another expedition was essential—northward this time to Amoy, which was captured without much loss or difficulty. In a pool by the side of one of the principal streets were found numerous dead bodies of female infants tied up in mats, confirming the report that the Chinese frequently destroy their female children. The force then went on to attack Chinhai (Shanghai) and Ningpo, and to retake Chusan, which was found to have been strongly fortified since our departure, one hundred and thirty-six guns, thirty-six of which were brass, having been mounted on the works thrown up. On 1st October the transports were again discharging their cargo of troops, by two P.M. of which day this now all-important group of islands was in our hands.

By the 10th Chinhai (Shanghai) had fallen, and by the 13th Ningpo, so we were now in a position to dictate almost any terms. In Ningpo was found

an enormous store of grain, which the appointed prize-agents sold to the natives at a dollar for as much as a man could carry away. And here again the wily Chinee proved his cunning by passing, in two days, some two thousand copper dollars. The chief amusement during the occupation was watching the natives catch fish with the aid of cormorants. Each boat contained from eight to ten birds, which, at a given signal, all jumped into the water and commenced diving. On their coming to the surface again the boatmen hooked them up by a string which was attached to their necks and made them disgorge any fish they had caught. They were then tossed again into the water, any bird that did not do his work well and that was not constantly diving being struck with a long bamboo till he recommenced.

On 24th August a conference was held at Nanking between Sir Henry Pottinger and the governor of that city to decide upon the terms of peace. The following terms were duly ratified by the Chinese commissioners: (1) A cash payment of twenty-one million dollars; (2) permanent cession of the island of Hongkong; (3) permission to trade with and have a consul at Canton, Amoy, Foochoofoo, Chusan, Ningpo, and Shanghai—upon the whole, a gratifying conclusion to a tedious war of nearly three years' duration, giving just cause for pride that we had so completely humbled the Celestial government, which but two months previously could think and boast of nothing but utterly exterminating the white-faced barbarians by driving them into the sea. The result strengthened a Chinese superstition of very ancient date that their country would one day be subdued by a woman from the West.

On 21st September news was received of the formal signature by the emperor to the treaty, and on 20th December forty transports sailed westward from Hongkong. A garrison was left in Chusan until the whole indemnity was paid, when it was withdrawn in 1846. We thus twice surrendered this group of islands, a position that would have played a highly important part in the world to-day, and which, had we retained, might have given an entirely different complexion to the present state of affairs in the Far East, even if it had not prevented it altogether.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XX.—THE HOUSE OF DAWYCK.

I KNEW well that I had little time to lose, and that what must be done must be done quickly. So, as soon as the tails of them were round the hillside, I came out from my hiding-place and mounted Maisie once more. I thanked Joshua Watson, the landlord; and, with a cry that I would remember him if I ever got my affairs righted again, I turned sharply through the burn and down the path to Peebles. It was touch or miss with me; for it was unlikely that the highway between the West Country and the vale of Peebles would be freed from the military.

Yet freed it was. It may have been that the folk of Tweedside were little caring about any religion, and most unlike the dour carles of the Westlands; or it may have been that they were not yet stirring. At any rate I passed unmolested. I struck straight for the ridge of Dreva, and, rounding it, faced the long valley of the Tweed, with Rachan woods and Drummelzier haughs and the level lands of Stobo. Far down lay the forest of Dawyck, black as ink, on the steep hillside. Down by the Tweed I rode, picking my way very carefully among the marshes, and guarding the deep black moss-holes which yawned in the meadows. Here daybreak came upon us, the first early gleam of light tingling in the east and changing the lucent darkness of the moonlit night to a shadowy gray sunrise. Scrape raised his bald forehead above me, and down the glen I had a glimpse of the jagged peaks of the Shielgreen Kips, showing sharp against the red dawn. In a little I was at the avenue of Dawyck, and rode up the greensward, eager to see my love.

The house was dead as a stone wall, and no signs of life came from within. But above me a lattice was opened to catch the morning air. I leaped to the ground and led Maisie round to the stables which I knew so well. The place was deserted; no serving-man was about; the stalls looked as if they had been empty for ages. A great fear took my heart. Marjory might be gone, taken I knew not whither. I fled as though the fiend were behind me to the door, and knocked clamorously for admittance. Far off in the house, as it were miles away, I heard footsteps and the opening of doors. They came nearer, and the great house-door was opened cautiously as far as possible without undoing the chain; and from within a thin, piping voice inquired my name and purpose.

I knew the voice for the oldest serving-man who dwelt in the house.

'Open, you fool; open,' I cried. 'Do you not know me, the Laird of Barns?'

The chain was unlocked by a tremulous hand.

'Maister John, Maister John,' cried the old man all but weeping. 'Is't yoursel' at last? We've had sair, sair need o' ye. Eh, but she'll be blithe to see ye!'

'Is your mistress well?' I cried with a great anxiety.

'Weel eneuch, the puir lass, but sair troubled in mind. But that'll a' be by and dune wi', noo that ye're come back.'

'Where is she? Quick, tell me,' I asked in my impatience.

'In the oak room i' the lang passage,' he says as quick as he could muster breath.

I knew the place, and without more words I set off across the hall, running and labouring hard to keep my heart from bursting. Now at last I should see the dear lass whom I had left. There was the door, a little ajar, and the light of a sunbeam slanting athwart it.

I knocked feebly, for my excitement was great.

'Come,' said that voice which I loved best in all the world.

I entered, and there at the far end of the room in the old chair in which her father had always sat, wearing the dark dress of velvet which became her best, and with a great book in her lap, was Marjory.

She sprang up at my entrance, and with a low cry of joy ran to meet me. I took a step and had her in my arms. My heart was beating in a mighty tumult of joy, and when once my love's head lay on my shoulder I cared not a fig for all the ills in the world. I cannot tell of that meeting; even now my heart grows warm at the thought; but if such moments be given to many men there is little to complain of in life.

'Oh John,' she cried, 'I knew you would come. I guessed that every footstep was yours, coming to help us. For, oh! there have been such terrible times since you went away—how terrible I cannot tell you,' and her eyes filled with tears as she looked in mine.

So we sat down by the low window, holding each other's hands, thinking scarce anything save the joy of the other's presence. The primroses were starring the grass without, and the blossom coming thick and fast on the cherry-trees. So glad a world it was that it seemed as if all were vanity save a dwelling like the Lotophagi in a paradise of idleness.

But I quickly roused myself. It was no time for making love when the enemy were even now at the gates.

'Marjory, lass,' I said, 'tell me all that has been done since I went away.'

And she told me—and a pitiful tale it was—that which I had heard from Nicol, but more tragic and sad. I heard of her brother's ruin—how the brave, generous gentleman, with a head no better than a weathercock, had gone down the stages to besotted infamy. I heard of Gilbert's masterful knavery, of his wooing at Dawyck, and how he had despoiled the house of Barns. It seemed that he had spent days at Dawyck in the company of Michael Veitch, putting my poor Marjory to such a persecution that I could scarce bide still at the hearing of it. He would importune her night and day, now by gallantry and now by threats. Then he would seek to win her favour by acts of daring, such as he well knew how to do. But mostly he trusted to the influence of her brother, who was his aider and abettor in all things. I marvelled how a gentleman of family could ever sink so low as to be the servant of such cowardice. But so it was, and my heart was sore for all the toils which the poor girl had endured in that great desolate house, with no certain hope for the future. She durst not write a letter, for she was spied on so closely by her tormentors; and if she had bade me return they well knew I would come with the greatest speed, and so, in knowing the time of my arrival, would lay hands on me without trouble. The letter which reached me was sealed under her brother's eyes, and the postscript was added with the greatest pains, and sent by Tam Todd, who sat at Barns in wrath and impotence. Truly, things had gone wrong with a hearty goodwill since I had ridden away.

But the matter did not seem much better now that I had returned. I was an outlawed man, with no dwelling and scarce any friends, since the men of my own house were either hostile or powerless to aid. My estates were a prey to my enemies; I had nought to trust to save my own good fortune and a tolerably ready sword; and, to crown all, my love was in the direst danger. If she abode at Dawyck the bitter persecution must be renewed, and that the poor maid should suffer this was more than I could endure. I had no fear of her faithfulness, for I knew of old her steadfast heart and brave spirit; but I feared my cousin as I feared no other on earth. He cared not a fig for the scruples of ordinary men, and he was possessed of a most devilish cunning, before which I felt powerless as a babe. Yet I doubtless wronged him by suspicion, for after all he was a Burnet, and fought openly as a man of honour should. But he had a gang of marauding ruffians at his heels, and God alone knew what might happen.

At all events I must wait till what time my servant Nicol should arrive from Leith. I had no fear of his failing, for he had the readiest wit that ever man had, and—I verily believe—the longest legs. He should be at Dawyck ere noonday, when he should advise me as to my course. Nor was there any immediate danger pressing, for so long as Gilbert abode at Leith he could not come to Dawyck; and unless our schemes grievously miscarried, he could not yet have been apprised of my escape. Moreover, the soldiers, to whom I had given the slip the night before, could as yet have no inkling either of my identity or my present harbour. So for the meantime I was safe to meditate on the future.

Marjory—woman-like—was assured that now I had come back her sorrows were at an end. She would hear nothing of danger to be. 'Now that

you are here, John,' she would say, 'I am afraid of nothing. I do not care if Gilbert return and plague me a thousandfold more; I shall well support it if I know that you are in the land.' It is for you I fear, for what must you do save go to the hills and hide like the hillmen in caves and peatbogs? It is surely a sad use for your learning, sir.'

So the morning passed so quickly that I scarce knew it. We went together to a little turret-room, facing the north and fronting the broad avenue, which all must pass who come to the house; and here we waited for the coming of Nicol.

About twelve of the clock we saw a long figure slinking up the avenue, keeping well in the shade of the trees, and looking warily on all sides. I knew my man, and going down to the door I set it open and waited for his coming. Nor did I wait long. When he saw me he changed his walk for a trot, and came up breathing hard like a hound which has had a long run. I led him into the dining-hall, and Marjory prepared for him food and drink. Never a word spoke he till he had satisfied his hunger. Then he pushed back his chair, and, looking sadly at my lady, shook his head as though in dire confusion.

'A bonny bigging, Maister John,' he said; 'but ye'll sune hae to leave it.'

'That's a matter on which I have waited for your coming,' said I; 'but I would hear how you fared since I left you.'

'I've nae guid news,' he said sadly; 'but such as they are, ye maun e'en hear them.'

And this was the tale he told.

(To be continued.)

AN ANGLO-INDIAN'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EDINBURGH MEDICAL SCHOOL.

FROM UNDER THE PUNKAH AT TRICHINOPOLY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

BUT let us get back to the Professor. 'Simpson's' being over: it is twelve o'clock and hospital hour, and off stream the students across from the University buildings, away down Infirmary Street to the old Royal Infirmary. Well, we must next go and hear one of the greatest surgeons of modern times:

Professor Syme.

Professor James Syme — a name to conjure with, a teacher to the world at large; a giant mind in a comparatively small body. I am a dresser in Syme's wards, so await the arrival of the great man along with his house surgeon and others at the foot of the stairs. Presently we see a high yellow carriage on C-springs, with blue hammercloths and a pair of large handsome gray horses, drive up to the door. The house surgeon advances to meet his chief, Syme descends from his carriage, and all hats are raised as this veritable king enters, walks up the stairs talking to his house surgeon, and enters his private room. He takes off his overcoat, and there stands the small figure so well known to thousands. He wears an ordinary black evening coat and waistcoat showing a white shirt-front, and round his neck a cravat (not a tie) of white and blue cambric. The trousers are a grayish tweed mixture, such as to-day we call a 'Bliss' tweed and make our riding-breeches of. Very small hands and feet, no moustache or beard, but small side-whiskers. A high intellectual forehead, sharp observant eyes, rather a large mouth, and a strong chin. Vigour and determination are, I think, the two qualities that strike one most. After a few words, and perhaps seeing some particular patient in the private room, we all file downstairs to the operating theatre, headed by Syme and his house surgeon.

In this theatre Syme gives his clinical lectures, and here also on other days performs the major operations before hundreds of students and medical men from all parts of the world who have come to see the man with a world-wide reputation operate. But to-day is a lecture day, and the lecture will refer to many subjects all illustrated by cases from the wards, and any surgical treatment of an operative character will be carried out there and then. Do not suppose that the patients object to this; on the contrary, they like it, and accept the presence of all these doctors and hundreds of students as the highest guarantee that they will meet only with the most skilful and most correct treatment. There is a slight applause as Syme enters, and he courteously motions foreign visitors and strangers to those seats of honour within the rail which separates the students' benches from the space reserved for the operations. Then Syme sits down in his chair and runs his hand over his face, finishing by stroking down his cheeks, the fingers running over the left cheek while the thumb smooths down the right. All who had the honour of knowing Syme will know exactly what I mean, while to those unfortunates who did not know him it does not signify whether or not they catch the idea. He begins in not too clear a voice, 'Gentlemen,

the case to which I wish to draw your attention first to-day is,' &c. Then, as he goes on lecturing, he leans forward, a hand leaning on each leg, the body is allowed to sway backwards and forwards, and the hands slip up and down the thighs as the body sways. Having described the case and informed the class what he proposes to do in the way of treatment, he looks to his house surgeon, who is seated near him and on the alert, asks him to bring in the case, and the patient enters, walking or being carried in a basket-litter, according to circumstances. The chloroform is given, Syme stands by the table, buttons his coat across his shirt-front, turns up two inches of coat-sleeve, and proceeds coolly and deliberately to his operation. This finished, the patient is removed, the nurses and dressers quickly and quietly arrange everything, and Syme, again seated, says, 'The next case, gentlemen, is so and so,' and, as in the first case, so in this and perhaps four or five more, the students have the advantage of having the case lectured on and treated before their eyes. The hour being finished, Syme rises, makes an abrupt little bow to his students, and leaves the theatre, perchance talking to some great French, German, Italian, or other foreign surgeon who has introduced himself to Syme.

On big operation-days the theatre was crowded to repletion; not only a large part of the seventeen hundred students at the University being there, but surgeons of the army and navy, the junior surgeons on the staff of the Royal Infirmary, and foreign surgeons from all parts of the world.

Syme hated to be timed over an operation. I recollect on one occasion, when he had to undertake an unusually bold operation (no one who saw it has forgotten the case of Gluteal Aneurism), an elderly surgeon from abroad occupied one of the reserved seats of honour, and just as Syme began his operation amid a death-like silence this visitor pulled out his watch. Syme looked at him and then went on with more than usual deliberation. The operation was a tremendous one, and most startling, as every one in the theatre knew there would be a critical instant when the life of the patient depended on the boldness, coolness, and skill of the operator — an operation requiring nerves of steel, the quickness of a flash of lightning, and the coolness and dexterity of a Syme. Every one held his breath and looked nervous except the operator. The moment came, was past; the patient was safe, and Syme had succeeded. You could hear the hundreds in that theatre draw a long breath of relief. The patient was sleeping away quietly, and the great man deliberately finished the concluding details of his operation. The patient was carried out of the theatre in the basket-bed. Not a word had been spoken all this time, not a whisper amongst all those onlookers; but as the green-baize door closed behind the dressers carrying out the patient there was a burst of applause from the crowded benches. Syme immediately suppressed this, and then said a few words about the case, finishing thus: 'One thing more, gentlemen, I wish to say. I know it is frequently the custom to time an operator over an operation. Now, if the operator were a young man, or inexperienced, nothing would be more likely to upset him at the commencement of an operation than to see some one pull out his watch for this purpose. In these days of chloroform nothing is gained by trying to do an operation quickly, the great thing is to do it well.' Then came the abrupt little bow, and every one began to leave the theatre, our distinguished visitor who pulled out his watch, very red in the face and dreadfully crestfallen, amongst them.

Syme, however, objected to these big crushes at big operations, and at his next clinical lecture said: 'Gentlemen, it is not at operations such as took place last Wednesday that I wish to see every student present—you will probably go through your whole life and never have to undertake such an operation; what I wish you to come and see are everyday operations such as you yourselves will meet with in general practice.'

Through the kindness of Syme I made my start in life. I had been officiating as house surgeon in London, and at the end of my time I was at a loss to know what to do. Timidly, one day in my house surgeon's quarters in London, I sat down and wrote to Syme asking him if he would kindly give me a certificate saying I had been a dresser in his wards. The answer arrived by return of post, but was almost illegible in its cramped, small writing. When—after spending hours over the letter, deciphering it to the best of my ability—I had written down word by word what I believed to be the contents, they were so wildly improbable and far above what I had expected that I could scarcely believe I had translated the curious hieroglyphics aright. What I made out was the following:

'Dear Dr Rowe,—Before replying to your letter of the 10th, I wish to ask whether you feel inclined to go abroad with a party of young noblemen, one of whom is slightly an invalid.—Yours truly, Jas. Syme.'

Cannot you imagine the delight and surprise of a young M.D. who did not know where to look for his next guinea at receiving such a letter from such a man. I had been fortunate in my examination paper with Syme as well as Simpson, and on going to Syme's table for my *viva voce*, he advanced from before the fireplace, where he was standing with his coat-tails under his arms, and all he said to me was: 'I've got nothing to say to you,' meaning I had passed on my paper, and I knew why. A few days before the examination I noticed at three clinical lectures he brought in the same sort of case, and the remarks on its treatment were not more than a dozen

words altogether, finishing up on each occasion with a pithy last three words. I felt certain it was to be a question for examination, and had his very words down in my note-book. To my intense delight, in my first eager, anxious glance over the surgery examination paper, there was the question, forming one of five or six others. My answer was in his own words, and occupied exactly one line and a half of my paper. I believe it was this tickled the fancy of the great Syme, who passed me, and eventually sent me travelling with Sir Newman Macdonald, Lord Oldport, and Mr Page all through France, Italy, Sicily, Gibraltar, Malta, Egypt, up the Nile, Palestine, Turkey, Austria, Prussia, Germany, Belgium, &c.

Syme died I think in 1870, but his name can never be forgotten as one of the greatest pioneers in surgery.

Professor John Goodsir.

At two o'clock Professor John Goodsir gave his lecture on Anatomy. Here again a man with a world-wide reputation as the very greatest of anatomists. A large man in every way; no littleness of any sort, large of heart, of head, and of limb. A kindly face, with whiskers, beard, and moustache, which he has a habit of stroking down with a large hand. I should say at least six feet one in height, somewhat bent and slightly paraplegic, making the gait awkward and uncertain. Profound and enthusiastic in his subject, almost too profound for junior students, with a reverence for his study that seemed to raise it above an ordinary subject to be lectured on for the instruction of students at a university.

See him as he enters his class-room and receives a loving little welcome from these crowded benches. I think he scarcely hears it; he is far away, thinking deeply over what he has just had to drag himself from in his own private room, or the museum, or of what is going to occupy him during the next hour. Goodsir disapproved entirely of any short-cuts to knowledge, especially anatomy, and thought the more stony the path was the more was the goal worth reaching. I recollect when that really admirable book *Gray's Anatomy* came out, Goodsir condemned it because 'it made anatomy too easy!' Ye gods! I do not think that even with our *Gray* the students ever found anatomy too easy. The Professor wished us only to use *Quain's Anatomy* at home and *Ellis* in the dissecting-room. Yes, one must confess that Goodsir's lectures were just a little too profound for junior students; and had it not been for his staff of demonstrators in the dissecting-room, Turner, Cleland, and Wilson, as also for that most popular class—the anatomical demonstrations given at four o'clock by Mr Turner (now Sir William and Professor), I fear we should have cut a sorry figure in trying to answer the questions of the Professor, made all the more puzzling in the endeavour of this profound mind to make them appear simple. But no professor in the University had a tighter hold on the affections and respect of the hundreds of his students. Such a large class as the anatomy one was an awkward one to interest and keep perfectly in order; containing, as it did, reading men, idle men, funny men, &c., it did not take much to upset the nice balance required to keep them all quiet, and there was a tendency to rounds of applause on short notice. Once, I recollect, Goodsir was having quite a field-day, although I am not sure that the students were enjoying it as much as the Professor. He was lecturing on the ethmoid bone, and had all the most delicate bones of the face and skull on a tray on his lecture table—bones so delicate, many of them, let me tell the lay reader, that some of the plates of these bones are hardly thicker than, and are as delicate as, a butterfly's wing, processes and joints that might be damaged even with the most careful handling. I don't know if handling these dearly-loved delicate specimens attracted too much attention of dear old Goodsir, but he made some awkward step with his paralytic foot, stumbled, caught at the table, upset the tray and specimens, and, worst of all, fell with a crash on the floor. The students behaved admirably, not a sound, not a movement, not a word. In this silence our Professor awkwardly gathered his long limbs together, picked up all his specimens, carefully running his eye over each; and when at length he had them all back on the tray, and had smoothed his hand over his face and beard, he gave out these words, which I shall never forget: 'Not a bone broken, gentlemen'—with that the strain on the students was loosed, and there was a loving round after round of applause. The oracular speech, 'Not a bone broken, gentlemen,' conveyed such a lot, which it would spoil the speech to analyse; but so long as the students were assured that the individual bones of their dear Professor were all right, they cared little about the specimens, and would have been glad, indeed, if there had not been another ethmoid or sphenoid bone left in the world for examination purposes.

In connection with the Chair of Anatomy in the University another great man held sway. Every one knows that black velvet skull-cap and those gray whiskers and keen eyes—yes, 'John Arthur' of course; and I do not feel sure to this day whether he was assistant-professor, or Goodsir's man, or what; at any rate he was a power, and it was much better to have John Arthur for a friend than an enemy. He certainly collected the cards at the lecture-room door, he injected all the bodies for the rooms upstairs, and performed many very small offices about the class-room; but then if you came upon him in the museum he was quite equal to giving you a lecture on anatomy that made you wish you knew half as

much about the subject as John Arthur did. He looked like a professor too, and had professorial manners. At any rate, as I have said, he was a power, and the students in the fifties and sixties stood in no little awe of this serious person.

Professors Laycock, Turner, &c.

At three o'clock we go to a lecture on the 'Institutes of Medicine,' and as we went to Hughes-Bennett at ten, we will go to Professor Laycock at three. Professor Laycock, has, I think, to be taken not quite so seriously as the professors we have been sitting under from nine till three. He is a genial, smiling, polished, and very well-dressed Englishman, with a somewhat accentuated English drawl. Some of his chief characteristics that always impressed me were the dazzling whiteness of this Professor's shirt-front, white tie, and wristbands, the clear pink-and-white boyish complexion, the smile that beamed through the gold-rimmed spectacles, and the rather affected little gestures at lectures, as he sat and gathered the points of the fingers and thumb together and threw them apart towards the benches, as if he made the students a present of his last idea and speech; and it is rather striking to notice how many of these little speeches, and apparently rather far-fetched ideas then, have worked to the front and become accepted truths in practical medicine to-day. I think we took Professor Laycock somewhat too lightly; but he was a most kindly and encouraging friend to the student.

At four o'clock there was a crush for 'Demonstrations.' Mr Turner (Professor Sir Wm. Turner of to-day) was Professor Goodsir's right hand then, and the popular favourite of the seventeen hundred medical students at the University. What a capital class it was, and how clear and understandable was every sentence in the lecture! When the Chair of Anatomy became vacant, on the University losing such a man as Goodsir, a void existed not easy to fill; indeed it might have appeared to the outside world as almost useless to hope that Edinburgh University would be able to find a successor worthily to fill the chair after the great Professor Goodsir. But with the advent of Professor Turner no diminution in the energy in the teaching of anatomy was suffered, and the prestige of the University has only been enhanced, while the number of students in the class has gone on increasing year by year. I suppose the class of Sir Wm. Turner is as popular to-day as was the class of 'Demonstrations' at four o'clock of Mr Turner, our popular demonstrator in the fifties and sixties.

In jotting down these notes, I have taken a day in the Winter Session, and gone from hour to hour as we did in reality, and from class to class. Of course it happened frequently that two or more classes were being held at the same time; but as we could not be in two places at once, I have had to omit a description of many of the classes of our revered professors. For instance, the class of that ornament to the University, Sir Douglas Maclagan; Professor (Lord) Playfair's Chemistry Class, with the invariable little introduction, which we all joined in *sotto voce*, 'In our last lecture,' with a little lilt upon the 'last;' then there was the lecture on (or from) 'Amœba,' &c., by Professor Allmann; the somewhat nasal lecture on (or from) 'Pathology,' by Professor Henderson (a good salmon-fisher); the ten o'clock lecture on Surgery from Professor Miller (also a salmon-fishing friend of my father's), with his handsome presence, his 'never tie a vein,' 'tolerance of the remedy,' and 'vis medicatrix naturæ;' the lectures on (or from) 'Woody Fibre,' by Professor Balfour at eight o'clock A.M. in the Botanic Gardens. With regard to all of these I should have liked to have said a word—perhaps told you a story; but these notes are already much longer than I intended, and here I have been sitting all day under the punkah scribbling until . . .

Hallo! what's that? By George, first trumpet for mess! 'Hi! Boy! my tub ready? Master's mess things laid out?' 'Yes, sar, master's things all ready; master too much late to-night.'

'All right, Sam; out of the way. *Juldie* (be quick), *juldie*, get master's horse, *juldie*.'

MISS CRISSIE'S ROUP.

By 'Tulloch Ard.'

THERE was many a sore heart in Herrington when the news came that the West Bank had failed. More than one little nest-egg, the sole provision for old age, had been deposited in the Herrington branch of the bank. Any doubt as to the absolute safety of the money had never entered a depositor's mind. When the crash came, and it was realised that it spelt ruin in many cases, white, scared faces told their piteous tale. Some of the more ignorant experienced an indefinable feeling of resentment towards Hector Morison, the local agent, whom they connected in some way with the disaster. They knew nothing about the West Bank, but they trusted Hector Morison; and this was the result, they said.

Hector felt his position keenly. How could he

explain to them that he was no more responsible for their ruin than the Emperor of China?

He was a tall, straight man of sixty, clean shaven, with a brown wig which covered a clever head, and a spare body which enclosed a kind heart.

'David,' said he to the accountant—as he tapped with his two forefingers the side of his silver snuff-box, preparatory to taking a pinch—'I am stunned by the thought that some of my fellow-townsmen actually suppose that I am in some way concerned in the bank's failure. It is monstrous, monstrous,' he repeated, and he carefully selected a pinch from the silver box, held it for a moment between his forefinger and thumb, and, with great deliberation, completed the process of snuffing. The process was invariably performed by the set of motions described, the order of which was as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

'David,' he added solemnly, as he flourished an immense and ornate pocket-handkerchief, 'the way of transgressors is hard.' And David understood that he was referring to the directors of the bank.

One of those whose 'all' had been swallowed up in the general ruin was Miss Crissie Campbell. 'Miss Crissie,' as she was affectionately called by the Herringtonians, was a maiden lady whose dark hair was beginning to show some silver threads. She came of a good Herrington stock, and could give you her family tree off-hand for six centuries back. Birth and breeding were strong points with Miss Crissie. She used to say that a man is like a horse; if he comes of a good stock he has an inherited value which the man of no birth cannot acquire in a lifetime. 'But,' she always added impressively, 'pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.'

Many were the reasons given why Miss Crissie had never married. It was maintained by some that her sweetheart had died young. But the older people shook their heads mysteriously, and said nothing. No one had the temerity to suggest that she had never had the chance of marrying. The idea that so good and kind and lovable a woman should have missed marriage, except of her own free-will, could not, by her fellow-townsmen, be entertained for one moment. Some of the townswomen might, perhaps, in a jealous moment have hinted at this; but no one dared say so openly. But Miss Crissie's story remained locked up in her own breast. Confiding as she was in most matters, there was one corner of her heart which was sacred; it was her 'holy of holies.'

She lived in a comfortable house in Seaforth Street, which had been built by her grandfather, and in which she had spent her lifetime, except during a few years when she lived in England. 'Miss Crissie' was a strict disciplinarian; and Jessie, her housekeeper and sole companion, had been drilled into habits which would have been the despair of the average housemaid. The heavy furniture, dark and occasionally worm-eaten with age, seemed to give a solid look of comfort to every room in the house; it was the pride and the joy of the worthy housekeeper. Jessie hated gimcracks. She sniffed equally at slender-backed chairs and at old china. She was solid herself—twelve stones to a pound—and liked solid things.

Jessie was no giddy young thing—she was forty last birthday—and made no attempt to reduce her ample proportions, as she might have done had she been matrimonially inclined.

'Catch me,' she said, 'getting merried. It's me that's not wanting a lad. Not but that I might have a dozen, maybe more, if I liked. There's Donald the baker's man, now—when he comes round with the bread he's always asking me if I would like to get merried. It's him that's wanting me bad; but I chust give him one look, and says I to him: "Would yourself like to have a baker's shop of your own? When you've got that, ma lad, then I'll tell you if I would like to be merried." I know well enough,' resumed Jessie, 'that that poor *truachan* (a term of contempt or pity) 'll never be a master, so I'll never have to answer his quaishton yes or no.'

On the day that the doors of the West Bank were closed, Jessie's watchful eye soon noticed that something unusual had happened to Miss Crissie. She seemed terribly worried, and her expression was despairing. She soon learned the cause.

'Jessie,' said Miss Crissie in the course of the evening, 'I must give you a month's notice,' and she assumed a severe aspect which ill accorded with her feelings.

Could she believe her ears? She who had been 'with the family' since she was a lassie of sixteen? A month's notice, after a quarter of a century's faithful service! 'What hev I done, Miss Crissie?' asked the poor creature plaintively.

'You have done nothing, my poor Jessie,' said her mistress kindly, 'but I shan't be able to pay your wages presently. I—I have had a great misfortune'—and her lips twitched ominously. 'But I'll try to get you a good place; or perhaps you had better tell the baker's man that maybe you would like to get married'—with a feeble attempt at a smile.

'It's me that'll have nothing to say to the *amadan*' (a foolish fellow), replied Jessie vigorously. 'And if it's only the wages that's the matter—hoch! that's nothing at all. If you'll only let me stay with you, it's me that'll not be wanting a penny of wages. But you'll not be so cruel as to send me away,' and the faithful Jessie wept at the thought.

Miss Crissie was deeply touched by the devotion of her dependant, a devotion which was not rare

in Highland families of that generation, before the commercial spirit ate like a canker at its roots.

'But consider, Jessie,' she said, 'you can easily get another place. People will only be too glad to get such a good servant as you. You had better think over the matter before you decide.'

''Deed, it's not thinking any more about it I'll be,' replied Jessie. 'Me that's been in the family twenty-five years too. It's only proud I'll be to stay with you as long as you'll hev me.'

'But you know—I must sell the house and the furniture'—another twitch of the lips—'and leave Herrington, and go away among strangers, and —and, oh! it's ruined I am, Jessie.'

She broke down. But the cry did her good.

A pair of warm arms were around Miss Crissie, and a soothing voice said:

'Don't cry like that, *m'euduil* (a term of endearment). It's myself that'll work for you all my life. And it's very cluvver I am with my needle and such like. And if anybody will be wanting to know why you will be leaving Herrington, I'll be mekkin' that right.'

And so it was settled that Jessie should stay.

Soon the sale of the house and furniture was announced, and the curious were speculating as to the cause. But Jessie was equal to the occasion.

'Are you going to the roup?' she asked Ishbel Macdonald, who, she well knew, would carry her words far and near. 'It'll be a fine roup, I'm thinking. But of course Miss Crissie won't be caring much for the money it'll bring her. 'Deed, it's strange to me why she has stopped in Herrington so long when she has a fine big house in London to go to. And it's you that would open your eyes, Ishbel, if you was only to see the kerrages and the horses and the servants in grand clothes to wait on her.'

'And will she ride in a kerrage now?' asked Ishbel admiringly.

''Deed, that she will—kerrages with two horses and a coachman with a lum hat' ('And the fare one penny,' she added to herself).

'And will her house be as big as John the Banker's?' inquired the awe-stricken Ishbel.

'John the Banker's!' laughed Jessie derisively. 'Hoch, now, how simple you are! I'll no' be saying that the kitchen is chust as big as the whole of John the Banker's put together — no, I'll no' be saying that—but that house would chust mek a fine porter's lodge for Miss Crissie's house, I'm thinking.'

'And you'll be going away with Miss Crissie, I suppose?'

'Of coorse; it's me that'll only be too glad to leave Herrington when it's my fortune I'll be mekkin' in London.'

'Ah, well,' rejoined Ishbel with a sigh, 'it's me that'll be sorry to see the back o' the mistress; for it's a good leddy she's been to the poor people of Herrington; and if all the chentry was like her it would be a fine thing for the town. But maybe we'll be seeing her again some day? She'll be coming back to Herrington, I'm thinking, when she'll be tired of all the grand people in London?'

'I'm no' sure about that' said Jessie dubiously. 'You see it's like this: Miss Crissie will be hevving so much on her mind that she'll maybe not be caring to cross the Minch again for a long time after she goes away' ('And that's the first true word I've spoken. May the Lord forgive me!' she added to herself).

While this conversation was taking place, Miss Crissie sat in her room deep in thought. The evenings were getting chilly, but the cheerful fire burning in the grate kept the room warm and flickered elusively on the furniture. At times it played on the pale face of Miss Crissie, and showed a tear glistening on her cheek. Suddenly she rose and opened a cabinet which stood in a corner of the room. It was a richly-carved piece of oak, which had been in her family for generations, and was greatly prized by its owner. From a drawer of the cabinet she took a photograph, yellow with age, and by the light of the fire gazed at it intently. It was the photograph of a handsome man of about five-and-twenty, in Highland dress.

'Allan *mo chridhe*' (my heart), she murmured, 'some people say that an old maid has nothing to do with love. But it's little they know of a heart that has been given away in its youth, and can never, never, be taken back in this world—or the next. Perhaps when we meet in the hereafter'—and her eyes brightened at the thought—'you may know it was my foolish pride that parted us—but till then'—— She again rose and replaced the photograph carefully and tenderly.

'Yes,' she continued, 'it's hard to leave the old house and the dear old town, and go away into the pitiless world. But the Lord's will be done.'

. . . . . .

Miss Crissie's romance, jealously hidden from the world, can be told in a few words. Allan Gordon, home from India for a holiday, was her first and only love. But she was proud and dissembled her love, fearing to appear to be won too easily. Allan, impatient and ignorant of woman's ways, mistook her reticence for indifference, went away from Herrington one day in a huff, and came back with a baby-faced bride from the South. Miss Crissie's life was crushed; but never a sign did she give of her great sorrow—except that she became more gentle, more tolerant than of yore. Allan returned to India with his bride; but she, poor thing, soon withered and died. The last Miss Crissie heard of Allan was that he had succumbed to a malignant fever; and her heart was after that buried in an Indian grave.

. . . . . .

On the day of the roup Ian the Bellman was busy. He had not had a job for days, and

funds were getting low. Truth to tell, Ian was not always eager for a job. He was, it must be confessed, horribly lazy. Needless to say, an appropriate nickname had been found for him, and he was known in Herrington as 'Lazy Ian.'

Never by any chance were Ian's hands out of his pockets except when he was on duty. His day-duties were intermittent, but each evening at eight o'clock saw him out with his dear old 'Cracker.' 'Cracker' was the name he had somewhat ambiguously given to his bell. In Herrington there existed a union of shop-assistants, whose chief function consisted in reminding their employers every evening that they had promised to close at eight P.M., and that the appropriate moment for so doing had arrived. The masters' watches had a curious tendency to chronic slowness, while those of their assistants were generally found to err on the side of rapidity. To maintain the necessary equilibrium, and offer to both sides an unquestionable authority on 'the great subject of the hour,' the services of 'Lazy Ian' were requisitioned by the assistants, with the approval of their employers. The Free Church clock has been from time immemorial the standard by which all Herrington watches are set, even the 'Moderates' acknowledging that the Frees 'know the time o' day.' Ian took his time from this clock every evening shortly before eight, and marched (he never slouched at night) from one end of the town to the other with 'Cracker.' On arriving at a shop door he paused for a moment —then 'Cracker' rang out aggressively its monotonous chant: 'Put up your shutters! Put up your shutters!' and the tired assistants thanked heaven for 'Good Old Cracker,' the curfew bell.

But this affair of Miss Crissie's was something quite out of the ordinary. Ian pondered the matter in his mind, but could make nothing of it. 'Ah, well,' he concluded, 'it's no consairn o' mine; but it's a great peety.' And so saying, he stopped at the first corner, made 'Cracker' speak out vigorously, and announced first in English and then in Gaelic to all and sundry of her Majesty's lieges that a sale by public roup of Miss Crissie Campbell's furniture and other effects would take place at 27 Seaforth Street on that day at two P.M. precisely. The same process was repeated at the next corner, and the next, until everybody had heard the announcement, or, at least, in Ian's opinion, ought to have heard it.

. . . . . .

The roup was a scene of great excitement. About ten people went there, thinking they might perhaps venture to make a bid 'if the things were going to be sold dirt cheap anyway.' Fully ninety went out of curiosity, and to watch the ten bidding against one another. It was known that the house was to be sold by private treaty, and rumour said that some stranger had outbid all the other buyers, and was likely to secure the property. Would the stranger make his appearance at the roup of the furniture? was the question which agitated the minds of the curious. When Neil Mactavish, the auctioneer (a mainlander), mounted his rostrum, adjusted his spectacles, and put up lot No. 1, the excitement grew intense. 'A magneeficent dining-room soot, leddies and chentlemen — all solid mahogany, of the first water—none of your meesarable pented deal in this hoose. Everything is chust as good as if it was made for Queen Victoria herself, God bless her. You'd better be queeck with your bids, for, as sure as death, you'll never get such a chance again. How much for the magneeficent mahogany soot? Did you hev the face to say five pounds, John Maclean? We'll no' come here to choke, John Maclean, but to transac' bussniss. You'd better be going home if you canna be saying something sensible. It's a peety you hev so much money to throw away.' And having silenced the unfortunate John Maclean with this barbed shaft of sarcasm, Neil resumed: 'Now then, who bids—ten pounds? ten pounds bid for the magneeficent soot—it's chust throwing it away as if it was dirt, but it'll do for a start—any advance on ten pounds?—eleven pounds—eleven pounds bid —it's clean redeeculous this—eleven pounds ten—hoch, why doesn't somebody bid eleven pounds ten and sixpence?—as sure as death I'll pay the sixpence myself.' 'Twenty pounds,' said a quiet voice from the rear of the crowd, and a hundred pairs of eyes were turned on a man of about fifty years of age, with a bronzed face and a dark moustache, in which streaks of gray were showing. 'Twenty pounds,' cried Neil exultingly—'that's something like the thing now, and it's a shame to you all that it's coming from a stranger it is—any advance on twenty pounds? Ma hammer'll be down in a meenat—going at twenty pounds—going—going'—and the hammer descended. And so the roup proceeded, the dark stranger taking the breath away from the assembled hundred by his reckless bids. Latterly, nobody competed with him; he got everything at his own price, and a good price it was in every instance. Last of all, the wonderfully-carved cabinet was put up for sale, and, being unique of its kind, it was expected to fetch a fancy price. It was an open secret that Geordie Simpson, the rich fishcurer from Peterhead, had promised the cabinet to his wife as a present, never fearing his ability to outbid any one in Herrington. He knew he would have a bad quarter of an hour if he went home without that cabinet. 'I'm no' going to say one word about this lot,' announced Neil, 'for you'll all be knowing about Miss Crissie's kist—it's chust a wonderful kist for keeping purns and needles, and—and bibles, and —and photographs. How much for the kist?' 'A'll gie you five pun',' said Geordie Simpson in a tone which implied that the 'kist' was as good

as his. 'Seven pounds' came the quiet voice from the rear. 'Seven pun' ten,' retorted Geordie angrily. 'Ten pounds,' called the stranger. 'Fifteen,' yelled Geordie furiously. 'Thirty,' again came the calm voice, while Neil rubbed his hands gleefully. 'Tak' it then, and be hanged tae ye,' shouted the discomfited Geordie, as he made his way through the crowd, while visions of a disappointed virago's wrath floated before his eyes.

The roup was at an end. All eyes were turned to the spot where the mysterious stranger had stood, but he had disappeared as suddenly as he had come upon the scene. A note, signed 'The Purchaser of the Furniture,' had, however, been handed to Neil Mactavish, telling him to call at the Royal Hotel that evening for payment and instructions.

On the evening of the roup, Miss Crissie stayed with her married sister, Mrs Macpherson, who was still known to the elder generation of Herringtonians by her maiden name of 'Miss Mary.' The faithful Jessie had kept the two ladies well posted in the events of the roup, and they were now waiting for Neil Mactavish, who had promised to call after his interview with the stranger, and tell them all the news.

Miss Crissie and her sister started from their chairs as a knock was heard at the door. 'It's Neil,' they said. But they were wrong. Three minutes later, Jessie announced, in awe-stricken tones, 'The stranger of the roup is in the drawing-room waiting to see Miss Crissie, and he said, "Never mind my name, Chessie," and he laughed. "Chessie," he says, quite friendly like, and it's him that had never set eyes on me before.'

Miss Crissie, assuming the dignified air which so well became her, went upstairs to the drawing-room. The stranger rose to meet her as she entered. 'Crissie,' he said. The tone of his voice bridged twenty years. 'Allan,' came the faint response. 'You thought I was dead, Crissie. Well, so I have been to the world for many years; but, as you see, I haven't died of fever. I arrived in England just in time to hear of the failure of the West Bank, and by a side-wind I heard soon afterwards of your house and furniture being put up for sale, so I put two and two together. My solicitors have just completed the purchase of the house, and you know where your furniture goes. I intend to spend the remainder of my days in Herrington, and propose to take possession of the house and furniture shortly. But upon one condition—failing which, I return to India next week. Crissie, need I tell you the condition?' he asked, tenderly taking her hand in his.

For the second time in her life, a severe struggle between pride and love took place in Miss Crissie's breast. But she had learned her lesson, and this time love emerged victorious.

'Allan, I have always loved you, and I always will,' she said simply.

When Jessie found that her 'angel' was none other than Allan Gordon, and that Miss Crissie was to remain in the old house after all, her astonishment was unbounded.

'To think that I didn't know Mester Allan, and him knowing me at once!' she exclaimed. 'Well, well, it's me that's a proud woman the day. And when will the merrage be, Miss Crissie?'

The next time Jessie met her crony Ishbel she had news indeed to tell her.

'Miss Crissie is not goin' to her fine house in London after all. She's goin' to get merried, Ishbel.' And then after a pause sufficiently long for the startling news to take effect, she added: 'I'll tell you who to the next time I see you.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

EGGS FROM AUSTRALIA.

NOT many years ago the possibility of shipping eggs from Australia with any likelihood of their reaching this country except in a decomposed condition would have been ridiculed as utterly unworthy of consideration. To-day the thing is not only being accomplished, but the eggs arrive in such first-class condition that they pass as new-laid. This has been rendered possible by the universal employment of refrigerating apparatus on shipboard. The eggs, while still perfectly fresh, are forwarded by the Australian poultry-keepers to the cold store, and are shipped to England at the time when eggs are scarce, and consequently at their dearest. Many thousands of dozens, packed in boxes with cardboard divisions, filled up with dry pea-husks, are now forwarded to this country from November to January. In a recent consignment the local price of the eggs at the time of shipping was fivepence-halfpenny per dozen, the freight and packing cost about threepence per dozen, and they realised one shilling and sixpence per dozen retail on arrival at this side of the world.

A NEW WHEEL.

Of all recent inventions having reference to locomotion, that of the pneumatic tyre is perhaps the most important, and in the very few years since its introduction it has brought large fortunes to many. What may possibly be a serious

rival to it in its application to vehicles other than cycles has just been patented by Mr Peter Fyfe, chief sanitary inspector of Glasgow. Mr Fyfe's experiments were with a view to reduce the vibration communicated by an ordinary wheel to vehicles as well as to the horse attached to such vehicles. This has resulted in the invention of what he terms a pneumatic sleeve, which is made in one piece and drawn tightly over the axle-box. The wheel is pushed on to this rubber sleeve and then secured by steel bands. The sleeve, which is cellular in structure, is then pumped full of air to a pressure of about thirty-five pounds to the square inch. These cells are, as at present designed, four in number; and after charging with air each one can be isolated from the other by the turning of some small screws. By this arrangement the axle and axle-box are floated, and do not touch the nave of the wheel. Careful tests show that seventy-seven per cent. of the shocks which, under ordinary conditions, would be transmitted to the vehicle are taken up by this cushion of air and then dissipated. Three vehicles of different types have been fitted with pneumatic sleeves to their wheels, and careful diagrams taken by means of attached apparatus, the results being considered by experts as highly satisfactory. By fitting the pneumatic cushion to the middle of the wheel instead of to its periphery, it will at once be seen that puncturing, in the ordinary sense of the word, is quite out of the question. The reduction in the amount of rubber necessary in the manufacture, as compared to the pneumatic tyre, points, we should think, to a great saving in cost of material.

LIZARDS AS PETS.

There always has been, and probably always will be, a feeling of repulsion of the human family towards anything in the shape of the reptile, from snakes to toads. Even the harmless lizard comes in for its share of dislike. We say harmless, for the only one having poisonous qualities is the *Heloderma horridum* of Mexico; all the other species known are innocent of evil intentions towards man. Mr Saville Kent, who has made a study of the Australian lizards, recently read a paper on the subject at the Camera Club, London, and warmly espoused the cause of these interesting and much-libelled creatures. He has kept many kinds as pets, and found them most tractable and appreciative of kindness. They will run about on his lawn in the most fantastic manner on their hind-legs; will kill all kinds of insects which are prejudicial to the garden; or will, in colder weather, warm themselves like cats on the hearthrug of his study. The Geckos are, perhaps, the most interesting to keep as pets. Their feet are furnished with sucking discs which enable them to run up walls or traverse ceilings in search of the beetles, moths, and flies which form their food. Some of the Australian lizards attain a length of seven or eight feet, and are by the ignorant often mistaken for half-grown alligators. These creatures are carnivorous, and so addicted to eating birds and eggs that poultry-yards suffer from their depredations.

INTERESTING ARCHÆOLOGICAL DISCOVERY.

On the buried walls of Pompeii, as well as at other Roman sites, and in Rome itself, various rude pictures and writings have been unearthed, to which the Italians have given the name *graffiti*—scratches or scrawls. One of the best known of them was discovered on the Palatine in the year 1857, and consists of a caricature upon the Christian religion, drawn at a time when Rome was pagan. This incised drawing is a rough outline of a crucified man with a donkey's head, by the side of which is another figure in the act of worship. Below these figures appears the inscription in Greek, 'Alexamenos worships his God.' The stone with this most interesting memento of the early years of the Christian era is now preserved in a Roman museum. Professor Marucchi has recently made a discovery, in the same place from which this stone was removed, of another *graffito*, which he believes to have been meant for an answer to the taunt implied in the one just described. It consists of the words, 'Blaspheme indeed, but God is with us.' Still more recently he asserted that a series of sketched outlines, also on the wall of the Palace of Tiberius, heretofore understood to be a representation of rope-dancers, was a sketch — possibly by an eye-witness — of the crucifixion of Christ. This startling interpretation he was, however, led again to withdraw.

SPITZBERGEN.

Mr E. T. Garwood, who accompanied Sir Martin Conway on a recent expedition to Spitzbergen, has given an account of their wanderings into the interior of that inhospitable island to the members of the Camera Club, London. The place is quite destitute of inhabitants, for although the weather is pretty open in the summer-time the prevailing temperature in winter is 40° below zero. At one time the Russians made an attempt to colonise this No Man's Land; and happening to have on hand some wretched culprits who had been condemned to death, offered these men their lives on condition that they should be landed at Spitzbergen and stop there. They accepted the reprieve, and were duly landed on the island. But before the ship had time to return, the men begged to be taken back and executed. They returned to Russia, and their lives were spared.

FROZEN FOG.

Spitzbergen is not an unbroken ice-sheet, as many persons supposed it to be. Glaciers there are in plenty, but there is much open ground and fine mountain scenery. Fogs are prevalent, and Mr Garwood described a peculiar effect due to this condition of the atmosphere which does not

seem to have been ever noted by alpine climbers. He has seen the face of a mountain covered with spicules of ice—a kind of exaggerated hoarfrost—some of the icicles standing out horizontally from the wall of rock, and measuring as much as eighteen inches in length. They are evidently generated by the action of fog—and grow by the constant addition of moist particles. Fogs will often continue for many days together, and they are so dense that one cannot see a companion who is more than two or three yards away.

ELECTRICAL PROGRESS.

Mr J. W. Swan, F.R.S., the newly elected president of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, gave much interest to his inaugural address by summarising the work which electricity was accomplishing in many manufactures. He regarded the application of the electric current to chemical industries as most important, and urged upon young engineers the great advantages which might accrue to them by studying this phase of electrical science, for it was one of those fields of inquiry which was by no means filled up. One-third of the pure copper which was produced in the world was obtained by the agency of electricity, and the present cheap price of aluminium —which in 1855 was double the present price of silver—was entirely due to the development of the electrolytic method of its production. The various alkalis — chlorine, chlorate of potash, sodium, and calcium carbide—were some of the substances much used in our arts and manufactures which were now produced by electro-chemical methods. Factories employing the electric current naturally looked out for localities where water-power was available for turning their dynamos. Unfortunately the direct exchange of heat for electricity was as yet possible only on a very small scale, therefore there was plenty of room for the steam-engine as intermediary aid.

A BLIND INVENTOR.

It is an undoubted fact that certain unfortunate persons who are blind can do far better work with their brains and hands than many of those who possess the blessing of sight. Here is a case in point. Mr A. J. Gormand, who is totally blind, has invented a most useful tool in the form of a centre-finding compass. This instrument resembles an ordinary pair of calipers, but it has a central adjustable leg which can be raised or lowered so as to accommodate itself to convex or concave surfaces. This same blind inventor has also contrived a machine for making the wire whisks known in the trade as 'French whisks,' which will make four of the articles in the time in which a sighted man will, unaided, make one. Mr Gormand has not always been blind; and, strange to say, before that calamity befell him he was not a mechanician, but spent the greater part of his life on shipboard.

MODERN MEN-O'-WAR.

The average educated person knows far more about the general structure and arrangements of an old three-decker than he does about the ponderous metallic engines of war which have now usurped their place, and the chief reason for this is the delightful air of romance with which the old vessels are invested by certain novelists, and the real stories of heroism which will ever be linked with their memory. But there is much that is interesting about the more prosaic battleships of to-day; and Mr Yates, the chief constructor at Portsmouth dockyard, who lately delivered a lecture on this subject, found many attentive listeners. He tells us that it is impossible to realise the magnitude of these floating monsters, for the most important part of each ship is below water; and that submerged part displaces a mass of water equal to the total weight of the ship. The size of the ship, and its consequent weight, depend upon a number of considerations, such as the size of the harbours or docks she would be required to enter, and the design of the ships with which she would co-operate. Then the weight was distributed in such a way that the hull structure was only responsible for one-half. Armour-plating was now of such perfect manufacture that a modern six-inch steel plate was as efficient as an old pattern fourteen-inch plate of wrought iron. This armour, with the guns, costs about half the total of the completed ship.

PERSIAN DATES.

An interesting account of the cultivation of dates in Persia is to be found in a recent report of the U.S. minister. The date-palm is indigenous to Southern Persia, the groves being chiefly confined to sheltered valleys and plains where the temperature is mild all the year round. The palm will bear much heat, but is very sensitive to cold, and should the head of the tree be touched by frost the whole very quickly dies. The date-palm will not flourish within twenty-five miles of the coast, in consequence of the salt which impregnates both soil and air; it bears no fruit until it is about ten years old, and will under favourable conditions have a life of one hundred years, and attain a height of from fifty to sixty feet. The total production of dates in Persia is about two thousand two hundred tons annually, about half of which is consumed in the country in a raw state, while large quantities are manufactured into vinegar, arrack, &c. The remainder is exported to various ports of Europe, India, and America.

WESTRALIAN DESERTS.

The Hon. D. W. Carnegie has recently returned to England after having traversed 3000 miles of unmapped and unexplored country in the heart of Western Australia, an expedition which occupied

thirteen months of toilsome travel. It was quite a small band that faced the unknown perils of this remarkable journey—four white men and a native tracker, accompanied by nine camels, which carried provisions for five months. This *terra incognita* had been crossed from east to west, but never from south to north, and it was in this direction that the expedition headed when they left Coolgardie in July 1896. The country was found to be a sandy waste, almost bare of vegetation, and the only water to be had was from the scanty native wells. In some places huge ridges of sand barred the track, and, as the height of these varied from twenty to one hundred feet, the work of getting over them was most arduous. Very small tribes of nomadic blacks were met with, people without any settled homes, for they have always to be on the move as their water-supply gets exhausted. 'They are only one degree removed from animals,' says Mr Carnegie. On 10th December the expedition reached Hall Creek, and here they made a stay of three months, and refitted. As a result of the expedition, Mr Carnegie says: 'We have proved the whole of the interior of Western Australia between Coolgardie and the Kimberley goldfields to be quite useless for man or beast. We saw no auriferous country between Lake Darlot district and Kimberley.

SUBTERRANEAN NOISES.

The village of East Haddam, in the lower Connecticut Valley, has for a long time been associated with what are known as the 'Moodus noises.' The word is a corruption of an Indian name meaning 'the place of bad noises,' for the phenomena to which the name refers were known long before the white man appeared in the district. At the beginning of the past century the first noteworthy account of these strange subterranean noises or explosions was written by the Rev. Mr Hosmer, who speaks of sounds and tremors coming from the earth 'which are sometimes very fearful and dreadful. Oftentimes I have observed them coming down from the north, imitating slow thunder, until the sound came near or right under, and then there seemed to be a breaking like the noise of cannon shot or severe thunder which shakes the houses and all that is in them.' After a period of rest lasting twelve years, these noises, it is reported, have begun again, much to the alarm of the inhabitants of the district, and they are again compared to muffled thunder and the crash of artillery.

A NEW GALVANISING PROCESS.

An important paper was read at a recent meeting of the Franklin Institute on an improved method of galvanising wire and wire goods. The term galvanising as here applied is a misnomer, for the process is not an electrical one. Hitherto it has consisted in drawing the iron wire slowly through a large tank of melted zinc, and upon emerging therefrom through wipers of asbestos or other material to remove the superfluous metal. This method is very slow and expensive, for the iron must be raised to the same temperature as the molten metal, and the amount of the latter is often 50 or 60 tons, in order to ensure sufficient length to the wire to be operated upon. By this new system the wire is placed in its original coil in the bath of molten zinc, which need not be of extraordinary size; and after sufficient time has been given to ensure adherence of the zinc, the coil is removed and placed in a centrifugal separator, with a speed of about 750 revolutions per minute, the superfluous metal is thrown off; and while the coil of wire is yet hot it is submitted to a jarring action on a block so that the various strands shall not be welded together. An alternative plan is to unwind the coil and rewind it at such a distance that the metallic coating upon it solidifies during transit. This new system, the practicability of which has been demonstrated by a United States Galvanising Company, saves so much time, and can be accomplished by such simple means, that it is likely to be universally adopted.

THE DEVIL'S WOODYARD, TRINIDAD.

IT was at after-dinner coffee one night in the wet season that I first heard of 'a queer place in the big woods that goes by the name of the Devil's Woodyard;' and, prompted by curiosity, I consented to visit it with a planter friend.

'It is only about six miles from us as the crow flies,' he said; but we had to struggle up and down steep and slippery hills, through seas of mud of varying depths, tacking backwards and forwards in a vain search for *terra firma*, with showers of warm, muddy water squirted up from our animals' feet, and with the constant fear that we should have to wade away and leave the horses hopelessly buried in a deep, miry hole.

Thus we worked our passage for two solid hours under a scorching sun before we reached the grateful shade of the forest and commenced to thread our way over a network of roots, round huge towering tree-stems like cathedral arches, passing a varied panorama of palms, creepers, and orchids. There was little animal

life visible, or even audible, at that mid-day hour; only now and then the mysterious stillness was broken by the two plaintive minor notes of the large wild-pigeon. A cordial welcome was, however, extended to us by the ever-thirsty mosquitoes, and the busy movements of a train of driver-ants across our path told us that rain was not far off.

We left the main track for a narrower one, and then dismounted, as we were close to our destination and on uncertain riding ground. Here my friend pointed out a broad, deep fissure, like the rent caused by a violent earthquake shock. With cutlasses ready for action and eyes on the alert for snakes, we pushed or cut our way through overhanging leafy curtains for about thirty yards, till we suddenly came upon a clearing and were face to face with the mud volcano known generally to the natives as the Devil's Woodyard. It was a large circular spot of level mud-flooring eighty yards in diameter, without a vestige of living vegetation, strewn all round its edge with dry fallen and falling trees and boughs, and dotted about with little volcanic cones from six inches to three feet in height. Some of these cones that were in operation belched forth bluish mud containing small, smooth red stones, or baked clay, that seemed to have passed through the action of fire. There are tracks of game across the Devil's Woodyard, but the most intrepid hunter will not shoot over it after nightfall. And, indeed, it must be an uncanny place at dusk or by moonlight; for the dense encircling belt of living green contrasts so markedly with its barren desolation, and the gurgling, spouting sound of the unseen subterraneous powers forcing their way to the surface is so suggestive of the helpless plight that might at any moment overtake a curious visitor.

After ten years of home wanderings, I again found myself near the Devil's Woodyard, and renewed my visit to it under the following circumstances. At four o'clock one dark, still morning in February, a planter in the neighbourhood, who was setting his labourers to work, was startled by the sound of a strange, hoarse rumbling in the woods, like the rushing of an express train at full speed over a quarter of a mile of rail. At daybreak a small exploring party set out for the scene of the explosion, cautiously peering and listening, and half-expecting renewed rumblings that fortunately never came. It was not now necessary to turn off the beaten track to look for the volcano, for its charmed circle of death and havoc had widened to a diameter of at least one hundred and twenty yards. A few seconds of violent upheaval had raised its surface twelve feet above the surrounding forest, uprooting smaller trees that were still standing at all conceivable angles, and enveloping the spurs of the larger leafy monarchs that alone stood upright in the track of the invading flood. Wishing to get a bird's-eye view of the scene, I climbed a tree, from which the appearance of the volcano was that of a huge over-boiled pudding that had collapsed without breaking up.

Sixty yards from the circumference of the Woodyard there were several wide, deep chasms in the earth, and only a few feet from one of these was a crooked hut. The owner was an East Indian, who had been tempted by the richness of the soil to buy a piece of land in that strange place from the Crown. The poor fellow had had a bad time of it. Suddenly awakened by a severe earthquake, and deafened by the roar of the explosion, he could not tell which way to run in the darkness, and waited for the morning light with feelings that can be more easily imagined than described. When I saw him, he had somewhat recovered his composure, and, pointing to a spot where the overflow had swallowed up his garden of maize, he said, 'Queen *must* gi'e um more garden, massa; debbil no' mindum picket!' (that is, has no regard for boundary marks).

In three weeks the crust of the earth had hardened to such an extent as to enable me to walk all over the volcano, and fresh cones were rising in every direction. There can be no reasonable doubt, I think, that most of the hills in these West India Islands, where not the work of coral insects, are raised after the pattern of, and with the same volcanic agency as, the Devil's Woodyard.

MY LOVER.

'I LOVE you, all the world, I do;'
So says my lover bold,
My lover who is scarcely two,
Though I am ages old.

'I love you, all the world, I do,'
He says with close embrace,
And eyes of soft unshadowed blue,
Upraised to read my face.

'I love you, all the world, I do;'
Go out in after life
With just these simple words to woo
A woman for your wife.

'I love you, all the world, I do;'
Go out with eyes like these,
And she that turns in scorn from you,
Oh she'll be hard to please.

M. G. W. P.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

'SANTA ANNA.'

BY FRED. M. WHITE.

CHAPTER I.

A DECOROUS hush fell upon the auction-room. The excitement of the *virtuoso* is usually of a mildly genteel type; but there are exceptional moments, and the brief period preceding the fall of the hammer on the sale of *the* 'Santa Anna' was one of them.

By degrees the bidding had advanced, the stream of golden promise went on until a timid millionaire modestly perspiring in the background suggested ten thousand guineas. Mr Forrest looked up with gentle approbation.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' he murmured, 'the picture is now on sale.'

To the uninitiated this meant that the reserve-price had been reached. A little man with a remarkably dirty face bobbed up, snapped out 'ten thousand five hundred,' and immediately fell to chewing his catalogue again. In a less sacred assembly they would have laughed at the seedy man with real estate secured in the lines of his features, but Mr Forrest bowed his thanks. The Semitic unit had come from Vienna on purpose to buy the 'Santa Anna,' and Forrest could have honoured his draft for half a million on sight—appearances go for so little where the *virtuosi* are concerned.

A well-known dealer advanced five hundred, and then the biddings drooped. Mr Forrest dropped into forensic art. The 'Santa Anna' had been propped up on a table before him—a canvas about six feet by four, and full of glowing colour. Mr Forrest tapped the frame with decorous familiarity.

'Need I enlarge upon this famous, this unique work?' he said. 'Need I recall to your recollection the fact that the purification of the saint was a subject specially selected for the brush of Leonardo da Vinci by Francis I. himself, and designed to hang in the palace of Chambord? It has been established clearly enough that immediately after showing this picture to his royal patron, the great artist expired suddenly in the king's arms. I *think* my last bid was eleven thousand.'

The millionaire hesitated. He regretted that his knowledge of pictures was so much less than his acquaintance with contangoes and futures. You can 'corner' diamonds and petroleum, but a picture trust is another thing. The Viennese dealer bobbed up again, suggested eleven thousand five hundred with the air of one who answers a conundrum, and ate another octavo page of his catalogue. As to the wealthy amateurs, they had dropped out of the hunt long ago.

Roscoe, of Hunt & Roscoe, the eminent dealers, edged a little nearer the rostrum—a slight, clean-shaven man, who looked more like a Chancery barrister than a buyer of pictures and armour. Both Hunt and Roscoe were young men, but both enjoyed excellent reputations. They were bold and successful. The Vienna gentleman scowled as he spotted a dangerous rival.

'Twelve thousand,' said Roscoe. The seedy one put a thousand on to that. Nineteen thousand was bid, and then Roscoe added one thousand more. His mien was calm and resolute, a crumpled telegram crushed in his hand gave him courage. With a patient sigh, Rosenthal of Vienna rose and went out. Like the philosopher he was, he swallowed his disappointment, and fell to counting up what his expenses would come to.

A ripple of applause followed, subdued applause as befitted the sacred place, and then the hammer came down with a snap. The 'Santa Anna' had been the last lot, and the audience filed out. They had something to talk of for some time to come, as such a red-letter day did not happen very frequently.

Quite coolly Roscoe pushed his way up to Forrest's desk. The latter nodded as one does to a familiar figure.

'You gave quite enough for it,' said Forrest. 'Still, I dare say an advertisement of that kind is worth a good bit.'

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'Well, yes. It is certain to go the round of the papers, and I confidently look forward to seeing a few leading articles thereon to-morrow. All the same, I didn't buy the picture quite as a speculation.'

'Got a customer for it, eh?'

'I *think* so. But one never can be quite sure. That's the worst of our business. We want all our big profits if we have a thing like this on our hands for a year or so. Every week that canvas hangs up in our shop I calculate it costs us twenty pounds.'

Roscoe departed a little later with his treasure. A short time after the same was reposing on an easel in the private office of the two partners behind the handsome premises in Piccadilly.

Hunt stood contemplating the new purchase with an admixture of fright and pleasure. He was a nervous man with bold ideas, which were no sooner carried out than they filled him with dread.

'It's a heap of money,' he murmured.

'Can't be helped,' Roscoe replied. 'It was a game of brag with Rosenthal, and for once in a way I got the better of him. Besides, we shall have all the *kudos* of the purchase, and make a good profit into the bargain.'

'And if the South African doesn't come up to the scratch?'

'What a fellow you are!' Roscoe exclaimed with some pardonable irritation. 'Haven't I got the telegram in my pocket?'

Hunt was fain to admit this comforting evidence. That was the worst of having a partner with a sluggish liver, Roscoe thought.

'It would have been absolutely criminal to have lost such a glorious chance,' the latter continued. 'Read the thing again.'

So saying, the speaker took from his pocket the pink paper upon which post-office telegrams are transcribed, and flattened out the crumpled sheet. It bore the Southampton mark and ran thus:

'Just landed from *Cary Castle;* seen advertisement of Forrest's sale. Can't get up to-day. Buy Santa Anna for me. Open commission.—BARON BRANTANO.'

The telegram was addressed to one Moss, a picture-dealer in a small way who occupied a sandwich of a shop next to the palatial establishment of Hunt & Roscoe—indeed the latter emporium had once formed part of their premises. A careless telegraph-boy had placed the message in the hands of Roscoe himself and had hurried out whistling. Without noting the address, Roscoe had torn open the envelope and mastered the contents.

Then he saw that the message was intended for Moss. Nevertheless he did not immediately deliver the same. He stood pondering, and the longer he pondered, the brighter did the scheme for the aggrandisement of the firm glitter before him.

There would be a row, of course. But the telegraph-boy would assuredly be prepared to swear if necessary that the message had been delivered at the proper address. He would do this for his own sake, and would be doing Hunt & Roscoe a good turn at the same time.

The commission on the purchase of the 'Santa Anna' would be a small affair. To buy it out and out, and sell the same to the South African magnate would be quite another matter. Hunt shared this opinion.

'Nobody can touch us,' he said. 'If that pinchbeck Baron requires the picture he will have to pay through the nose for it. Only we had better be careful that we are going to deal with the genuine Simon Pure. Let's send round to Lloyds for a list of passengers on the *Cary Castle*.'

Information from Lloyds proved to be quite satisfactory, and again this was confirmed by a paragraph in the *Standard*, to the effect that amongst the passengers landed from the *Cary Castle* was Baron Brantano.

It is needless to remark that the Baron had loomed large on the public eye of late. Some day a book will be written upon the materialisation of the modern millionaire. He comes, like the Baron, mistily and vaguely, then suddenly he becomes a being crystallised in newspaper paragraphs. He has gold and silver mines, he has 'cornered' all the diamonds in the universe; he has given £100,000 for a picture. Then he fades away, and a new plutocrat occupies his place. But when and where he comes, he always finds a place in the public confidence.

Thus Baron Brantano. So far as any one could tell, he was an adventurous Englishman who had served the king of the Belgians on the Congo, hence the title. After that he had devoted himself to the millionaire business with distinct success—perhaps because it is the only profession not overcrowded.

'Good,' Roscoe exclaimed, 'we shall make £5000 out of this. You notice that Moss was to have had an open commission. Nobody will have the least suspicion of us. Therefore we buy the picture at any cost, and then we can offer it privately to the Baron. Of course his game is to make a present of the same to the National Gallery with a view to establishing a position in society. What a slice of luck!'

The millionaire came ostentatiously to the 'Hôtel Métropole' a day or two later, and the evening papers fell down and worshipped him. A few days passed, but no sign came from the Baron, and Moss appeared to be as friendly as usual. Could it be possible that the Baron had changed his mind?

'Hadn't you better go and see him?' Hunt suggested.

'Don't be an ass,' snapped Roscoe. 'How can I go and see him? I couldn't show him Moss's telegram, could I?'

'I don't see why you shouldn't,' Hunt replied. 'I have been making a few inquiries, and I find

that Brantano has been buying pictures. Why not call upon him, and ask him to come and look at the Santa Anna?'

Roscoe pondered a moment. Something would have to be done shortly. After all, there could be nothing suspicious in carrying out Hunt's suggestion. If the Baron had forgotten the incident it might recall the same to his memory. Perhaps Moss might have faded from his mind. Then, when he knew where the picture was, he would naturally trouble no more about Moss, who thus might never even know that a telegram had been sent him.

'On the whole, I think I'll go,' said Roscoe.

Without further delay he proceeded to put his intention into effect. Roscoe was fortunately enabled to see the millionaire after a wait of not more than half-an-hour, which, under the circumstances, was quite cordial.

Brantano was English beyond a doubt. He was quite a young man, stout of figure and guileless of air. He was almost clean shaven, with a prominent thin nose and a firm yet receding chin. The hair on the temples was somewhat thin and grizzled, and there were countless wrinkles round the keen, beady eyes. The Baron's hand was slightly shaky; he was quick and nervous.

'I don't remember your name, Mr Roscoe,' he said. 'But if your business is pressing, I can spare you ten minutes or so.'

Roscoe plunged at once into the subject. He noted with satisfaction that the Baron smiled when the 'Santa Anna' was mentioned. Clearly there was no mistake about the matter.

'It is a magnificent picture,' Roscoe concluded.

'A magnificent picture truly,' echoed the capitalist. 'I am no great judge, but I fell in love with it directly.'

'You have seen it before, then?'

'Never till I landed in England this week.'

'But there must be some mistake here,' Roscoe suggested. 'Did you not land from the *Cary Castle* on Monday week?'

'Certainly I did. And I remained in Southampton till Wednesday.'

Roscoe looked puzzled, as well he might.

'Then I fail to understand how you could have seen the picture,' he said, 'considering that on the Tuesday we purchased the picture from Forrest's people, and that it has not been out of our possession ever since. The telegram'——

Roscoe checked himself. He had been on the point of making a dangerous admission. The Baron smiled in an indulgent manner.

'Then there must be two "Santa Annas,"' he said. 'Mine came from Lord Maplehurst.'

'And *ours* came from Lord Maplehurst as well,' Roscoe burst in. 'There is some extraordinary mistake here. Perhaps I had better hear your story, Baron.'

'With pleasure. As you may not be aware, I am a Roman Catholic. It has always been a great idea of mine to send the Pope a fitting present on his birthday. By chance I heard the history of the "Santa Anna" from Lord Maplehurst's brother, Mr James Maplehurst, whom I know very well in Kimberley. I offered £20,000 for the picture, and it was refused. Lord Maplehurst called upon me on the morning following my arrival in England, much to my surprise, with the picture. It had been offered for sale the day before, and fetched just the sum I had offered, at which price it was bought in. Would I give another £1000? I would and did, in Bank of Bechuanaland notes, and the picture was mine. Moreover, as his lordship was going abroad, he offered to see the picture safe to the Vatican for me, and I consented. These things always come to those who know how to wait, Mr Roscoe.'

A cold perspiration stiffened Roscoe's spine. Could it be possible that he had been made the victim of a heartless swindle? Could Forrest'—— but that was absurd. That the Baron was telling the truth from his point of view was patent. But still the picture which had been offered for sale remained in Roscoe's possession.

'Then you did not commission any one to buy the picture for you by telegram or otherwise?' Roscoe gasped.

'Certainly not. And I have neither written a letter nor despatched a telegram since I have been here. Perhaps it would be as well, Mr Roscoe, if you were to describe your picture.'

Roscoe proceeded to do so. The Baron followed with fluttering interest.

'Beyond question one of these pictures is a forgery,' he said. 'All the same, as I got mine direct from the owner, I feel safe. If you like I will treat this interview as private, so as to give you an opportunity of consulting the police. Depend upon it, secrecy will be all in your favour.'

'The very thing I was about to suggest,' Roscoe cried, 'and I beg to thank you for your kind consideration. I will lay the matter before the authorities at once, and take their opinion upon it.'

Roscoe departed for Piccadilly in a state of mind easier imagined than described. Some instinct told him that theirs was the copy of the 'Santa Anna.' The pecuniary loss could be tided over, but the loss of prestige and reputation would be a most serious one from a business point of view.

Hunt took the matter far better than his colleague had expected. Men who suffer with a liver are apt to see trouble looming everywhere, but when it does come they understand how to take it with philosophic resignation.

'It's no use beating about the bush,' he said. 'Some of us are the victims of a vile conspiracy. The fact that the Baron sent no telegram on that day proves it. We simply can't go and make any fuss with the police at present, for the simple reason that we shall be bound to admit using a telegram belonging to somebody else.'

'Do you suppose it was a *bona fide* telegram?' Roscoe suggested.

'That's a very good idea of yours,' said Hunt. 'We will suppose that the telegram was a clever forgery, and that the lad who delivered it had been dressed for the part by the actual swindler. You'd know the boy again?'

'Certainly I should. He was a very smart lad, I noticed.'

'And he came from the Circus office. Go there and lodge a bogus complaint against one of the boys, and ask to see them all.'

Roscoe departed at once. The business took a long time; but finally he returned with the information that every messenger employed in the Circus office had been brought before him, and that not one of them tallied in any way with the lad who had delivered the fatal missive.

'That is exactly what I expected,' Hunt said. 'We may make up our minds now that the telegram was a forgery, a fact we can easily prove by submitting it to an expert. Let's have the big magnifying-glass on the flimsy.'

A minute examination of the telegram disclosed the fact that an old message had been soaked out by acids, and a new one substituted.

'You can't *read* anything,' said Hunt, 'but under the word "open" in the forgery, the heavy pencil of the operator has scored "cash" in the original. The rascals could take out the letters, but not the lines of the word "cash" cut into the flimsy. You may depend upon it this trap has been deliberately laid for us, the wire being addressed to Moss being most ingenious. The pseudo telegraph boy would never have made the mistake of going to the wrong shop.'

Roscoe was bound to admit the lucidity of this argument.

'The next thing,' he replied, 'is to make quite sure that we *have* been duped. Let us get the picture from the safe. Once we are sure of our ground we will proceed to unravel the mystery—if we can.'

The 'Santa Anna' was anxiously examined. A forgery it might have been; but it was a desperately clever one. At the end of half-an-hour the two critics were still as undecided as ever.

'I can't tell what to make of it,' Roscoe remarked. 'Everything points to a forgery, and yet with that wonderful colouring before my eyes, I am bound to doubt it. Such pigments don't exist nowadays. What shall we do?'

Hunt squinted at a splash of vivid vermilion and coquetted with a smear of azure artistically applied, and said:

'What we ought to have done before. Send for Manders.'

Manders came in due course: a handsome man, a fair Van Dyck, so to speak; a Charles I. with a tendency towards whisky and unholy hours. But for these weaknesses and an ingrained contempt for popular taste, a man capable of being head of the profession. Too lazy to originate, and too proud for order work, he had become a prince of copyists.

'Well, what's the matter?' he asked. 'Can I teach you anything?'

This is not the way for artists to address dealers of repute; but as the dealers allowed it to pass, the reader may. Roscoe explained partially. He also incidentally observed that the colours in the picture were wonderful.

'Can't be done nowadays,' he concluded oracularly.

'Can't it?' said Manders; 'much you know about it. I've been studying colours for years. And I've got back the old trick of the pigments. I could do you a Raphael or an Angelo that could deceive the artist himself. Why, only a few months ago I made a copy of this same "Santa Anna," and Maplehurst couldn't tell the difference. Not a bad idea when you are hard up, keep your picture and pawn it at the same time.'

The partners exchanged glances. Here was a discovery, here was the outstart, so to speak, of another aristocratic scandal.

Hunt was the first to recover himself. He led Manders gently to the spot where the cause of all the strife stood in a good light. Manders nodded at it as one does to an old acquaintance.

'Is this the picture you bought at Forrest's?' he asked.

'The same,' Roscoe gasped. 'Is it the genuine picture or a'——

He could get no further. Manders coolly rolled a cigarette and lighted it before he replied, not without malice.

'The copy,' he said. 'I'll prove it to you if you like.'

ENGLAND'S GIFTS TO THE WEST.

THE writer remembers having read a critique upon Froude's book on *The English and the West Indies*, in which the critic said he doubted if a less popular writer could have induced the British public to read a word about the West Indies; and yet, he added, 'they are no mean adjunct to the empire.' Whatever of truth may have attached originally to this oracular opinion, one fact stands out with striking clearness. Without question, many things are conspiring at the present moment to make the British Colonies bulk largely in the national mind. Truly enough, with our ubiquitous empire we Englishmen ought to know something of its component parts, and so take a more intelligent

interest in the way this magnificent empire has been built up. It may be that our Colonies, at no very distant date, will join loyally in a grand scheme of federation, fascinating in its conception and worthy of so great a people.

It would seem that the splendid Jubilee celebrations of the past year had this important result—amongst many others—that they kindled afresh in the minds of Englishmen the flame of a lofty patriotism, and roused the nation to a deeper sense of the glorious heritage bequeathed by those whose dauntless courage and amazing enterprise stand forth as not the least that is admirable in the history of the past.

A practical race needs that the faculty of the imagination be cultivated and developed. Doubtless the march of events is contributing to this end; and the term 'Empire' now means infinitely more than 'Empire' did.

The Colonies are as members to the body. 'There should be no schism in the body; but the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.'

If, then, we recall the immeasurable sacrifices entailed upon Great Britain, it need be no matter of surprise if the Secretary of State for the Colonies, having in view the vast colonial interests which are at stake, should foreshadow a scheme which cannot fail to draw the attention of the world to our West Indian possessions. 'The Chancellor of the Exchequer has consented, the Secretary of State for the Colonies assures us, to propose at the meeting of parliament a very large grant in aid of the West Indies.'

This suggested gift will, without doubt, recall to many minds that wonderful exhibition of Christian philanthropy which electrified the world some sixty years ago. The negro was freed—it was by England's gift.

It is, then, of the West Indian descendant of the black African as the slave and as the freedman that we wish to speak.

Whether it were a wise and far-seeing step to take—this freeing of a million slaves without any lengthened period of training in the uses of liberty—may be fairly questioned.

The storm is over now; the hurricane has swept along its course; the waves have long since lost their force, and we can, with a calm dispassionateness re-live the days of an intense, even terrible, enthusiasm.

It is an easy matter to condemn the methods which, in the fervour of a great emotion, were struck out upon the anvil of popular acclaim.

That there were mistakes no one will attempt to deny. They belong to the history of all great movements. Nor is it without interest, in this connection, to study the report recently published by Vice-consul O'Sullivan upon the working of the decree abolishing the legal status of slavery in the Zanzibar protectorate. The measure, we are reminded, was of 'a cautious and experimental character.' Profiting by the experience of the past, 'the slave was left to take the initiative in claiming his freedom, and the provisions were so framed that any violent social transition, precipitating the ruin of the Arab planters, might be avoided.' Whatever of criticism may be allowed in considering emancipation in the West Indies, we may think to-day, with a pardonable pride, upon England's gift of £20,000,000 as compensation to the slave-owner. It was an act of surpassing generosity, the parallel of which has never been supplied by any other nation.

It was, of course, impossible for any one to say what would happen when the declaration of freedom should be read. A terrible anxiety was on every heart. It could not be otherwise. But at whatever cost the inevitable had come at length. Causes had been steadily at work, the progress of which the planter could no more arrest than he could roll back mighty Niagara with his hands. To discuss those causes adequately would be beyond our scope; we are more concerned with the actual developments, the success or failure of the scheme.

However much was felt the righteousness of the cause and the consequent necessity for action, few, probably, were very sanguine as to the results of so great a measure. Crimes, abuses, excesses—these were thought to be the most likely outcome. Yet, island after island gave to the world the unique spectacle of tranquillity under changes the most radical in the economic conditions of government. It was a sudden leap from thraldom into liberty; and it does infinite credit to a nascent race that, though far from permeated as yet by the benign influences of Christianity, the feeling of thankfulness should have swallowed up all baser thought. It might have been so different.

In the eventful August of 1834 there was no Phrygian pileus handed to the liberated slave, no symbolical act of manumission. There was but a declaration read and the birthday of the race began.

If the difficulties attendant upon emancipation or the hindrances to an advancing civilisation inherent in a down-trodden people afford no adequate plea for a return to the days of enforced labour, neither is the argument of any weight which is heard even to this day—that there are not wanting those who, having tasted the fruits of liberty would yet be willing to return to slavery.

The present writer, during some years of residence amongst the blacks, has known such cases. He has talked with men and women who could expatiate with something like enthusiasm upon the days in which they were, as they said, 'cared for.' They will tell you that they were no gainers by emancipation, that so far as material

and physical comfort are concerned they were better off than now; for, in their old age, their children, too often unconscious of any filial duty, leave them to end their days as best they may.

That they were better fed is certain. To feed the slave well was a matter of the most obvious self-interest. The black is a great eater, and to get good work out of him he must be fed and cared for—fed certainly—that the planter fully understood.

But, under the best conditions, as found in Barbadoes, the whole life was a woful experience, brightened mainly by food and sleep. The majority of the planters may have been—often were—men of understanding and humanity; but when freed from such salutary hedging as public opinion mercifully affords, it was sufficiently easy to yield to temptations incident to the management of great estates worked by slave-labour.

Time was when Christianity and philanthropy alike stood outside many a plantation pleading persistently and patiently for entrance. It was frequently a matter of individual caprice whether or no religious teaching should be even tolerated. Under such conditions progress and development were impossible.

But now, what is that we see? A progress truly remarkable in many ways.

In the half-century and more of freedom the negro has learnt to understand the element in which he lives; has thrown off, to a very appreciable extent, the lower and more debasing laws, and has come to value and aim at the higher—love, truthfulness, manliness.

It would be impossible here, however interesting, to pass under review all that has contributed to make the black what he is to-day. As one studies the West Indian negro the wonder grows, not that so little should have been accomplished, but that such undoubted progress should have been made.

There is little in the bud to give promise of the future glories of the flower. What the bud requires is to see the sun. And surely there was little enough in the stunned and stunted intellect of the negro to give even hint of subsequent expansion. What the race needed was the light. Lord Macaulay says: 'Till men have been some time free they know not how to use their freedom. There is only one cure for the evils which newly-acquired freedom produces, and that cure is freedom.'

It may be well, then, to inquire briefly how far England's gift has proved a blessing and not a curse.

The experiment of free-labour could not be other than a dismal one. Even to-day it is only an indifferent success, if success, indeed, it can be called. The change was a disastrous one for the planters. One by one they left, disheartened and disgusted with the new order of things; nor have our West Indian islands ever recovered from the shock which Christian philanthropy was constrained to give. Traces there are, and many, of the solidity of the work which used to be accomplished. Such evidences lie in the massive walls and in the sturdy ruins of what once were magnificent structures, and which seem now almost to defy the ravages of time.

The moralist will tell you these are but indications of a former greatness raised by the unrighteous combination of English capital and enforced labour. That is true; but you cannot, nevertheless, but feel, as you look upon them, a certain sadness that the greatness is no more.

But was the change equally disastrous for the negro? We think not. What life-value he has, however, for himself and others, is a question involving problems yet unsolved, both racial and economic.

We have no desire to paint the West India islands as Edens in which flourish only innocence and harmony. We hold no brief for the coloured race; but justice demands that we recognise and foster what is best within it. If we pass it through the moral crucible we must generously accept results where we find them.

And results there are of no mean order.

The educational system has already worked great things. If the standard of attainment is not particularly high, it is, at least, not without surprise that we notice, on visiting the 'coloured schools,' the state of discipline in which the black teacher holds his pupils; the quick intelligence expressed by the ready answer, the general orderliness and sense of requirement displayed. Perhaps the extreme receptivity of the young is the most striking feature. Place side by side white and black children, not beyond the age of twelve years however, and you would find it difficult at times to decide which is the smarter race. Volatile, rapidly maturing, the black is by no means incapable of mental activity. Yet, after such age-limit as we have indicated, the white child forges ahead, never to be overtaken by the black. Up to the present time the negro has shown little aptitude for originating or for self-government. He does best when under guidance—the guidance of a superior race—and probably always will do so. What has been said lately of Africa may still, with equal truth, be said here: 'The brain of Africa is white, the sinews are black.'

Probably no charge is more frequently made against the black than this, that he is lazy. Judged from the standpoint of English energy, it may seem true enough; residence within the tropics should, at least, help to modify the impression. Nature, it must be remembered, in the West Indies has her bounty which militates, to some extent, against undue exertion. Making due allowance for exhausting heat, we may say that the negro, while constitutionally disinclined for labour, is capable of doing average work, and of doing it fairly well.

Of course, when freedom becomes a gift, the power of doing anything, or of not doing anything, needs careful watching, especially in such islands where nature is prolific, and raises no great cry for cultivation. The freed one requires a moral stimulus which shall ensure habitual industry and correct the natural tendency to indolence. Now, clearly, at first there was no such stimulus. The physical cause for labour being removed, the need for a moral cause became imperative. Should it be a matter for surprise if many years must elapse before the lesson could be learnt?

The relationship between master and servant is far from being the sympathetic bond it should be. A spirit of independence, due, in measure, to the reactionary swing of the pendulum, not infrequently engenders trouble and discomfort.

The writer recalls how one day a man came up to see him, bringing a message from his employer, and when the personal answer given was: 'Oh, I will call and see your master about it'—'Master!' was the instant retort; 'I 've got no master;' and he went away in a huff. It would, however, be unfair to suppose that such is the general attitude. It was exceptional, and is only mentioned as an example of extreme assertion of independence.

A strange people this with which one had to do; emotional and unstable, it is yet gifted with characteristics which might well call out the best qualities of the stronger and dominant race. Happy, genial, kindly, quickly moved as they are, a stranger would assuredly gather the impression that they were quarrelsome. In reality it is not so. Fond of litigation they may be, chiefly on account of the excitement it imports into lives otherwise dull enough; but violent they certainly are not. Rarely do they come to blows, even when altercation assumes the most threatening aspect. The writer has frequently watched groups of negroes in such vigorous and excited mood that he has feared for the consequences. Gradually he grew to understand that all this meant nothing. Their moods are evanescent as those of children. Indeed, we may say the race has not as yet outgrown its childhood.

We do not say that the black race can ever take a high position; we do not say that it is a noble race, or one free from grave defects, constitutional and acquired; but with a readiness to accept religious teaching, with a slowly, but surely, advancing morality, with a remarkable abstention from the greater crimes—a race docile and law-abiding, it will repay, and fully, the most careful and sympathetic study. One factor there is which is so remarkable that it would be impossible to overlook it in any estimate of the probable future progress of the black. We refer to the phenomenal fecundity of the negro—phenomenal, viewed in the light of the inexorable law, by virtue of which the weaker races disappear before the stronger. Apparently the negro remains untouched by such a law; and it is this rapid increase of population which cannot fail to arouse most anxious consideration. There are difficulties ahead. The island of Barbadoes, for instance, is the most densely populated part of the earth. With an area of 106,000 acres, it has a population of over 182,000—that is to say, an average of no less than 1104 people to each of its 166 square miles of territory.

It will need all the acumen and resource of the English people to grapple with the present economic conditions, due largely to the unsatisfactory state of the sugar industry. It may be that Great Britain will ere long bestow an added blessing upon what has been so rightly described as 'no mean adjunct of the empire.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XXI.—HOW MICHAEL VEITCH MET HIS END.

'WHEN you had gone off,' began Nicol, 'I just waited till I heard your foosteps gang oot o' the yaird. Syne I gaed doonstairs to the landlord, whae is a decent, comfortable kind o' man, wi' no' muckle ill aboot him. I telled him that my maister was terrible unweel, and on no accoont maun be disturbit, but that he maun hae the room to himsel' for the nicht. The man was verra vexed to hear aboot ye. "Sae young a chiel," says he, "it's awfu'." So I got my will, and I kenned I wad be troubled by nae folk comin' and speirin' aboot the place. There was nae reason why I shouldna gang awa' and leave the lawin', but I had a kind o' irkin' to get anither glisk o' the sodgers, so I e'en gaed into the room aside them.

'They were noo mair uproarious than afore. Nane were drunk—for, faith, the captain wasna the man to let his men dae that—but a' were geyan wild and carin' little aboot their language. The captain sits at the heid o' the table sippin' his toddy wi' that dour, stieve face o' his that naething could move, and that ye think wad be ashamed to sae muckle as lauch. But Maister Veitch wasna like him. He was singin' and roarin' wi' the loudest, and takin' great wauchts frae the bowl far mair than was guid for him.

'By-and-by he gets up on his feet.

'"A health to the captain," he says. "Drink, lads, to the welfare o' that most valiant soldier and gentleman, Captain Gilbert Burnet. Ye a' ken the errand ye're come on—to lay hands on a rebel and take him to his proper place—and I drink to your guid success in the matter." And he lifts up his glass and spills some o' it ower the table.

'At this there was a great uproar, and they a' rose wi' their glasses and cried on the captain. He sat a' the while wi' a sort o' scornfu' smile on his face, as if he were half-pleased, but thocht little o' the folk that pleased him.

'"I thank you," he says at last. "I thank you all, my men, for your goodwill. We have done well together in the past, and we'll do better in time to come. I will prove to the rebel folk o' this land that Gilbert Burnet will make them obey."

'"Faith, Gilbert," says Master Veitch, "hae ye no' the grace to speak o' your verra guid friend? I think ye're beholden to me for a hantle o' your success."

'The captain looks at him wi' a glint o' guid humour. "No more, Michael," says he, "than the cook owes to the scullion. You do my dirty work."

'"Dirty work, quotha," cried Master Veitch, who was hot and flustered with wine. "I wouldna take that from any other than yoursel', Gilbert, and maybe no' from you."

'"Take it or not, just as you please," said the captain scornfully. "It's no concern o' mine."

'This angered the other and he spoke up fiercely.

'"I am of as guid blood as yourself, Gilbert Burnet. Is a Tweeddale gentleman no' as guid as a bit Westland lairdie?"

'"Faith, that is too much," says the captain. "Michael, I'll make you answer for this yet." So he sat with lowered brows, while Maister Veitch to a' appearance had forgotten the words he had spoken.

'In a little the captain dismisses the men to their sleeping-quarters, and the pair were left alone save for mysel', whae, being in the dark shadows near the door, escaped the sicht o' a'. The two gentlemen sat at the board eyeing each other with little love. By-and-by Gilbert speaks.

'"Ye called me a bit Westland lairdie no' long syne, Master Veitch, if ye'll be remembering."

'The other looks up. "And what if I did?" says he. "Is't no' the fact?"

'"That it's no' the fact I have a good mind to let you see," says the captain.

'Michael looks at him askance. "This is a gey queer way to treat your friends. I've done a' in my power to aid you in a' your pliskies. I've turned clean against the laird o' Barns, who never did me ony ill, a' for the sake o' you. And forbye that, I've done what I could to further your cause wi' my sister, who is none so well inclined to you. And this is a' the thanks I get for it, Gilbert?"

'I saw by the dour face o' the captain that he was mortal thrawn.

'"And a' the thanks ye are likely to get," says he. "Is't no' enough that a man o' my birth and fame should be willing to mate wi' one o' your paltry house, a set o' thieves and reivers wi' no claim to honour save the exaltation o' the gallows-rope? Gad, I think it's a mighty favour that I should be so keen to take the lass from among you."

'"By Heaven, that is too much to swallow," said Maister Michael, as some sparks o' proper feeling rose in him at last; and he struggled to his feet.

'The captain also rose and looked at him disdainfully.

'"What would you do?" said he.

'"This," said the other, clean carried wi' anger, and he struck him a ringing lick on the face.

'Gilbert went back a step, and (for his honour I say it) kept his wrath down.

'"That's a pity," says he; "that was a bad action o' yours, Michael, as ye'll soon ken. I'll trouble you to draw."

'I hae felt vexed for mony folk in my life, but never for yin sae muckle as puir Maister Veitch. He reddened and stumbled, and plucked his sword from its sheath. He was dazed wi' wine and drowsiness, but his enemy made nocht o' that.

'They crossed swords, and I watched them fall to. I was terrible feared, for I saw fine that the yin was as angry as a bull, the ither as helpless as a sheep. It was against a' decency to let sic a thing gang on, so I ran forrit and cried on them to stop. "D'ye no' see the man's fair helpless," I cried out, but he never seemed to hear me, but went at it as hard as ever.

'At first baith fought nane sae bad, for baith were braw swordsmen, and even in sic a plight Michael's skill didna desert him. Gilbert, too, was quieter than was to be expectit. But of a sudden a wild fury seized him. "I'll teach ye to speak ill o' me and my house," he cries in a voice like thunder, and came on like a storm o' hail.

'Michael fell back and did his best to defend himsel'. But the puir lad was sae dazed and foundered that frae the first he had nae chance. His blade wabbled at every gaird, and he never risked a cut. It was just like a laddie gettin' his paiks frae a maister, and keepin' off the clouts wi' yae airm.

'And then he let his sword drop, whether wi' weariness or no' I canna tell, and stood glowerin' afore him. The captain never stopped. I dinna think he ettled it, for when he began I think he didna mean mair than to punish him for his words. But now he lunged clean and true. Nae sword kept it aff, nae coat o' mail wardit it, but deep into Michael's breast it sank. Wi' yae

groan he fell back, and the breath gaed frae his body.

'I could hardly contain mysel' wi' rage and sorrow. At first I was for rinnin' forrit and throttlin' the captain, but I got a glimpse o' his face, and that keepit me. It was dark as a thunder-cl'ud, and regret and unquenched anger lookit oot o' his een.

'"This is a black business," he says to himsel'. "God knows I never meant to kill the fool." And he began to walk up and down wi' his heid on his breast.

'I felt that I had seen eneuch. My whole heart was sick wi' the pity o' the thing, and forby it was time for me to be going if I was ever to win to Tweedside. So I slips frae the house, which was still quiet, for naebody kenned o' the deed, and far away somewhere I heard the lilt o' a soldier's song. I sped doun the Harbour Walk, and syne into Embro', as though the deil were ahint me. When I won to Auchendinny it was aboot three in the morning, and I made a' the haste I could. I think I maun ha'e run a' the road frae there to Leadburn. Then I took ower the Cloich hills and doun by Harehope and the Meldons. I crossed Lyne abune the brig and came doun Stobo Burn, and here I am. I never met a soul for good or ill, so the land's quieter thereaways than folk make it oot. But doun by the Eddleston Water there's a geyan nest o' sodgers, so ye've nae time to lose, laird, if ye wad win to the hills.'

When I turned to Marjory at the close of this tale she was weeping silently, yet there was little bitterness in her tears. Her brother had, after all, made a better end than one could have guessed from his life. Indeed, I had small cause to feel kindness to him, for he had betrayed his trust, and had been the author of all the ills which had come upon my mistress. But for her sake I was sad.

'Marjory,' I said, 'I have many scores to settle with my cousin, for all his life he has done me ill, and the time will come when I shall pay them. I will add this to the others. Be assured, dear, that your brother shall not be unavenged.'

And Marjory dried her tears, and from that hour spake never a word of Michael. But I knew well that deep in her heart remained an abiding sorrow which chastened the gaiety of her spirits.

COMMERCIAL EDUCATION ABROAD AND AT HOME.

By Principal GRANT OGILVIE, Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh.

WE hear much of the excellence of the commercial education provided in other countries, and of the pressing need of our adopting some, at least, of the foreign methods. We have certainly much to learn from Germany, France, and Austria in this matter; and it may be profitable to consider shortly the conditions and arrangements that obtain in these countries.

It is a common remark that on the Continent every relation of life is dominated by the military system. In few relations, however, is this dominance more complete in character and more lasting in its effects than in that of higher education; indeed, it is not too much to say that many institutions for advanced scientific, technical, and commercial education on the Continent owe their success in no small measure to the laws relating to military service. The military training to which all young men are subject is begun by two or three years spent with the colours. But such young men as pass certain examinations, on leaving higher schools of a specified grade, may be enrolled as one-year volunteers, and are posted to the reserve on completing one year of continuous service. The period of study required for the final qualifying examinations in commercial high schools or colleges may be taken as from fifteen to eighteen. These three years of study, however, practically take the place of one or two years' service in the army, and they lead to other military advantages and social distinctions to which in Britain we have no parallel. It is not, then, to be wondered at that all who can in any way afford it continue their education to the required stage.

In this way an artificial stimulus has been given to higher commercial education abroad. But the advantages which this education, in these times of keen struggle for place and position, gives to the individual as well as to the commerce of the country are now so well understood and appreciated that no outside influence would be necessary to maintain the attendance at the higher commercial schools and colleges. On the Continent, as in Britain, the great volume of business is at the present day transacted in offices too large to afford a thorough general training to an apprentice. It has thus become necessary to supplement, in one way or another, the training afforded by practice in a mercantile office. In the Continental high schools the course of instruction for boys, up to the age of fourteen or fifteen, is very much the same whether they are destined for commerce, manufactures, or professions. After that age, however, the pupil pursues a course which, while liberal and educative, makes use of those subjects of instruction which are most likely to enable him to learn his business easily and rapidly. The school aims, not at making the lad a merchant, but at so training him that he will enter upon his career with good prospect of success in it.

One of the oldest schools for higher commercial instruction is the Public Commercial Institute at Leipzig. Each section of its work is well developed, and it may well be taken as typical of the commercial schools on the Continent. The institute is under the control of the Leipzig Chamber of Commerce, and the cost of carrying it on is almost wholly met by fees for tuition. The higher department of the institute affords a three years' course of thirty-six hours' work per week. Pupils must pass an entrance examination in German, French, geography, history, and arithmetic. Throughout their course in the institute they continue to study these subjects, together with English, mathematics, and science. The practical subjects—commercial science, law, office work, bookkeeping, and correspondence — find place in the time-tables for the second and third years. The purely commercial subjects, however, do not have the prominence in the German schools which they have in those of France and Austria—a difference due rather to the conditions of the one-year military service certificate than to the views of the directors of German schools. In this, which we may regard as the central department of the Leipzig Institute, there are from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pupils. The fees for the full courses are from twelve pounds to eighteen pounds per session.

About one hundred other pupils attend for a session what is called the professional course. This course of work is provided for those who have previously obtained the certificate, securing for them the privileges of the one-year military service law, but whose studies had been on other than commercial lines. The curriculum for such students includes English, French, Spanish, commercial legislation, economics, bookkeeping, correspondence, and the study of products. For students of this class who are engaged in offices during the day there is provided a modified one year's course, which requires their attendance only ten hours a week (seven to nine in the morning).

An important section of the work of the Leipzig Institute, and one which represents a development by no means common on the Continent, is the apprentice department. To the classes of this department any apprentice in a Leipzig commercial house may be admitted, but only on the request of the head of the firm with which he is apprenticed. The apprentice course extends over three years. The hours of instruction are: for one division of pupils, from seven to nine in the morning, on five days a week; and for another, from two to four in the afternoon. The fee for this course is four pounds per session.

In the commercial academy of Prague, which may be taken as a typical Austrian commercial school, there are over four hundred students, and these are somewhat older than those in the Leipzig Institute. Most of the pupils in the three years' all-day course are between sixteen and twenty-one years of age. Here, as in Leipzig, there is a one year's course for older students who have previously received a liberal general education, and who wish to obtain in the shortest possible time such an amount of special commercial knowledge as will prepare them for a position in a business house.

In France there are eleven institutions officially recognised as higher schools of commerce. These are managed by the local Chambers of Commerce, and each school provides a course specially adapted to the requirements of the district from which it draws its pupils. In essential features, however, the programmes of all are alike, and a uniform diploma is given to those students who pass successfully through the course. The examiners for this diploma are nominated by the State, and the diploma carries with it the privilege of the reduction of military service from three years to one. These higher schools of commerce in France date their importance from 1889, when the law was passed which gives official recognition and regulation to their programmes and diplomas.

The course of study for the diploma extends over two years, and pupils are not admitted under sixteen years of age; the ages of most of those in the schools are from seventeen to twenty. It is usual, however, for the schools to carry on a preparatory course of one year's study; this affords an opportunity for intending pupils to bring themselves well into line with the programme for the diploma-course in the higher school. It may be taken that the French boy of sixteen or seventeen enters upon his two years' course of commercial studies with much the same preparation that the English boy has when he leaves school for an office. Let us see, then, how this extension of school-time is utilised. In what may be called the commercial bureau of the school the pupils spend ten or eleven hours a week; here they are instructed in the principles of bookkeeping and accounting, office practice, commercial correspondence, money, weights, and measures of different countries, exchange calculations, and banking. Two hours a week are devoted to handwriting and shorthand.

While these studies may be said to provide in the main a special training for business, the other subjects are no less valuable for the opportunity they afford for liberal culture than they are as a preparation for the many possible relations into which business brings the merchant. They include industrial and commercial geography (three hours a week), history of commerce (one hour), commercial law and economic science (three hours), and modern languages (eight hours). Much attention is devoted to the study of modern languages. English, which is compulsory, has four hours a week given to it; other four hours are devoted to a second language, which may be German or Spanish or Italian or Arabic. In

addition to these subjects, which are common to all the schools, two or three hours a week are spent in each on the study of matters of special importance in the district from which the school draws its pupils.

The general result is that on the Continent those young men of the middle classes who are destined for business enter the merchant's office at about twenty years of age; they are then familiar with commercial history and geography, the money, weights, and measures used in different countries, and with bookkeeping; are able to read, and it may be to speak, one or more foreign languages; and they have at least an elementary knowledge of the machinery of business, economic science, and commercial law.

What now of commercial training in Britain? It is no doubt true that in our offices we afford unrivalled opportunities for much that is essential in the education of the man of business. If, however, these opportunities are not to be thrown away, it is necessary that the clerks to whom they are offered should have such a preliminary training as will enable them to enter into their duties with full intelligence. The majority of British clerks commence their apprenticeship at fifteen or sixteen. Their school course should then be one which will enable them to reach a definite standard at this age. The subjects of instruction should be chosen with a single eye to the preparation for subsequent work in commerce. This does not imply that the school is to aim at being a model office. Far from it. Look at the course suggested by the London Chamber of Commerce, which has been trying for the last ten years to give a lead in this matter. The junior commercial certificate of the Chamber is awarded after an examination in the following subjects: English, arithmetic, a modern foreign language, elementary drawing, elementary science, and two other subjects selected from a list classed as mercantile, linguistic, mathematical, and scientific. This examination is within the reach of well-trained pupils at thirteen or fourteen years of age. No less than three hundred firms in the city of London have stated that they will give a preference in their appointments to applicants holding the certificates which the London Chamber of Commerce issues to those who pass in this junior examination. Surely this is a sufficient indication of the value of a sound preliminary education to a lad who has chosen a business career.

The London Chamber holds also an examination for 'senior commercial certificates.' The subjects of this examination are: English, two modern foreign languages, mathematics, commercial geography and history, elements of political economy, and two of a long list of optional subjects. Such are the subjects which men of business recommend for the later years of a boy's school life and for higher work in evening classes during a clerk's apprenticeship.

It must be confessed that the suggestions and inducements offered by the London Chamber of Commerce have not yet brought forward a large number of candidates for their certificates. It may be, nevertheless, that they have had a considerable influence in guiding teachers and parents in the education of boys who are to go to business.

In Scotland the establishment of 'leaving certificates' given by the Education Department to boys who pass suitable examinations on leaving secondary schools has done much to cultivate a systematic course of study in these schools. Indeed, by a very slight modification of some of these examinations, and by the establishment of a commercial group-certificate, Scotland would be in possession of an excellent preliminary commercial examination. Such a certificate would be in definite relation to a course of instruction in secondary schools which even now leaves but little to be desired. With such a lead, England, too, might look for the early establishment of an efficient general scheme for the commercial sections of its secondary schools.

While we in Britain have been slow to realise what the schoolmaster can do for the merchant in the preliminary stage of commercial education, we have been by no means behind in regard to the second and equally important part of the work. The conditions of life here make it essential that instruction in commercial subjects should be provided in evening classes for clerks during their apprenticeship. Accordingly, we find now in almost every large town good provision of classes for this purpose. The subjects specified in the senior scheme of the London Chamber of Commerce are well represented in the programmes of the great evening schools and colleges—foreign languages, commercial geography and history, machinery of business, commercial and industrial law, mathematics, and science, all draw many evening students in our great commercial centres. Indeed, it is now quite possible for a clerk who has had a good school training to make such advance in his education during his apprenticeship as to bring him at twenty or twenty-one years of age practically abreast of his Continental brother—or shall we say rival? Opinion in the offices is, however, slow to realise the great value of a thorough knowledge of modern languages and of those aspects of commerce for which definite instruction outside the office is required. Yet one has only to look at the groups of subjects that appear in the courses of study of all the Continental schools of commerce to see what studies are found to pay in the long-run. Perhaps before long we may find commercial instinct lead our young clerks to secure for themselves all those advantages of education to which their fellows abroad may almost be said to have been driven by the effects of the military régime under which they live, and by the commercial aspirations of those in power.

Meanwhile the subject is not being allowed to rest. The Education Department received notice that an International Conference on Commercial Education would be held at Antwerp in the middle of April, to give an opportunity for the discussion of the curriculum and methods which should be adopted in schools of different grades. Sir J. F. D. Donelly, of the Science and Art Department, has also announced that special inquiry is being made into the nature of the provisions of commercial education of various grades in Paris, Havre, Hamburg, Antwerp, and other cities, the results of which will be given in the next volume of *Special Reports on Educational Subjects*. Sir John Donelly added: 'Seeing that more than £775,000 a year is at the disposal of local authorities in England and Wales without the exercise of their powers of rating, it seems to the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education that they are in a position to establish and organise commercial schools in the places best adapted for them, and with the most suitable curricula; and it appears to my Lords that the time has not yet arrived when they can properly approach the Treasury with a view of obtaining further special grants for commercial education.'

The third and highest section of the work of commercial education appeals to a limited number, but it is of the greatest importance. For those who are to be our leaders in commerce much can be done by instruction in an educational institution. In France, the 'École des Hautes Études Commerciales' is an institution of university rank, and provides a two years' special course of training for those who are to become merchants or bankers. A building, erected at a cost of over £100,000, for the accommodation of three hundred students, is a standing demonstration of the estimate which our French neighbours put upon the national value of the instruction which such an institution can afford.

In Britain we have the beginnings of a school for higher commercial studies. 'The London School of Economics and Political Science' is not yet three years old, but it is rapidly making its influence felt among men engaged in business in the metropolis. It is intended not to take the place of but to supplement the training of the office and the market; its classes are therefore, as a rule, held after office hours—say between 6 and 9 P.M. Its curriculum includes a large number of definite applications of economic science to departments of commerce, banking, insurance, railway administration, customs, &c. The school is only a beginning, but it is a beginning of much promise.

There is one feature in the Continental schemes which must not be omitted from this notice—the official recognition of the importance of foreign travel as a part of the education of the young merchant. The governments and Chambers of Commerce abroad give travelling scholarships for the study of foreign commercial conditions. These scholarships are awarded by competition, and are usually tenable for two or three years. The young men who hold them are required to reside in some selected foreign country, to occupy themselves with serious studies, with business, and with commercial journeys. At certain times—generally at the end of each year—they have to submit studies of the commerce and industries of the region in which they are living. Who can say that the national and local money spent on these scholarships is not well invested?

A MESSENGER FROM THE DEAD.

By ALAN OSCAR, Author of *Captain Kid's Millions*, &c.

CAPTAIN JOHN WHITNEY sat in his cabin at the Liverpool Sailors' Home with a letter before him, the contents of which filled his soul with longing.

'It is the sweetest little girl in the world, dear, and I am getting quite strong already; but I *do* wish you were here.

'That means I must go straight out by the mail boat,' he said; 'and yet I can't afford to throw away fifteen pounds on a saloon berth, and steerage I *won't* go. I know! Watkins will give me a passage out.'

The next morning he was in the forecastle of the Allan liner *Armenian*, outward bound, his acquaintance Watkins, the marine superintendent, having shipped him aboard to work his passage to Halifax, home, love—*and fatherhood*. In ten days he hoped to see his wife and daughter.

The seamen noticed him directly.

'One of them blooming Novys (Nova Scotians) been over to sell his ship; going back on the cheap,' said Tom.

'Yes,' replied Bill, 'I guess that's about his size.' Which was a good guess of Bill's.

Not being a 'packet rat,' Whitney knew he would have to be his own chum during the passage across, and was content that it should be so; it would give him more time to dream of the greeting awaiting him at Halifax. Thus he rather resented the familiarity of a harmless-looking fellow in the port watch, who came up to him on deck and offered him a chew of tobacco. The man seemed a foreigner.

Whitney took the offered plug with an abrupt 'Thank you, mate,' and turned short on his heel. The other, not a whit offended, shambled off, singing low, '*Mimi Pinsent est une blonde.*'

'What's the matter with "softy Vannes"?' asked a man.

'He gave me a chew,' said Whitney.

'Ah! he's not a bad sort, though he is daft. Been sailing back and fore in these here packets this two year past; they *do* say as he's got any amount of book-l'arning, that same feller.'

'Oh!' said Whitney, and passed on.

Vannes, who was said to be a French Canadian, was persistent in his friendly advances, and at last Whitney made some response. To his surprise, he found Vannes intelligent and educated, although a link in his chain of life seemed to have snapped and left him drifting, anchorless. He was a favourite amongst the seamen on account of his simplicity and good nature, and also because he had a fund of French songs, some of which the rough fellows had turned into chantys or hauling choruses, by adding an uncouth burden of their own. One in particular appeared to be a favourite, and in constant use when the topsails were to be hoisted:

Joliette, ma Joliette—
And a hoodah, and a hoodah;
Qu'elle est belle, ma Joliette—
And a hoodah, hoodah day.

And so forth.

Whitney and Vannes were the only two amongst the seamen who had the least pretence to culture; and the Nova Scotian, softened by the sweet imaginings of the meeting he so eagerly looked forward to, felt himself drawn to this simple fellow who, though in a ship's forecastle, showed by his refinement that he was no common sailor. What he was, or had been, Whitney could not discover; he seemed to have no past, or at least to have no recollection of it. To what might not such a friendship have led? But some wild force willed that it should be brief—little more than 'a look and a voice, then darkness again and silence.'

For the first few days they had strong north-east winds, and were able to keep their square sails set; running thus before a favouring gale, the watch on deck had little to do. Vannes attached himself closely to John Whitney, and seemed to look on him as a sympathetic friend. One evening he came up into the crow's-nest during Whitney's lookout.

'What is it, Frenchy?' Whitney asked. 'You've no business up here, you know.'

'I want to spik with you. 'Av' you a wife, John?'

'Yes.'

'Me also. I think I once did have wife, *belle comme une ange*, and—I did dream of her to-night. . . . Where is she?'

'How should I know, Vannes, my boy?'

'I t'ink it means that I meet her up—up in *ciel*.'

'Nonsense! You aren't going to die.'

'You think no?'

'Of course not.'

'*Mon ami*,' said Vannes seriously, 'sometimes he who shall die knows better. I do not fear the *Bon Dieu*—He is one friend of me; and if I have a wife, why should I not go to see her? Do *you* go to meet your wife?'

'Yes, Frenchy.'

'In *ciel?*'

'Good heavens! No, Vannes. You make me shiver with such questions. She is in Halifax; and my little girl too.' He spoke with all the father in his voice.

'Ah! Then soon you will see her. I also soon shall see my wife.'

A few hours afterwards the wind shifted suddenly to the north-west, and all hands were turned up hurriedly to shorten sail. The port watch sprang aloft to furl the fore topsail.

Already the night was wild. In the North Atlantic a storm wastes no time; a few hours and a winter gale becomes a hurricane, giving scant time to get sails furled and ship snug. Already the *Armenian* was plunging wildly into the rising sea, and hurling the spray across her forecastle in heavy showers. The ship rolled and wallowed along, driven by the great panting heart low down in her iron body. Up there on the yards it was no child's-play to get hold of the great slattering topsails in the thick darkness. Men howled directions to one another, working madly the while on the swaying foot-ropes, their bodies bent over the yard, their arms clutching at the wildly bellying sails.

Vannes and Whitney were out on the lee yard-arm; they could not see each other in the black night; conversation was impossible in the teeth of the roaring wind.

At last the sail was secured and the gaskets passed.

'Come on, Frenchy!' roared Whitney. 'Let's lay down out of this.' There was no answer.

'Vannes,' he cried, 'come on!'

'Frenchy ain't here,' yelled an answering voice. 'It's me—Bill Yawl!'

'I thought it was the Frenchman,' answered Whitney as he descended, with the rest of the watch, to the deck.

In such a night a man is not missed. But day came, and Vannes was gone.

'I knew he was alongside of me last night, on that topsail-yard,' said Whitney. 'He must have fallen from aloft. Poor chap! I wonder if he *did* receive warning of death? I've heard of such things,' he thought. 'I wonder if I shall know beforehand when my time comes to die? If my dear Margaret was dead would her spirit come and tell me?—Heavens! what am I thinking about?' and he roughly shook his tremors from

him. But poor Vannes's sudden death had laid a hold on his spirit, and he could not altogether throw aside his gloom.

Five nights later John Whitney again sat alone, a broken man. He had reached Halifax to find the young mother and her baby beneath the snow-covered earth. At first he had blindly cursed in his utter despair; now, at last, he was slowly waking to manhood again, and trying to look forward to the long, solitary years which he must dree alone. His intense, passionate longing for the dead woman had led him to wild extravagances; in the secrecy of his room he had called upon her, in mad whispers, to come back to him from her grave—only for one moment, for one word; but there was no answering voice, no dim spirit-shape.

The other occupants of the house had long since retired, the mistress with a caution to him about the gas. For he had taken refuge in a boarding-house, utterly unable to face the solitude of his own place. The hours struck one after another, and still found him sitting there. Twelve—one—two—three——

'Oh Margaret! if I could only speak one word to you, dear; one word to know that you are still alive—somewhere; one word to tell me that I shall meet you again. Why! I could go through the rest of it alone then. My darling girl! I've heard of people coming back like that. Can you not come? Perhaps you can see me sitting here alone. Come, dear! Come! Only for one'——

He suddenly stopped his wild prayer. The door of his room had opened noiselessly; a dim light shone in. Another moment and he had risen, staggering to his feet. Had his cries been answered? In the doorway stood a beautiful young woman, clothed in white, who carried in her hand a curiously-shaped lamp which gave forth a peculiar bluish light.

'Margaret!' he whispered wildly, 'is it indeed you?' But the vision made no sign. 'Margaret, my love! Are you so changed? Does heaven, then, alter one's face? Oh, my dear, speak to me!' and he held out imploring hands from where he stood, afraid to move. But the apparition answered not, and stayed there staring with vacant eyes. Then, even as he would have moved forward, it noiselessly glided away. He sank gasping into his chair.

'Was it she? How altered! My dear wife was not so beautiful. Is that the heavenly change? I had rather have seen her earthly face; this one was like a stranger to me.'

But the experience had been too much for him; he felt faint, and walking unsteadily to his bedroom, flung himself prone. Nature asserted her rights; he fell into a deep sleep.

Mrs Herault, the proprietress of the 'Colonial' boarding-house, was getting uneasy about her friend Captain Whitney; it was now three in the afternoon, and though Amanda had more than once knocked at the door of his bedroom, there had been no answer.

'Poor fellow!' said Mrs Herault, 'I hope the loss of his wife has not deranged him.' She was beginning to fear that Whitney had taken his life, and was imagining the possibility of her other boarders taking flight. 'He must be waked,' she said decisively, and went up herself to his room. Perhaps her summons was more forcible than Amanda's; perhaps he had slept his sleep. She was answered, and a burden of fearful possibility was lifted from her mind. She waited for him as he came downstairs, and carried him off to her private sitting-room.

'See now, my friend,' she said, 'you will stay and drink tea. What is it, then? Come; be a man. She will not like to look down and see you thus.'

'She *has* seen me, Mrs Herault,' he answered, in such a voice that she again took fright.

'Come, Captain Whitney, have a little sense.'

'It is true,' he said solemnly.

She saw he was all shaken, and that he had something to tell her. She kept silence, and Whitney told of his night's experience.

'And she did not speak?' asked Mrs Herault when he had ended. Such a vision seemed quite possible and likely to her, for she was a 'spiritualist,' as so many of her countrywomen are.

'Not a word,' answered Whitney.

'And you could see her face plainly?

'Well—yes. I thought I could. But yet she was changed. Her hair was gold; it used to be black, as you know. And she was not so tall as Margaret—but perhaps that was the white robe.'

Mrs Herault started. All at once her spiritualistic romance faded to nothing.

'What is it?' he said, for he noticed her change of countenance.

'Shall I tell him?' she asked herself. His staring eyes and tremulous repeated question decided her.

'Listen, *mon ami!* It was not your Margaret.'

'Ah, yes, it was. I shall never forget her glorified face. And she had the white robe that people say they have up there.'

'Stop, my dear friend, I beseech you! Be tranquil. I will tell you the secret.'

At that moment a voice was heard somewhere within the house singing:

'Monsieur Biron veut danser!
Sa culotte fait apporter;
Sa culotte
À la mode.'

'Who's that?' he asked. 'That was one of poor Vannes's songs.'

'Vannes!' she cried. 'You knew Vannes? Ah! what can this mean? *Dites donc*, where is he, this Vannes? What mystery is this?'

'Vannes is dead,' said Whitney.

'Dead! *Ciel!* You say so? *Mon Dieu!*' The voice approached:

'Sa perruque
Jusqu'à la nuque,
Ses souliers tout ronds,
Eh bien, dansez, Biron!'

Mrs Herault sprang to her feet.

'Listen, my friend,' said she, putting her hand on Whitney's shoulder. 'Be prepared. Be strong.'

The door opened. His vision of the past night appeared! He sat staring, gasping. He would have spoken, but words refused to come.

'Ah, *ma tante*,' cried the vision; then, seeing Whitney, paused and said, 'Oh! I thought you were alone,' and was about to retire.

'Stop, Dorine,' said Mrs Herault; 'you have already made the acquaintance of monsieur.'

The young woman looked at him curiously, a blush surging up in her cheeks till all was rosy.

'No,' she said; 'I have not his acquaintance;' then she turned and fled. Whitney started to his feet and would have followed her.

'Stay,' said Mrs Herault. 'Sit down. You are now satisfied that she is not your wife.'

'Yes,' answered Whitney. 'And yet'——

The midnight encounter with this beautiful vision, at a time when all his soul longed for his dead wife, had filled him with a special interest in this lovely woman, whoever she might be.

'Who is she, then?' he asked.

'The wife of your friend Vannes.'

'The wife of Vannes!' he repeated in wonder. 'But—Mrs Herault, he was out of his mind; he thought his wife was dead. He had a prevision that he was going to meet her in heaven.'

'Poor fellow!' said Mrs Herault. 'Listen while I tell you their story. He was a man in good position, a civil engineer, but very fond of the sea. Dorine is my dead brother's daughter; he was a sea captain. Vannes was with him on a voyage to Cape Breton when they first met. They became very fond of one another, and he asked for her hand. But she was only a young girl. However, he would not be denied. On their wedding-day—it is now three years ago—he met with an accident, and had to be taken to the hospital. There was an operation. The doctors said his brain might be affected, but there were no signs of it, and he was getting rapidly well, when, one day, he disappeared, and we have never seen him since. The shock made Dorine very ill, and when at last she recovered we found that she was liable to attacks of sleep-walking. Sometimes after these attacks she confessed to me that Vannes had spoken to her in dreams, and she has had the belief that some day she would actually meet him in one of these sleeps, for she never believed that he was dead. She has said nothing to me about her attack of last night, but it is no wonder that she blushes and runs away.'

'I should like to tell her about her husband,' said Whitney.

'She will scarcely face you just yet,' answered Mrs Herault.

This proved to be true; Dorine did not again appear that day.

Dwelling on the lovely midnight vision and the romantic circumstances of the case, Whitney's thoughts were drawn from his dear dead ones to this new excitement. It was two days ere Dorine Vannes could be persuaded to face him; then, at last, they met. Both felt that, already, they were on more than ordinary terms of intimacy; mutual interests attracted them. He observed her with some curiosity, trying to imagine a likeness to his dead Margaret. And though the golden-brown hair and deep-gray eyes were not hers, still his imagination, willing to see resemblance, found it. He told her of the death of Vannes, which brought her tears; he also told her of his own bereavement.

Here, then, they were, both bereft of their dear ones. A common grief drew them to each other. To Whitney this was a mercy. To her, who had never in truth been a wife, and who had outlived the shock attendant on her loss, it seemed an opportunity for pitying consolation.

And so it happened that, when, presently, Whitney had again to go to sea, they were more than friends, though no word other than of friendship had been spoken between them.

He was away six months. Then once again they sat face to face. His eyes asked the question he would put. Hers dropped at the challenge.

'How can I take her place?' she said.

'You took it that night when you came to me at my call,' he answered. '*She* could not come. She sent *you*.'

LIGHT RAILWAYS FOR INDIA.

IN view of the enormous sums the government has to pay for transport of troops and stores on Indian frontier expeditions, and the awful mortality of baggage animals, it seems certain that the laying down of light railways in these regions would save money in the long-run. In the Indian Empire itself during peace-time light railways have over and over again proved of the greatest benefit to trade and commerce, and it is surprising that the authorities do not encourage their general adoption in congested districts, and where larger sums than a light railway would cost are often spent on the make and up-keep of roads. A civil engineer writes to an Indian contemporary

that the general ignorance of not only lay but also of professional men on the carrying capacity of light railways on thirty-pound rails is marvellous. There is a light railway of two feet six inches gauge now working in the Deccan which puts to shame the antiquated stock of the standard gauge lines. This railway has recently carried a boiler weighing fourteen tons on an ordinary low-sided wagon. Forty other wagons were lying in the yard. The high-sided wagons of the company, with a bare weight of five tons seven hundredweight, carrying a load of fourteen tons thirteen hundredweight, are specially constructed for the carriage of heavy ordnance, and are bullet-proof. A similar line and similar stock with Sir William Lockhart's force would have saved the government lakhs of rupees in the past year in transport, and it is a great pity that such light railways are not better known and better appreciated in India. The haulage powers of this light railway in the Deccan are, on a level, straight line, one thousand and thirty-six tons; on a gradient of one in ninety, with a curve of six hundred feet, two hundred and forty-five tons. The lower-class carriage is forty feet long, and constructed to carry with ease sixty-four passengers. It is satisfactory to hear that all the rolling stock of the Deccan light railway was supplied by English firms. The transport difficulty on the north-west frontier is well illustrated by what happened in the case of the column which had to be served last. They naturally had the remnant. The animals were in most cases so small that it was found impossible to fit them with government saddles. Donkeys from Sind and hill ponies all the way from Darjeeling were collected at Peshawar in October; and when these animals have to be brought in some instances about fifteen hundred miles with their drivers, the cost of transport may be imagined. An elephant battery is with one of the columns. In ten days the elephants of the battery would devour four hundred and eighty mule-loads of fodder; whilst, in addition, elephants daily require *chupatties*, made of flour, to keep them in health.

That light railways pay their way well in the East is shown by the Darjeeling and Himalaya Railway, and another small venture in private hands in Burma. The former, though the cost of construction was heavy, as it connects a popular hill-station seven thousand feet high with the plains, pays a dividend of ten per cent. The line in Burma is a short one of only eight miles in the Tenasserim division, but its earnings, with a small line of steam-launches connecting Maulmain with Thaton, the headquarter station of a large district covered with fertile paddy-fields, during the past three years has yielded thirty-six per cent. profit to its proprietors.

With all these facts before them, the government of India and the different local governments of the various provinces should encourage by all means in their power the opening out of the country by the construction of light railways. Where funds are available, districts should be encouraged to construct railways themselves. Where funds are scanty, English firms might well be asked to tender for the work, land and every reasonable facility being given to the constructors. By calling for such tenders by advertisement in the Indian press and in English professional papers, the government of India would be doing a vast deal of good to the empire committed to their charge, whilst at the same time this might easily afford remunerative employment for millions of capital seeking investment in England. Such lines of light railway would, we believe, pay a dividend in most places in the East nearer ten per cent. per annum than five. The government might well undertake to guarantee three per cent. while the line was under construction, and to share equally with the contractors in any dividend that might be earned over, say, four per cent. per annum. Such terms would, we believe, be satisfactory to European capitalists, whilst they would in no way embarrass the revenues of the government of India, guarantees being given for the construction of the lines within a certain time. Eventually, we believe, the government of India would be large gainers, not only by their share in dividends over four per cent., but in the great impetus which would be given to trade and agriculture by cheap and speedy transport. In times of scarcity or famine in one district, food could be quickly and easily transported in as many hours as it took days to transport it in the recent famine. Such lines would also mean increased comfort in living to the poorest classes of India, who are now, even in ordinary years, often reduced to a single meal a day, whilst one hundred miles away there may be comparative plenty. Light railways are therefore, we consider, one of the first necessities of the day in India, and we trust those in power will do all that they can to bring about their extension by the means we have suggested. Before the close of the century we might have at least one thousand miles of such lines in India, to the advantage of both the rulers and the ruled.

SPRING IN EXILE.

THE Spring is here! and far-off England wears
Its tenderest, freshest garlands on her brow.
My home-sick heart turns back to England now.
Ah! small would be my share of haunting fears
If I could stand upon a good ship's prow
And scent the bursting heather as she clears
The homeward bar: instead, a mist of tears
Blots out the blush upon the hawthorn bough.

'Tis only through the eyes of memory
That I can see the yellow primrose-beds,
The cowslips in the meadow by the sea,
The golden light that the laburnum sheds,
Or crystal margins, near whose purity
The slender daffodils uplift their heads.

MARY PAGE BIRD.

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SOME NOTABILITIES AT PLAY.

THE happiest and healthiest men are those who have one or more hobbies; and that person is to be pitied who cannot relax and find change and enjoyment in another groove than that which forms the main employment of his life. It is also perfectly evident that what forms a pleasurable recreation to one man may only prove another form of work to his fellow. Dr Livingstone once expressed regret that he did not play more with his children when they were growing up around him, as they soon sprang up in his absence, and left him conscious that he had none to play with. Hugh Miller found genuine recreation and objects of endless study and delight in a sandstone quarry. Charles Dickens, after a heavy spell of work at one of his serials, would fly off at a tangent, and walk until he was like to drop; or he would engage with Forster to meet at a country inn and dine hilariously. 'I am become incapable of rest,' he once said to Forster when remonstrated with. 'I am quite confident I should rust, break, and die if I spared myself.' He did not spare himself, and so dropped down in harness. Carlyle was often in the Chelsea 'bus when busy with his *Frederick;* he rather enjoyed the 'shaking' of the vehicle as wholesome exercise, and believed he had ridden twice round the world when so engaged. Sir Richard Tangye has found recreation and enjoyment in the collection of relics of Oliver Cromwell; while Lord Armstrong has spent many a happy hour in planning for the planting, building, and the making of roads in and around his noble estate of Cragside, at Rothbury, and has thus found recreation from his more serious work at Elswick.

Quite a number of notable persons have been obliging enough to tell Mr Douglas Sladen, the editor of the invaluable biographical handbook *Who's Who* (A. & C. Black), something about their favourite recreations. The result is often both astonishing and amusing, while always interesting. For instance, Mr Toole finds his recreation in 'the exercise of his profession;' the favourite recreation of Sir Henry Irving is acting, that of George MacDonald preaching, and of Sir Walter Besant 'looking on.' The author of *All Sorts and Conditions of Men* has indeed looked on to some purpose. Lord Salisbury does not condescend to give his recreations; but those of Lord Roberts are hunting and cycling, and of General Sir Evelyn Wood hunting, shooting, and lawn-tennis. Dr Smiles at eighty-six confesses to being too old for recreation; but we know that he has had his own day of it in travelling here and there, hunting up facts and interviewing many persons on behalf of his small library of industrial heroes. Mr Ruskin, when a boy, was driven by his father over the finest parts of England and Scotland, and in later life found both work and recreation in drawing, writing, and travelling, and setting the world right in its political economy. Mr Gladstone and Mr Goschen both find their recreation in literature; although the form it takes with the late Prime Minister would be called study by most men. He saturates his mind to repletion from one book, and then flies to another. Tree-felling is not always in season, of course.

We may be permitted to remark, without disrespect to our authority *Who's Who*, that, having attained its fiftieth year, it has grown somewhat stouter, and ever more serviceable, with the addition of new lists of editors of newspapers and magazines, and over a thousand more biographies. No word is wasted in these biographies, or shall we call them autobiographies? Facts only are given without any comment, the tail-end of the article giving the recreation of the subject under notice, with his address and the club or clubs with which he is connected. A ramble over its pages has furnished us with much useful information as well as with the recreation of many of our prominent public men; and since a man shows his character quite as plainly in play as in work, these facts have an autobiographical interest.

We wonder how far Lady Aberdeen is joking

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when she tells us that for recreation she takes a great interest in everything connected with Ireland. This surely says much for her goodness of heart, as the Irish Question in the House of Commons means serious business indeed, and is generally looked upon as a wet blanket. Dr Adler, chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation, finds enjoyment in arranging and completing his library of Oriental history. Canon Ainger, our best authority on Charles Lamb, of course finds his recreation in literature. The Duke of Argyll has found amusement and instruction in geological studies, natural history, and painting; while Dr Alfred Russel Wallace enjoys chess and gardening. The inventor of 'Bovril,' Mr J. Lawson Johnston, spends three months of the year in shooting and yachting in Scotland; while Mr E. T. Hooley recreates himself in yachting.

Sir Edwin Arnold, happier than most newspaper editors, has varied his duties on the *Daily Telegraph* by shooting, yachting, cycling, and travelling in the East. Mr Buckle of the *Times* finds his recreation in golf; so do 'Ian Maclaren' and Dr W. Robertson Nicoll of the *British Weekly*. Only, the latter must find it difficult to say where work ends and recreation begins, if we consider his other labours in connection with the *Woman at Home*, *Expositor*, *Bookman*, and many volumes continually dropping from the press. Mr C. A. Cooper of the *Scotsman*, like his predecessor, Alexander Russel, affects angling and books; Mr H. W. Massingham of the *Daily Chronicle* engages in golf, cricket, and fishing; while his joint-editor, Mr Henry Norman, has many strings to his bow, such as shooting, fishing, riding, cycling, farming, and photography; Mr J. St Loe Strachey of the *Spectator* practises cycling; Mr A. C. Harmsworth enjoys cycling, angling, and travel; Sir T. Wemyss Reid, general manager of Cassell & Co. and editor of the *Speaker*, has recourse to travel and conversation, when he can get them.

Mr F. C. Burnand, editor of *Punch*, finds more *Happy Thoughts* in riding and music; Sir Joseph Norman Lockyer believes in tennis and golf. As Mr C. K. Shorter does not enlighten the public about his recreations, we must suppose that editing weekly periodicals, such as the *Illustrated London News* and the *Sketch*, with the *English Illustrated* and editions of English classics thrown in, are probably included. Mr J. A. Spender of the *Westminster Gazette* finds his recreation in cycling; Mr Max Pemberton indulges in riding, cycling, and golf; while Mr W. T. Stead enjoys cycling, boating, and playing with children. Mr Douglas Sladen, editor of *Who's Who*, has forgotten one important item in the list of his own recreations—that is, the editing and preparation of this volume, which must have been a labour of love; otherwise his list contains other forms of industry, such as rifle-shooting, Rugby football, golf, travel, architecture, and curio-collecting.

No one will be surprised to hear that Mr William Black's favourite recreation is salmon-fishing. Mr Thomas Hardy delights in arboriculture, cycling, and architecture, which was his first love; Mr Meredith, a great pedestrian in earlier days, now finds enjoyment in reading French literature; and Mr James Payn in whist. Miss Braddon loves music and literature, and Mr Hall Caine horse-riding and mountaineering. Mr Quiller-Couch believes in yachting and rowing; Dr A. Conan Doyle enjoys golf, cricket, and cycling; and Mr Stanley Weyman riding and cycling. Dr Blake Odgers finds his recreation in reading the works of these two before-mentioned novelists. Mr Rider Haggard varies novel-writing with gardening, fishing, shooting, and cycling; Mr Guy Boothby loves riding, driving, cycling, and the collection of live fish from all parts of the world. It is evident from every page of the writings of Mr John Buchan, author of *John Burnet of Barns*, that he is fond, as he says, of the open air and out-of-door recreations, such as golf, cycling, climbing, and angling. Mr Henty indulges in rowing and yachting; Mr Manville Fenn loves travel, gardening, and natural science; Mr Barrie likes a good game of cricket, and indeed all out-of-door games; while Mr Crockett had 'anciently' a love for cricket, now mountaineering, cycling, and golf are more to his mind. Mrs Molesworth has found recreation in weaving her pleasant stories for young people; and Mrs Ritchie (Miss Thackeray) finds enjoyment in riding, fresh air, pictures, and good company.

Mr Andrew Lang loves cricket and golf and—as one who was born within sight of Ettrick and Tweed—angling; Mr Augustine Birrell indulges in walking, golf, and book-hunting, as all readers of his *Obiter Dicta* might be well assured. Mr Jerome has a fondness for riding, driving, and cycling, and Mr Swinburne for swimming. Mr E. W. Hornung, Mr H. G. Wells, Mr Le Gallienne, Mr T. P. O'Connor, and many others set down cycling as their favourite pastime, to which Mr Rudyard Kipling adds fishing. To this list we may add the name of M. Zola, although his opportunities for the pastime of cycling in the near future promise to be limited. Mr Zangwill, on the other hand, likes all forms of locomotion save the 'bike.' To Dr W. W. Skeat belongs the honour of having been the first Cambridge professor to ride a bicycle. Nobody need ask what Mr W. G. Grace enjoys most, but to his favourite cricket we must add beagling; and General Booth has no recreation save travelling in connection with the Salvation Army.

We give these as but samples of the rest. Depend upon it—and we end as we began—a man away from the main business of life without one, or several, hobbies may prove but a dull dog to live with or spend a holiday alongside; and all the examples which Mr Douglas Sladen has

enabled us to give are better and not worse men because of their recreations. They are probably healthier, and do better work into the bargain; which means a great deal in the struggle and stress of modern life. That is to say, if these recreations do not themselves become the main business of life, or are so engaged in as not to bore other people. It matters little what the occupation of one's by-hours may be, whether the sawing of wood or the planting of cabbages — provided one gets the necessary change and recreation. When the hobby provides relaxation and helps on the main business of life at the same time, so much the better.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXII.—I CLAIM A PROMISE, AND WE SEEK THE HILLS.

AND now I set myself resolutely to think out something that might be the saving of my life and my love. I was in a perilous case; for when Gilbert found that I had escaped him he would come on forthwith to Dawyck, and in all likelihood be here ere nightfall. One thing was clear—that I could not bide myself nor leave Marjory to the tender mercies of our pursuers. The hills for me; and for her—ah, that was the rub in the matter!

At last I made out some semblance of a plan. On the edge of Douglasdale, in the shire of Lanark, dwelt William Veitch, at the house of Smitwood, the uncle of the dead Sir John, an old man well fallen in the vale of years. He was unmolested by all, being a peaceable soldier who had served God and the king in his day, and now thought of nothing save making a good ending. He would gladly take the lass, I knew, and shelter her till such time as I should come and take her again. Nor would Gilbert follow her thither, for no word should come to his ear of her destined harbour, and he knew nought of the place or the relationship. The plan came upon me with such convincing force that I took no other thought on the matter. Nicol should be left there, both as a guard of the place—and who so vigilant?—and as some means of communication between me and my mistress. For my own part, when once I had seen my lass safely sheltered, I should take to the hills with a light heart. I should love to be free and careless among the wide moors, and try my wits in a fair contest against my sweet cousin.

I told the thing to Nicol, and he gladly agreed. Then I sought out Marjory, who had gone to make some preparations for my flight, and found her talking gravely to the old man, the only remaining servant. I drew her to the little oak parlour.

'Marjory, lass,' I said, 'I am but new come home, and I little thought to have to take flight again so soon. Do you mind, ere I went to the Low Countries, I came here to bid you farewell, and you sang me a song?'

'I mind it well,' said she.

'Have you a remembrance of the air, my dear? How did it go?' and I whistled a stave.

'Ay, even so. You have a good ear, John.'

'I think, too, that I have mind of a verse or so,' said I. 'There was one which ran like this:

> Oh, if he were a soldier gay,
> And tarried from the town,
> And sought in wars, through death and scars,
> To win for him renown,
> I'd place his colours in my breast
> And ride by moor and lea,
> And win his side, there to abide,
> And bear him company.

Was it not so?'

'Yes,' she said, smiling. 'How well you remember, John!'

'And there was a refrain, too,' I went on:

> 'Forsooth, a maid, all unafraid,
> Should by her lover be,
> With wile and art to cheer his heart
> And bear him company.'

Marjory blushed. 'Why do you remind me of my old song?' she said. 'It pains me, for I used to sing it ere the trouble came upon us, and when we were all as happy as the day was long.'

'Nay,' I said, 'it is a song for the time of trouble. It was your promise to me, and I have come to claim its fulfilment. I am for the hills, Marjory, and I cannot leave you behind. Will you come and bear me company? I will take you to Smitwood, where even the devil and my cousin Gilbert could not follow you. There you will be safe till I come again when this evil time is past, for pass it must. And I will go to the hills with a blithe heart if once I knew you were in good keeping.'

'O John, to be sure I will follow you,' she said, 'even to the world's end. I will fare among rough hills and bogs if I may but be near you. But I will go to Smitwood, for most terribly I dread this place.'

So it was all brought to a conclusion, and it but remained to make ready with all speed and seek the uplands.

It was, I think, about three hours after mid-

day when we were ready to start on our journey. A strange cavalcade we formed: Marjory on her roan, dressed plainly as for the hills, and with a basket slung across the saddle-bow for all the world like a tinker's pannier; I myself on Maisie, well mounted and armed; and Nicol on foot, lean and ill-clad as ever. It was not without a pang that we set out, for it is hard to leave the fair and settled dwellings of home for haphazard lodging among rough morasses. Marjory in especial could scarce refrain from tears; while I own that, as I looked down the vale and saw the woods of Barns and the green hills of Manor, I could have found it in me to be despondent.

Soon we left the woods and came out on the heathery brow of Scrape, and crossing it, entered the deep glen where the burn of Scrape flows to join the Powsail. The heather had been burned, as is the custom here in the early spring, and great clouds of fine white dust rose beneath the hoofs of our horses. A dry crackling of twigs and the strident creak of the larger roots as they grated on one another filled our ears. Then once more we ascended, high and ever higher, over rocks and treacherous green well-eyes and great spaces of red fern, till we gained the brow of the hill which they call Glenstivon Dod, and looked down into the little glen of Powsail.

We crossed the lovely burn of Powsail, which is the most beautiful of all Tweedside burns, since the water is like sapphire and emerald and topaz, flashing in every ray like a myriad jewels. Here we watered our horses, and once more took the hills. And now we were on the wild ridge of upland which heads the glens of Stanhope and Hopecarton and Polmood, the watershed 'twixt the vales of Tweed and Yarrow. Thence the sight is scarce to be matched, to my knowledge, in the south country of Scotland. An endless stretching of hills, shoulder rising o'er shoulder, while ever and again some giant lifts himself clean above his fellows, and all the while in the glen at our feet Tweed winding and murmuring.

I asked Nicol what was the purpose of our journey, for this was by no means the shortest way to Douglasdale and Smitwood. He answered that to go straight to our destination would be to run our heads into the lion's mouth. He purposed that we should go up the Tweed to a hiding-place which he knew of on the Cor Water, and then make over by the upper waters of the Clyde and the Abington moors to the house of Smitwood. These were the more deserted and least accessible places, whereas the villages and lowlands around the skirts of the hills were watched like the High Street of Edinburgh.

In a little we passed the wild trough where the Stanhope Burn flows toward the Tweed. It was now drawing toward the darkening, and the deep black glen seemed dark as the nether pit. Marjory grew frightened, as I knew by the tightened clutch at her horse's rein and her ever seeking to draw nearer me; but, like the brave lass that she was, she breathed never a word of it. Every now and then an owl would swoop close to our faces or a great curlew dart out of the night with its shrill scream, and vanish again into the dark. It was an uncanny place at that hour, and one little to be sought by those who love comfort and peace. But the very difficulty of the way gladdened us, for it gave us assurance that we would be unmolested by wayfaring dragoons. By-and-by stars came out and the moon rose, glorious and full as on the night before when I had ridden from Leith. Then it served to light my course to Dawyck, now to guide me from it.

We were now descending a steep hillside, all rough with 'sklidders,' and came to the Water of Talla, which we forded at a shallow a little below the wild waterfall called Talla Linns. Even there we could hear the roar of the cataract, and an awesome thing it was in that lonely place. But we tarried not a minute, but urged our horses up a desperate ravine till once more we were on the crest of the hills. And now a different land was around us. Far to the right, where the Talla joins the Tweed, we could mark the few lights of the little village of Tweedsmuir. The higher hills had been left behind, and we were on a wide expanse of little ridges and moor which the people of Tweedside call 'The Muirs,' and which extends from the upper Clyde waters to the source of the Annan and the monstrous hills which line its course.

Soon we came to a narrow upland valley, walled with green, precipitous hills. Here Nicol halted.

'There'll be watchers aboot,' he said, 'and our coming 'ill ha'e been tellt to the folk in the cave. We'd better gang warily.' So we turned our horses up the glen, riding along the narrow strip of meadow land beside the burn. I had heard of the place before, and I knew it for the Cor Water, a stream famous for trout, and at this time no less renowned among the hill-men as a hiding-place. For in the steep craigs and screes there were many caves and holes where one might lie hid for months.

Soon we came to a steep green bank, and here we drew rein. Nicol whistled on his fingers, with a peculiar piercing note like a whaup's cry. It was answered by another from the near neighbourhood. Again Nicol whistled with a different pitch, and this time a figure came out as from the hillside and spoke.

'Whae are ye,' he said, 'that come here, and what do ye seek? If ye come in the Lord's name, welcome and a night's lodging await ye. If no', fire and a sword.'

'I'm Nicol Plenderleith,' said my servant, 'as weel ye ken, John Laidlaw. And these are twae gentlefolk, whose names are no' convenient to be mentioned here, for hillsides ha'e ears. If ye come near I'll whisper it in your lug.'

The man approached and appeared well satisfied. He bade us dismount and led the horses off, while we waited. Then he returned, and bidding us follow, led the way up a steep gully which scarred the hillside. In a little he stopped at an outjutting rock, and crept round the corner of it. At the side next the hill was an opening large enough to allow a man of ordinary stature to pass, and here he entered and motioned us to follow.

CHAPTER XXIII.—THE CAVE OF THE COR WATER.

THE place we found ourselves in was a narrow passage, very lofty and very dark, and with countless jags of rough stone on all sides to affront the stranger. Some few paces led us into a wider place, lit by some opening on the hillside, for a gleam as of pale moonlight was all about it. There stood a sentinel, a tall, grave man, dressed in coarse homespun, and brown of the face. Through this again we passed into another straitened place, which in a little opened into a chamber of some magnitude.

When I grew accustomed to the candle-light I made out that it was a natural cave in the whinstone rocks, maybe thirty feet in height, square in shape, and not less than thirty feet long. The black sides were rough and crusted, and hung in many parts with articles of household gear and warlike arms. But the place was less notable than the people who were sitting there and greeted us as we entered. In the midst was a table of rough-hewn wood, whereon lay the remnants of a meal. Lit pine-staves cast an eerie glow over all things, and in the light I saw the faces of the company clearly.

On a settle of stone covered with a sheep's fleece sat an old man, large of limb and tall, but bent and enfeebled with age. His long lyart hair fell down almost to his shoulders; his features as the light fell upon them were strong, but his eyes were sightless and dull as stone. He had a great stick in his hand, which he leaned on, and at our entrance he had risen and stared before him into vacancy, conscious of some new presence, but powerless to tell of it. Near him, along by the table-side, were two men of almost like age—square, well-knit fellows with the tanned faces of hill-men. I guessed them to be shepherds or folk of that sort who had fled to this common refuge. Beyond these again stood a tall, slim man of a more polished exterior than the rest: his attitude had something of grace in it, and his face and bearing proclaimed him of better birth. Forby, there were one or two more, gaunt, sallow folk, such as I had learned to know as the extreme religionists. These were busy conversing together with bowed heads and earnest voices, and took no heed of our arrival. To add to all, there were two women, one with a little child, clearly the wives of the shepherds.

Our guide went forward to the man who stood by the wall and whispered something to him. In an instant he came to us, and, bowing to Marjory, bade us welcome.

'We are glad to see you here, Master Burnet,' said he. 'I am rejoiced to see the gentlemen of the land coming forth on the side of the Covenant. It is you and such as you that we need, and we are blithe to give you shelter here as long as you care to bide with us. It is a queer thing that two men of the same house should be engaged in this business on different sides.'

Here one of the others spoke up.

'I trust, Master Burnet, ye have brought us good news from the Lowlands. We heard that ye had great converse with the godly there, and we will be glad to hear your account of how the guid cause prospers over the water.'

Now I felt myself in a position of much discomfort. The cause of my outlawry had clearly got abroad; and here was I credited with being a zealous religionist and a great man among the Scots exiles in Holland; whereas, as I have already said, I cared little for these things, being not of a temper which finds delight in little differences of creed or details of ecclesiastical government, but caring little in what way a man may worship his Maker. Indeed, to this day, while I can see the advantage of having fixed rites and a Church established, I see little use in making a pother about any deviation. So I now found myself in an unpleasing predicament. I must avow my utter ignorance of such matters and my worldly motives for thus seeking shelter, and in all likelihood win the disfavour of these folk—nay, even be not suffered to remain.

'I thank you for your welcome,' said I; 'but I must hasten to set matters right between us. I am not of your party, though it is my misfortune to have to seek safety among the hills. It is true I have been in the Low Countries; but it was for the purposes of study and seeing the world, and not for the sake of religion. If I must speak the truth, when I abode there I had little care of such things, for they were never in my way. Now that I am returned and find myself a fugitive, I am not a whit more concerned with them. My misfortunes arise from the guile of a kinsman and not from my faith. So there you have my predicament.'

I made the declaration crudely and roughly, for the necessity was urgent upon me of making it very plain at the outset. Another man would have been repelled or angered, but this man had the penetration to see through my mask of callousness that I was not ill-disposed to his cause.

'It is no matter,' he said. 'Though you were the most rabid malignant, we would yet give you shelter. And indeed, though you may not be of

our way of thinking in all matters, yet I doubt not you are with us on the essentials. Forby, you are a gentleman of Tweeddale, and it would be queer if you werena right-hearted, Master John Burnet.'

One of the disputants grumbled, but the others seemed heartily to share in this opinion; and bidding us sit down, they removed our travelling gear and set food before us. Our appetite was sharp with the long hill-journey, and we were not slow in getting to supper. Meanwhile the long man to whom we had first spoken busied himself with serving us, for in that desert place every man was his own servant. Afterwards Marjory went to the women, and soon won their liking, for the heart would be hard indeed which was not moved by her pretty ways and graces.

When I had done I sat down on the settle with the rest, and the fire which burned in a corner of the cave was made up, and soon the place was less dismal, but a thousandfold more fantastic. I could scarce keep from thinking that it was all a dream; that my landing, and midnight ride, and Nicol's news, and my perilous predicament were all figments of the brain. I was too tired to have any anxiety, for I would have you remember that I had ridden all the night and most of the day without a wink of sleep, besides having just come off a sea voyage. My eyelids drooped, and I was constantly sinking off into a doze. The whole place tended to drowsiness—the shadows and the light, the low hum of talk, the heavy air, for the outlet for smoke was but narrow. But the man I have spoken of came and sat down beside me, and would engage me in talk.

'I do not think you know me, Master Burnet,' said he, 'but I knew your father well, and our houses used to be well acquaint. I am one o' the Carnwath Lockharts, that ye may ha'e heard o'. My name is Francis Lockhart o' the Beltyne.'

I knew him whenever he uttered the words, for I had often heard tell of him for a gallant gentleman who had seen service under Gustavus and in many Low Country wars. I complimented myself on his acquaintance, which kindness he proceeded to repay. So we fell to discussing many things—men I had known in Leyden, men I had known in Tweeddale, together with the more momentous question of the future of each of us. I gave him a full account of my recent fortunes, so that he might have wherewith to contradict any rumours as to my reasons for taking to the hills. He in turn spoke to me of his life and his sorrow at the fate of his land. The man spoke in such unfeigned grief, and likewise with such a gentleman-like note of fairness, that I felt myself drawn to him. It was while thus engaged that he spoke a word which brought upon him the condemnation of some of the others.

'Oh,' said he, 'I would that some way might be found to redd up thae weary times and set the king richt on his throne; for I canna but believe that in this matter loyalty and religion go hand-in-hand, and that were James Stuart but free from his wanchancy advisers there would be less talk of persecuting.'

At this one of the others, a dark man from the West, spoke up sharply: 'What do I hear, Maister Lockhart? It's no' by ony goodwill to James Stuart that we can hope to set things richt in thae dark times. Rather let our mouths be filled with psalms and our hands with the sword-hilt, and let us teach the wanton and the scorner what manner o' men are bred by the Covenant and the Word.'

The speech was hateful to me, and yet as I looked in the dark, rugged face of the man I could not keep from liking it. Here at any rate was a soul of iron. My heart stirred at his words, and I could have found it in me to cast in my lot even with such as these, and bide the bent with nought but a good sword and faith in God. Then the old man, he whom I have spoken of, beckoned to me with his staff and bade me come and sit by him.

'Ye kenna me, John Burnet; but weel ken I you. Often in the auld days your father and me had gey ploys hunting and fechting roond a' the muirs o' Tweed. He was a guid man, was Gilbert, and I hear he had glimpses o' grace in the hinner end.'

'Maybe,' said I, being in perplexity, for from the grace that he spoke of my father had ever been far.

'Ay, and I was sair vexed I saw him so little. For he had to bide at hame for the last years, and I was aye busied wi' other work. Yeddie o' the Linns was never an idle man, and less than ever in thae days.'

At the mention of his name a flood of recollection came in upon me. I minded how I had heard of the son of Lord Fairley, a great soldier who had won high renown in the wars abroad; and how he had returned a melancholy man, weighed down with the grave cares of religion, and gone to the wilds of Tweed, to a hut just above the Linns of Talla, where he spent his days in prayer and meditation. The name of Yeddie o' the Linns, as he was called among the shepherds and folk of these parts, became an equivalent for high-hearted devotion. Then, when the wars began, tales of him grew over the country-side. In stature he was all but gigantic, famed over half the towns of France for feats of strength, and no evil living had impaired his might. So at the outbreak of the persecution he had been a terror to the soldiers who harried these parts. The tale ran of the four men whom he slew single-handed at the Linns, hemming them in at a nook of rocks, and how often he had succoured fugitives and prisoners, coming like an old lion from the hills, and returning no one knew whither. There was also the tale of his

blinding by a chance splinter from a bullet-shot, and how he had lived among the caves and hills, dangerous even in his affliction. Had I but known it, this cave was his finding, and half the retreats in Tweeddale and Clydesdale were known to him. But now he was an old man, who had long left his youth, and his strength had all but gone from him. He sat alone in his great darkness, speaking little to the inmates or the chance-comers, save when he knew them for gentlemen of birth; for though he might risk his life for the common people, he had no care to associate with them, being of the old Kirkpatricks of that Ilk, as proud a house as is to be found in the land.

'You are not of us,' he said suddenly. 'I heard you say a moment agone that you had no share in the inheritance of Jacob, but still chose to dwell among the tents of sin.'

'Nay,' I said very gently, for he was very old and of noble presence, 'do not speak thus. Surely it is no sin to live at peace in the good earth in honour and uprightness, and let all nice matters of doctrine go by, esteeming it of more importance to be a good man and true than a subtle disquisitioner—thinking, too, that all such things are of little moment, and change from age to age, and that to concern one's self much with them is to follow vain trifles. For the root of the whole matter is a simple thing on which all men are agreed; but the appurtenances are many, and to me at least of such small significance that I care for them not at all. I do not mind how a man worship his Maker, if he have but real devoutness. I do not care how a church is governed if the folk in it are in very truth God's people.'

'You speak well, my son,' said he, 'and at one time I should have gone with you. Nor do I set any great value by doctrine. But you are young, and the blood is still rich in your veins, and the world seems a fair place, with many brave things to be achieved. But I am old and have seen the folly of all things—how love is only a delusion, and honour a catchword, and loyalty a mockery. As the things of earth slip away from me and the glory of my strength departs, I see more clearly the exceeding greatness of the things of God. And as my eyes cease to be set on earth, I see more nearly the light of that better country which is an heavenly. So I love to bide in these dark moors where the pomp of the world comes not, among men of grave conversation, for I have leisure and a fitting place to meditate upon the things to come.'

'It may be,' said I, 'that some day I also be of your way of thinking. At present the world, though the devil is more loose in it than I love, seems to me so excellent that I would pluck the heart of it before I condemn it. But God grant that I may never lose sight of the beauty of His kingdom.'

'Amen to that,' said the old man very reverently.

Truly my thoughts on things were changing. Here was I in the very stronghold of the fanatics, and the two chief—the old man and Master Lockhart—I found men of reasonable mind and lofty purpose. And thus I have ever found it, that the better sort of the Covenanters were the very cream of Scots gentlefolk, and that 'twas only in the *canaille* that the gloomy passion of fanatics was to be found.

Meantime Nicol, who cared for none of these things, was teaching the child how to play at the cat's garterns.

THE PHONOGRAPHIC TEACHER.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

A MOVEMENT is on foot for bringing in the phonograph as an aid to the teaching of foreign languages. It is not by any means a new idea, though it is only recently that it has been practically taken up. When Edison invented this modern marvel he foresaw that it would be available for this purpose, though a good many years have passed without the suggestion he then made having been adopted. From the moment the possibility of recording and repeating sound was practically demonstrated it was obvious that something like a royal road to the learning of languages had been opened, and not only that, but that a very important aid to the teaching of instrumental music and singing had also been introduced.

The time seems to have come when these practical developments of the invention may be expected on a considerable scale. The phonograph is not likely now altogether to supersede the living teacher either of music or languages where the living teacher is available; but it may to a very important extent supplement and assist the teacher, and in a good many cases where good personal instruction cannot be had it may be an extremely useful substitute. There are, for instance, many persons living in villages and remote country houses who would be glad to learn French or German or Italian, but who are deterred from doing so by the difficulty of getting teachers who can impart to them the proper pronunciation. Translation, grammar, idioms, and so forth may be gained from books; but for the power to speak a

foreign language it is necessary to hear it spoken by the tongue of a native, and an educated native.

Now this is just what the phonograph may be made to afford. Most persons by this time know what the instrument is. Edison found that the vibrations produced by sound could be made to record themselves on a revolving cylinder of smooth, hard wax, by means of a small point attached to a tympanum. The tympanum vibrated, and the little point scratched marks upon the wax as it went round. The sound made the vibrations, and the vibrations made the marks; and it was found that by reversing the process the marks would make the vibrations and the vibrations would make the sound — no matter what the sound might be. It might be the words and the nasal twang of the Yankee, the gutturals of the German or Russian, the mellifluous periods of the Frenchman or Italian, an organ or pianoforte performance, the accompaniment and solo of a prima donna, or the outburst of applause which follows it. When the cylinder has received its impression, whatever it may be, it may be stored away. Whenever it is desired it may be slipped into position on the phonograph, and the mere touching of a switch sets the mechanism in motion and brings forth the sound—not, it is true, quite so clear and distinct as the original sound, but sufficiently so for all the practical purposes of teaching. It is easy to conceive of many of the purposes to which the thing may be put. A young lady in a remote country house has, we will suppose, a new piece of music which she cannot quite master or about the best rendering of which she is not quite sure. She wishes to know how the best executants would interpret it. If she has a phonograph at hand, it may shortly be quite possible for her to write to her musicseller and request him to send her Grieg's or Paderewski's rendering of the piece. By return of post she may get a little box perhaps six inches long and three inches square, containing the cylinder. She will merely unpack it, slip it on to the phonograph, put the ends of two tubes into her ears, and touch a button, and immediately Grieg or Paderewski will be playing to her the piece she has been studying. And they will play over and over and over again, if she wishes it. If it is a full volume of sound, it may be heard clear and strong from a funnel or trumpet, and without the assistance of the ear-tubes. It will not be altogether the pure, bright tones of the Broadwood or Erard that the great players are seated at; there is a certain resonant twang which further developments may possibly overcome, but which at present detracts somewhat from the enjoyment of it as music; but as a means of studying the niceties of style, of execution, of light and shade and expression, it is practically just as good as having the actual performers. It is a literal and infallible reproduction of their playing.

And the same may be done in the case of a song. Any one wishing to know how a Patti or a Santley would render a given passage may summon these distinguished vocalists—assuming, of course, that their rendering has thus been stereotyped—and may set them singing just as often and as long as may be required.

The only objection to this that it is easy to conceive is, that it will tend to make musicians mere imitators instead of encouraging them to express their own feelings and ideas in their own individual way. In the use of the phonograph for the learning of a language not even this objection can be raised, for the less individuality an Englishman can introduce into his articulation and pronunciation of his French or German the better. He can learn to speak and to understand a foreign tongue only by dint of constant repetition and imitation, and the phonograph is just the thing to give him this. A series of carefully devised lessons are being prepared, and these are spoken into the phonograph with the utmost clearness and precision. The student may then take each spoken lesson away on a cylinder, and in the privacy of his own room may have an educated Parisian Frenchman or a Berlin German to go over it with him just as many hours a day as he thinks proper. As with the music, it cannot be said that the reproduction by the cylinder is as clear and distinct as the original voice. It requires close attention—at any rate by the unpractised ear; but it may perhaps be said to be as distinct as ordinary speech appears to a foreigner, and the student who can readily make out the voice of the phonograph will have little difficulty in understanding the living speaker.

And what, it may be asked, is likely to be the cost of studying a language, or instrumental music, or singing by this method? No very precise answer can be given to this at present. A phonograph complete costs not much under £40 to purchase outright, but comparatively few students would want to buy the thing. They will be content to hire, and this, it seems, may be done for about £10 a year. The wax cylinders, blank, cost about a shilling apiece. What may be the price of them when they have been enriched by music or speech must obviously depend upon the value the musician or the speaker may be able to get for service rendered. For linguistic purposes this need not be very exorbitant, and a cylinder with a good lesson engraved upon its shining surface ought to be had for half-a-crown. Two new cylinders a week for a month would thus, with the hire of the instrument, cost thirty-five shillings. Lessons, of course, may usually be had for less than this, but then it must be remembered that the phonographic teacher is entirely at the disposal of the pupil for the whole of his time if he chooses. There is, indeed, a limit to

the durability of the waxen impression on the cylinder. The little vibrating point cannot go indefinitely over and over the same lines without affecting them. But a lesson, it is said, may be repeated for some hundreds of times without appreciably impairing its clearness, and the probability is that the patience of the scholar will wear out before the mechanical instructor. The graven wax will certainly retain its teaching power until the fee per hour has been brought indefinitely lower than that of the ordinary living teacher, and, unless the pupil is phenomenally slow in apprehension, the lesson may be learned and the wax roll laid aside in safe keeping with its powers practically unimpaired, and ready, it may be, to be brought out by-and-by for another generation of students.

The new and cheaper phonograph which has just been put upon the market may work even a greater revolution. It weighs less than nine pounds, clockwork takes the place of the electric motor, and from £41, 10s. the price has been reduced to five guineas, although up to twelve guineas can be paid for larger machines. On the five-guinea machine the speeches and songs of celebrities can be reproduced with effect to a drawing-room or even to a larger audience. Another important development is that Edison has invented a machine by which from one cylinder on to which a great speaker or singer has spoken or sung, the number can be indefinitely multiplied without in any way losing the characteristics of the original. Each cylinder can contain from half to three-quarters of a newspaper column of matter, and in the case of the new musical phonograph the cylinders will be capable of taking the whole score of an opera, for ordinary purposes they can be bought for less than a shilling, and they can be used for fifty or sixty different speeches or songs.

'SANTA ANNA.'

CHAPTER II.

THE awful discovery laid bare by Manders naturally turned the attention of those interested in the direction of Lord Maplehurst. Manders had troubled nothing about the sale of the alleged 'Santa Anna.' He did not ask why his commission came. The doings of the dealers interested him not at all so long as he was paid; and both Roscoe and Hunt saw the wisdom of keeping the fraud between themselves and Manders for the time.

That the picture was a copy Manders proved beyond a demonstration. He really had discovered the secret of the lost colours. Nobody without the knowledge could have painted a picture like that substituted for the genuine canvas. Roscoe was not so utterly prostrate with grief that he failed to turn this discovery to account.

True, the swindle might have cost his partner and himself £20,000; but it would be well laid out if they could procure from Manders the formula for the production of those marvellous colours. Manders admitted that his media were comparatively cheap to manufacture.

At the same time he declined to sell. He did not want money, he said; no true artist ever did. Some day or another the public might have a lucid interval; they might come to appreciate the genius of Manders, and then his knowledge of colours would enable him to go down to posterity as the Father of the New Renaissance. With a sigh of regret, Roscoe abandoned the contest—for the present.

The thing to do now was to get at Lord Maplehurst. Doubtless this impecunious nobleman had been tempted to crime; and doubtless—when the matter was explained to him in a reasonable light, by a detective—he would disgorge the ill-gotten plunder. This view was shared by the private inquiry agent employed by Hunt & Roscoe. For the present they decided to keep clear of Scotland Yard.

Mr Shorter, of Leadenhall Street, was quite ready to take up the case. There were prospects of large fees in it, to say nothing of a personal journey to Pau to see Lord Maplehurst, if it proved necessary. The little man with the soft voice and the greedy mouth demanded £100 down, and got it; after which he went away, and nothing was heard of him for a week, when he came sidling into the Piccadilly establishment.

'You have news for us?' Roscoe asked eagerly.

'Oh yes,' said Shorter. 'I have been to Maplehurst Castle; and the first thing I hear is that his lordship has not been in England for fifteen months.'

'But Baron Brantano saw him at Southampton.'

'Well, there is something in that. Any way, his lordship has not been near his family property, and his lawyer assures me that he has not been in England. Indeed, there are reasons why he cannot return.'

'We know of one of them,' Hunt remarked grimly.

'We *think* so,' responded the more cautious Shorter. 'The lawyer's explanation involves nothing criminally wrong. When Lord Maplehurst was last at home he fell in love with a young lady, a ward in Chancery and heiress to a huge fortune. The trustees opposed the match, and the Court supported them. Lord

Maplehurst solved the matter by running away with the young lady and marrying her. There is a warrant out for his arrest for contempt of court. This means at least six weeks in Holloway Jail unless the lawyers can settle the matter—a fearful punishment for a young man who is passionately addicted to field sports and an outdoor life generally. Now you understand.'

'He 'll have to come back now,' said Roscoe.

'Of course. They couldn't arrest him on the present charge. But if you swore an information it would be a different thing.'

'No, no,' Hunt cried; 'for heaven's sake let us have no publicity! You shall go and see his lordship, Shorter, and point out the error of his ways. You say his wife has plenty of money. I don't ask you to compound a felony, but if we could see our money back we should be satisfied.'

'Quite so,' said Roscoe; 'and as to the picture?'

'The picture was removed from the Castle by Lord Maplehurst's secretary,' Shorter explained. 'It used to hang in the library, and I saw the place whence it was taken a week or two ago by the properly accredited agent. He brought a letter from Lord Maplehurst to the housekeeper, who allowed it to depart upon those instructions. I have traced it to Southampton.'

There was no more to be said after this, and Shorter received his orders to proceed to Pau and interview the author of all the mischief without delay. Little holidays at other people's expense relieved the fatigue of Shorter's business. He prophesied a speedy return with the money or its equivalent in value. Hunt & Roscoe accepted these assurances with chastened satisfaction.

'I don't feel very sanguine,' Roscoe remarked after their visitor had departed. 'This chap is evidently a cunning rascal, and you can see now why he got Manders to make a copy of the "Santa Anna." He could sell the picture twice over by using the forgery, and there was a big chance also that the forgery would never be discovered. The real picture would be buried in the Vatican—unless the thief kept it for a third experiment—and nobody would know it was there, at least nobody in *our* world. And there you are, Hunt.'

'But why that forged telegram?' Hunt suggested.

'Well, there, I confess you have me,' Roscoe replied. 'For the present we can only grin and bear it in silence. I don't believe that the picture in our safe at present is the one we purchased. It looks so different now, some way. How it was done or by what black art I can't say, but I believe that the genuine article has been substituted in lieu of the forgery.'

At that moment an assistant entered the office.

'Lord Manningham to see one of you, sir,' he said. 'He 's come about the Leonardo da Vinci. I said the picture was not here.'

The partners groaned. Lord Manningham was one of their best customers, a nobleman of unlimited means, who counted no cost where his fancy was concerned. Suppose he wanted to purchase the 'Santa Anna.'

As a matter of fact, this was exactly what the earl required. His corrugated face puckered into a smile as the partners advanced to him.

'So you got the picture, eh?' he squeaked in his falsetto, a little cracked in the upper register. 'If I could have got to the sale you wouldn't. Did your people arrange for my train to be late?'

'We deeply regret your absence, my lord,' Roscoe murmured.

The speaker had never made a more veracious statement in his life. He did indeed deeply deplore the absence of his noble patron.

'Oh, I dare say,' Lord Manningham laughed. 'No getting over you people. But come, I am all anxiety to see the picture.'

Roscoe remarked that the precious treasure was at the bank, which was a fiction, and that it was past banking hours, which was perfectly true. Lord Manningham professed his profound disappointment.

'Then I will come at this time the day after to-morrow,' he said. 'I *may* be able to come to-morrow afternoon, in which case you had better have the picture ready. And don't be too grasping in the way of profit.'

His diminutive lordship departed with the consciousness that his visit must have caused a deal of satisfaction to the partners. But it was not exactly joy that was apparent in their hearts. They were clad in gloom as in a garment.

Here was a nice state of things. They dared not sell the 'Santa Anna' to Manningham as genuine; they were equally averse to confessing how cruelly they had been deceived.

'What in the name of fate shall we do?' Hunt groaned.

Roscoe laughed. Then he too fell into a sombre vein. For a long time he sat gazing at his blotting-pad. A light suddenly flashed into his eyes.

'I have it,' he cried; 'indeed, there is no other way out of the mess.'

He bent over the table and whispered eagerly in Hunt's ear. The latter looked dubious, then more cheerful. Finally he went so far as to smile.

'It shall be done,' he said; 'I leave it entirely to you.'

. . . . . .

Unconscious of the snares entangled by fate about his feet, Lord Maplehurst was making the best of life at Pau. He had a villa there, and though the place was more or less out of season, Maplehurst had no complaint to make on that score.

He even entertained no grudge against the Court of Chancery. So long as those people came to their senses before the hunting season commenced, there was no reason why all should not be forgotten and forgiven.

Meanwhile Maplehurst was completely happy with his *dolce far niente* and his charming wife. It is not every day that a man marries beauty and wealth, and Maplehurst had done both. He was genuinely in love with his wife, and she with him; his creditors, evidently anxious to cast no cloud athwart the long honeymoon, had like one man ceased from troubling, and all was peace.

There was nothing of the criminal about Maplehurst as he lounged in the garden of his villa that perfect August morning, perusing his letters. He had a cigarette between his white teeth, and his curly head rested against the hammock-chair in which his wife was reclining.

A handsome young man enough, with a face bronzed and varnished over the ruddy glow, and eyes as bright as stars. He looked like one who owes a great deal more to his saddler and gunmaker than to his cigar and wine merchant, which was indeed the case.

Lady Maplehurst's lips were parted in a smile. Evidently the letter in her hand afforded her considerable amusement. Maplehurst, deep in his own correspondence, did not notice this till he felt his ear pulled. Wives of peers of the realm are very like the wives of other people in this respect.

'Are you listening, or are you not?' the lady asked.

'I beg your pardon, Hilda,' quoth Maplehurst. 'This is the rummest thing I ever—— But I'll explain presently. Go on.'

'It's from Lucy,' said Lady Maplehurst. 'She was dining at Meldrum the other night, and she met the Lord Chancellor'——

'Fatuous old ass,' Maplehurst said *sotto voce*.

'On the contrary, Lucy says he was very nice. And what do you think she did? Why, she mentioned our case to him; and he said we were very foolish not to come home. He intimated that things could be made all right, and that if Lucy liked to drop us a hint she might do so. What do you think of it?'

But Maplehurst was hidden in his *Times*.

'Hullo,' said he; 'so they sold the "Santa Anna," which only fetched £20,000 after all. Jim has gained nothing by the delay. And, by Jove! Brantano has got it, all the same. "We understand the picture has passed into the possession of Baron Brantano, the South African millionaire." Wonder what the dealers made out of it; and I wonder why Pearson has not written to tell me this, since he had the business in hand.'

Lady Maplehurst was deep in her letter again. At the same time a servant came down the garden with a card on a tray. On the card, in modestly small letters, was the name of James Shorter.

'I'll be there in a minute,' said his lordship. 'I say, Hilda, I suppose this is not what Sam Weller would call a confidential pal of the Chancellorship's? No emissary of the outraged majesty of the law?'

Lady Maplehurst laughed merrily.

'Absurd,' she said. 'Hasn't your lawyer assured you over and over again that you can't be touched so long as you are out of England. I shall begin to think you are a coward presently.'

The listener shook his head solemnly.

'I'm not,' he responded. 'But being penned up would be the death of me. I dare say it's only some beggar of a creditor after all.'

With which consolation Maplehurst strolled leisurely towards the house. There was at any rate nothing very formidable-looking about Mr Shorter.

'Lord Maplehurst, I believe?' said the latter.

'That's me,' came the Arcadian reply. 'Look here, it's no use for you to bother me about money. I hope to be back in England in the autumn.'

'My visit has nothing whatever to do with money,' Shorter cut in. 'It is a far more serious matter than that, my lord.'

'You don't mean to say that the Court of Chancery'——

'I have nothing whatever to do with the Court of Chancery. I have come from England to see you about a certain picture called the "Santa Anna." A little time back you called upon Messrs Forrest with the painting and ordered them to sell the same. In due course they did so, and handed the proceeds over to you.'

'All wrong,' Maplehurst exclaimed. 'I have not been in England for ages. As to the "Santa Anna," I will tell you the exact facts of the case. The painting was left by my mother to my brother James Maplehurst and myself. My brother is in business in Kimberley, and a shrewd fellow he is. Before he went away it was arranged that if he saw a really good opening for the investment of capital he was to cable me to sell the "Santa Anna" and send him his share of the proceeds. The opportunity has come, and he wants the money. He wrote me that this Brantano would buy the picture, and my secretary, Pearson, negotiated with the Baron. The thing hung for so long that I decided to sell the picture, as James was pressing, and I sent Pearson to England to settle the thing. And I see by the *Times* that the matter is completed.'

'Oh yes,' Shorter smiled. 'I am a detective, I may say. This Pearson, whoever he is'——

'A man of most respectable family; with me for three years, and, beyond the signing of cheques, he transacted all my business. I had such confidence in him that he signed my letters even.'

'I dare say,' Shorter said dryly. 'Only the picture passed over by Forrest's people to my clients, the purchasers, turns out to be a rank forgery. And the real picture was disposed of the day after the public auction to Baron Brantano, who was first sounded by yourself, to see if he was ignorant of the affair.'

'Who told you this fable?'

'The Baron himself. I had the facts from his own lips. You met him at Southampton, and exchanged the picture for notes—£21,000 worth. And you were also personally paid by Forrest on the day the "Santa Anna" was sold.'

Maplehurst felt cold. It began to dawn upon him that his immaculate secretary had robbed him of the priceless painting. He was filled with anger.

'Well, this beats everything,' Maplehurst muttered. 'I am quite prepared to prove that I was not at Southampton at the time mentioned. I can't understand it.'

Shorter deliberated for a moment. That the other was telling the truth was patent at a glance. Evidently this unknown quantity, Pearson, was the figure to seek.

'My lord,' said Shorter, 'did you negotiate with the Baron direct?'

'We did, and we didn't. Pearson opened up with him; but as to the value and the monetary part, we took a dealer and expert into the business.'

'Do you happen to remember the name of this man?'

'Oh yes. His name is Moss, and he has a place in Piccadilly. But when we found that my brother wanted the cash and our man wouldn't come to our price, I followed Pearson's advice, and let him go to England to realise without delay.'

'And you wired your brother what you were doing?'

'Of course. His opportunity out there could not stand idle indefinitely.'

Shorter smiled behind his hand. Quite by accident he had stumbled on a valuable clue. Whoever the real culprit was—Pearson presumably—Moss was the guiding spirit. By that cunning telegram he had lured Hunt & Roscoe into the net, and, again, his knowledge of these negotiations was invaluable in eking out a fraud. And yet Hunt & Roscoe had purchased the real picture—of that he felt certain. How, then, was it so contrived that they were placed in possession of the copy?

Shorter almost jumped from his seat with the magnetism of a startling discovery. Moss lived next to Hunt & Roscoe; the premises had at one time been one, surely.

Then with a violent effort Shorter calmed himself.

'You say you had an interview with the Baron?' Maplehurst was saying, his voice coming to Shorter out of a kind of mist.

'Yes, my lord,' the latter stammered.

'Very good. Then I suppose you did not fail to ask him what the pseudo peer was like. It was a safe game in any case, as my face is so unfamiliar in England.'

'I did not omit to ask the question, my lord. Baron Brantano gave me a good description. He outlined a very gentlemanly, fair man of about your age. He had a pointed beard and moustache, and a thin, hooked nose. His manners were excellent. A portion off one of his front teeth.'

'Got him,' Maplehurst cried; 'that's my model secretary, Pearson. He was with me for three years, and a better servant no man could wish for. He knew all my business and all my friends. It was perfectly safe for him. Three months ago he left my service, telling me he had come into some money, and intended marrying and settling down. He was to settle the matter of the picture first, however. Fancy him treating me like this! All the time he was with me I don't believe I ever troubled over a business letter.'

'Depend upon it, this Pearson is the culprit,' Shorter replied. 'In any case, I am afraid I must trouble you to return to England, my lord.'

'I suppose it *is* necessary,' said Maplehurst, with a wry face. 'I'll come. And if ill befalls me, my blood be on your head.'

Lady Maplehurst had no such fears. Truth to tell, she regarded the whole affair in the light of a huge joke. Perhaps, also, she had faith in the blandishments of her sister Lucy where the Lord Chancellor was concerned. Doubtless she had founded her impressions of that great personage upon recollections of *Iolanthe*.

Any way, a few hours later saw the whole party steaming back to England. Shorter contented himself with a third-class *coupé*, consoled by the reflection that Hunt & Roscoe would be charged for a first in his little bill. So far the detective had no reason to be dissatisfied with his investigations; and the case looked like lasting a long time yet.

In due course Dover was reached, and Lady Maplehurst began to feel that life's joys were not so hollow after all. Later on husband and wife found themselves dining cosily in a private room at Limmer's Hotel, and listening to the raucous cries of the newsboys below.

'How familiar it all seems!' said Maplehurst. 'By the way, pass that evening paper, Hilda. The autumn handicaps. . . . Hullo! Listen to this.'

And Maplehurst proceeded to read as follows:

'DARING BURGLARY IN PICCADILLY.

DISAPPEARANCE OF AN HISTORIC PICTURE.

Last night an audacious robbery took place at Messrs Hunt & Roscoe's shop in Piccadilly. The thieves entered the premises and succeeded in getting away with the famous Leonardo da Vinci, the 'Santa Anna,' recently purchased for £20,000. The picture was cut clean from the frame, nothing else appearing to have been touched. Up to the time of going to press no further particulars have transpired.'

Lord Maplehurst looked at his wife for a moment in blank astonishment. When would these strange complications end? And what did all the mystery mean?

A TRIP IN A TORPEDO-BOAT DESTROYER.

I HAD rather a novel and interesting experience the other day.

Being in town, on sick leave from my regiment in India, with nothing to do, and lots of time to do it in, whilst eating my dinner at my club and vaguely wondering how on earth to spend that portion of the next twenty-four hours which was not night, I suddenly remembered that one of my old school-chums was in the navy, and furthermore that the last time he had written me he had mentioned that he was in command of one of the torpedo-boat destroyers belonging to the instructional flotilla at Chatham.

I hadn't his letter by me, and I was not at all certain whether it was Chatham or Sheerness, not being at all well up in things naval; but still, when I went to bed that night I registered a vow that, as time was weighing heavily upon me, the next morning I should seek for Vincent somewhere in the Medway; which vow I kept, as, rising early, after breakfast I went down to Chatham, drove to the dockyard gates, and, being young and innocent, dismissed my cab.

On inquiry at the Chatham dock-gates as to whether H.M.S. *Fury* was in the port, I had the good luck to be told, 'Yes, sir; you will find her down at the South Lock. It's rather a long way, sir, and she's going out this forenoon.'

Within half-an-hour, and after some uneasy experiences over dockyard cobbles, I came within sight of the *Fury*. She certainly was not pretty; but her great length and narrow beam gave me the impression that her speed must be very great; whilst her sloping forecastle, the twelve-pounder gun on top of the fore-bridge, her other guns distributed about the deck, her torpedo-tubes, and, above all, her three large funnels, filled me with the idea that she had power in her to strike, if need be, and that she would be a formidable, or at least dangerous, implement in the hands of daring officers and well-trained men.

She was painted black all over, with the exception of a white line around her just under her upper deck.

Going on board, a bluejacket, who turned out to be the quartermaster, stopped me at the gangway and asked what I wished. I gave him my card, and inquired if the captain was on board.

'Yes, sir,' he said. 'Please follow me.'

I did so, but very gingerly, being in constant fear of tripping over valve-guards, eye-bolts, stays, &c. (these names I found out later on), with which the deck was covered, so that just as I got aft up came my old chum from below.

'Hullo, old fellow!' said he, with surprise showing all over his sunburnt face; 'I never expected to see you down here. Come down below and tell me all about it.'

He disappeared down the hatch, so I followed cautiously. It was just as well I did so, for at the bottom of the ladder gaped a large square hole, in the centre of which was the upper half of a man's body, whom I nearly kicked.

'Oh, they're only getting up the rum,' said Vincent. 'Come in.'

I didn't like these man-traps at all, and I told him so; but I went in, and found myself in a very cosy, square room, about four yards long by six yards broad, with just room to stand upright. This was the 'ward-room,' and here I found the 'sub' correcting some charts, and the 'gunner,' to both of whom Vincent introduced me.

'We're rather busy this morning,' said Vincent, lighting his pipe. 'We have only come up here to get a new class of stokers on board after having trained and discharged the old set; and we're going out in about ten minutes' time. You were very lucky to catch the ship at all. Look here! You had better come out for the day with us. You'll see a little of what destroyer-life is like, and it will give you a bit of a blow through and an appetite. We shall land you at Sheerness afterwards, unless you care to stop for the night.'

At once I acquiesced, and being left alone for a little, I had time to survey my surroundings.

Facing the door was a stove and a small side-board, with a bookcase above, filled with books on service matters, such as *Channel and North Sea Pilots*, *Light Lists*, *Tide Tables*, &c.; a paper-rack and a wine-locker, a pipe-rack, block, chronometer-box, and one or two little nicknacks filled up that side.

On either side of me were the bunks, of which altogether there were three. These bunks, though narrow, seemed very comfortable; they were fitted with drawers underneath, and a small wardrobe was fixed at the head of each bunk. On one side, also, was a chart-box and a looking-glass, whilst behind me were lying a pile of sea-boots, and on the bulkhead were hung coats, mackintoshes, oil-skins, and sou'-westers. Glancing up overhead, I saw camp-stools, swords, golf-clubs, sticks, tennis-rackets, fiddles for the tables in rough weather, &c. My friends on board knew how to pack, evidently, for not an inch of space was lost.

Having thus completed my inspection of the ward-room, I looked outside: on my left a very diminutive pantry; on my right a bath-room in like proportions, with two washing arrangements similar to those one sees in a railway carriage, and also an indiarubber bath.

Getting tired of stopping down below, and yet fearing to be in the way, I went on deck. To my surprise, I found all the men forward, and that we were quietly steaming down the Medway.

I was standing on the quarterdeck, with a six-pounder gun on a platform in front of me, which gun was reflecting the sun's rays in my eyes and dazzling me, so beautifully clean and nicely-polished was it. Behind me was a screen, sheltering the

'after-steering position,' fitted up, I found out later, exactly as the one forward was. There was also a hatch which led down to the captain's cabin, outside of which were store-rooms and racks for rifles and cutlasses. The cabin was a nice little place, and had a bunk, wardrobe, writing-table, and bookcase, and also a little bath-room outside, but no stove. The captain in these ships messes in the ward-room, and only uses his cabin for sleeping in and for correspondence work.

Walking over the platform, I found a torpedo-tube, and alongside it a hatch, which, on inquiry, I was told led to the chief petty-officers' mess. It was quite a little place, about half the size of the ward-room. The engine-room artificers have a similar mess on the other side of the deck. Everything was beautifully clean, and the table was quite white from hard scrubbing.

Going farther forward, my olfactory organ was tickled by a most savoury odour, and on looking down another hatch I found that here was the galley, and beside it stood the ship's cook hard at work getting the dinners ready. There was also here a dynamo for supplying electricity to the search-light, which latter was placed between the engine-room hatches on deck.

I now came to the engine-room, but did not go down just yet. Passing the big after-funnel, I came on an open space, and a couple of bluejackets, who were splicing a wire rope, volunteered the information that this was where the foremost torpedo-tube would be placed when the ship was used solely as a torpedo-boat. Here I was joined by the 'sub,' who apologised for his sudden ascent from the ward-room, and offered to show me round the rest of the ship, as the captain could not yet leave the bridge for any time.

I rather liked the rig he was in—a thick pilot coat, ditto trousers, a football-sweater, with a white silk scarf in lieu of a collar, a fairly old cap, heavy but close-fitting leather sea-boots, thick gloves, and a pair of binoculars slung round his neck, formed his attire; which, as he went forward, I could not help thinking was, for this sort of rough-and-ready life, absolutely the best he could wear.

Between the two foremost funnels is the standard compass, with the flag-locker underneath it, and a chart-table, all of which the 'sub' pointed out.

'How many men are there on board?' said I.

'Oh, our complement is fifty-two all told; but about thirty of these are stokers for training in the working of water-tube boilers, and they are changed every month. This is their mess-deck. The magazine and shell-room for the twelve-pounder are under here also.'

'There 's not much room for thirty, is there?' hazarded I, drawing a bow at a venture, as I felt I should say something.

'Well, no, there 's not very much; but they get along all right. You see, some sling their hammocks, and the others sleep on the lockers; and if they are cold they use their duffle suit, which consists of a pair of trousers made of very thick fearnought, and a big coat of the same material with a hood attached, and it is fitted with beckets and wooden toggles for fastening it by. We (the officers) find them very useful to put on over our oilskins during a bad night's run. You can't get very wet, and they keep you as warm as toast.

'Do you know what this is?' he said, to change the subject. 'It is a collapsible boat. We have two, one each side, you see. They are hoisted out by that derrick on the mast, and if we had to abandon ship they would take seventeen men each, and provisions for them as well.

'You see the deck is covered with a kind of linoleum; it is found to answer much better than wood in this class of ships, as also in torpedo-boats. Here are two six-pounder Hotchkiss guns; these and the twelve-pounder up there constitute our bow-fire. Pretty strong for so small a ship, isn't it? You see, our object is to overtake and destroy by our superior gun-fire an enemy's torpedo-boats; consequently, when chasing, bow-fire would be of great importance, and I think that chap up there would give a pretty good account of himself.'

He pointed up at the gun on the fore-bridge as he spoke, and I agreed with him, and inwardly determined that any further acquaintance I might make with 'that chap up there' should be made from behind, and not from in front.

'The ship seems very long,' I said; and, being rather curious on this point, I added, 'What length is she?'

'Oh, about two hundred feet,' he answered.

'And her beam?'

'That is about nineteen and a half feet, and she draws about six. See here; this is the conning-tower, with our half-inch of armour on it. Isn't it a lot? We can steer from here, and in bad weather we have to, as one would be washed away on the bridge.'

I looked inside. There was just room for two people to stand up inside, and it was fitted with a compass, steering-wheel, telegraph to the engine-room, and voice-pipes to the torpedo-tubes and various other parts of the ship.

'You say this is only half-an-inch thick?' I queried. 'How thick, then, is the ship's side?'

'Oh,' said he, laughing, 'about an eighth of an inch;' and before I could quite grasp how much an eighth of an inch of steel really is in thickness, he had disappeared down a ladder at my feet.

'Come down here,' he said, looking up and smiling at my evident blank dismay at his last piece of information. 'This is the mess-deck for the bluejackets—under the turtle-backed forecastle, you see.'

One long table stood in the centre, and two rows of lockers ran along the ship's side. A few men were down here, one stitching canvas, another mending his clothes, one reading a book, another writing a letter, and one stretched out

right forward fast asleep, utterly oblivious of everything going on beside him.

'About twenty men live down here,' said the 'sub.' 'These are their hammocks, and that is the capstan engine—we have a steam-capstan.'

He pointed above his head as he spoke.

'More store-rooms under our feet, too,' he continued. 'We keep the explosive war-heads for the torpedoes down below here. We have two eighteen-inch torpedoes, carried, without the heads, in the tubes themselves. Now let us go up on the fore-bridge.'

I followed him up the little iron ladders till beside the twelve-pounder, alongside which my old chum was standing, a chart in one hand and a pair of binoculars in the other; and when I reached the top I drew a long breath.

We had increased speed, and now we were well out of the Medway, and gliding along through the water so smoothly that I could hardly believe the statement that our speed was over twenty-four miles an hour. Slipping through the water with no vibration at all, the only indications of speed were the ripples on the water flying past us, and the fountain of spray rising at our sharp, straight stem, sparkling with all the colours of the rainbow as the sun's rays flashed upon it.

Far astern is the Nore light-vessel, clearly showing up on the horizon; a little ahead is the Mouse light-ships, round which we are going.

A beautiful blue sky above, with hardly a cloud to be seen, except that on one part of the horizon there is a little haze, which does not altogether cover a number of sailing-ships, vainly trying with the little wind there is to make headway against the tide. The fountain at the bows is playing beautifully now, and all around is the pure, bright sea-air blowing against one's face, and through one's clothes, and into one's body; rousing, stimulating, and reviving one, and making one feel a new man, so refreshing and exhilarating it is.

Oh! that time was splendid, and I felt glad to be alive to experience such a sensation.

No wonder these fellows look so healthy with such a tonic, and living such a life as this.

'Starboard!' sings out my friend. 'Starboard, sir,' answers the quartermaster, whose head I, being startled in my reverie, nearly tread on, it having come up suddenly through a hole in the platform on which we are standing.

'Well, how do you like it?' queries my chum. '"Midships; steady.' 'Steady, sir,' replies the head.

'I wish I were in your place,' said I. 'You have made a new man of me already.'

'Oh,' replied he, laughing, 'come out on a cold, wet night in January, when a heavy sea is running, and you have to hang on to the rails or the twelve-pounder here to prevent yourself being carried off your feet; when the seas rise dashing on the turtle-back, and washing all over the upper-deck; when you are soaked to the skin, and, clinging on to something, are shivering and thinking of the many thousands ashore who are fast asleep, warm and snugly tucked between the blankets; when the blinding spray and sleet is lashing your face like whipcord in an incessant shower, so that you can hardly open your eyes as you vainly struggle to peer into the darkness to discern the lights of the vessel ahead; and when everything down below in the ward-room is sliding about on the deck, gloriously mixed up, so that if you wish to get a piece of meat for supper you have to hold the joint with one hand whilst you hack off a slice with the knife, and when you can't stand up by yourself—you'd soon change your mind.'

Walking aft, we went down the engine-room ladder.

'I'm sorry we are only going 280 revolutions per minute now,' says he. 'You should see them going at 350. That's the time.'

But even as it is, I wonder mightily to see these two engines with their many bright rods flashing up and down at a speed I can hardly make my hand move at; and the cranks whirring round at the rate of four revolutions per second are alone enough to make one pause and wonder when human ingenuity will reach its limit, and also speculate on what a terrible smash there would be if anything chanced to go wrong.

'Lunch!' yells the matter-of-fact 'sub' down the hatch, and again are my musings rudely interrupted.

'We'll just have time for "scran" before we get in,' he says, as we all sit down round the little table in the ward-room. 'The skipper is going to have his afterwards. Aren't you hungry? I am.'

To which question I had to confess a mild 'Yes, very.' To tell the truth, I have ever since been envious of the appetite I had that day. But to continue.

Chaffing and joking formed the conversation whilst plates were being emptied and refilled, for every one seems to be put in a good temper by this sort of work. Millionaires should buy a destroyer, and try the life as a recipe for dyspepsia.

As to the messing, I must say it was far better than I imagined could obtain on board a small boat like this.

Plain but good and substantial food, excellently cooked, is the order of the day; and cut and come again is the order of the table; which last I carried out in spirit and in truth. A knock at the door. 'Come in,' shouts the 'sub.'

'Just going into harbour, sir. Captain sent me down to tell the officers,' says the signalman.

Up the others jump. I follow, and reach the deck just in time to hear the telegraph gongs sound in the engine-room as the indicators are put to 'slow.'

We pass up close under the stern of the *Sans Pareil*, the guardship here, and very shortly after reach our buoy; and then I noticed that the smartness and agility which was the peculiar

characteristic of the British bluejackets in olden times has not yet passed away, for a hand is down over the side and on the buoy in a twinkling, a hook-rope is hooked on, the cable passed down by the aid of a small rope, and then quickly shackled on to the buoy, and the bluejacket is up the side and inboard, whilst the cable is paid-out under the direction of the gunner on the forecastle.

I hear the dingey called away, and turning round with the 'sub,' who has been explaining the proceedings to me, and going aft, I find my chum in mufti waiting to take me off. As for his lunch, he will get that ashore, he says; so 'chin-chins' are passed, and, stepping over the side and down the ladder, we are quickly pulled beachwards, after a day's outing which was full of novelty to me, and which will not be forgotten for some time to come.

ELBOW-GREASE.

THE writer well remembers, when a very small child, watching one of the maids polishing the furniture, being requested by her to go and ask the mistress if she might send to the village shop for three-pennyworth of elbow-grease. Taking the joke in earnest, she went, only of course to be sent back with the message that the girl must provide the article herself. This same elbow-grease, which polished our grandmother's oak and mahogany till you could see your face in it, brightened the household steel and brass till it sparkled in the sunshine, and scoured the floors to such a pitch of cleanliness that, according to Mrs MacStinger, 'you might have eaten your dinner off them,' appears to have dropped out of the methods of the 'modern' maid-servant—though it is to be hoped that maid-servants nowadays are not all modern in this sense.

The smart board-school-taught young persons whom the unfortunate middle-class mistress interviews at the registry office nowadays require instead an unlimited supply of the thousand-and-one soaps, polishing powders, and other labour-saving appliances perpetually thrust under our noses by the advertising fiend. Putting up as best she may with the consequent depletion of her purse, the lady fondly hopes that Mary Jane and Sarah Anne — we beg pardon, Florence and Beatrice — will improve the shining hours, and leave a shining way behind them in their daily march through the household domain. Alas! in their wake she finds only a dusty track strewn with the débris of her household gods. For Florence and Beatrice consider it their principal business to amuse themselves; and reading *The Mock Marriage* or *Love's Young Dream*, inspecting the mistress's belongings, acquainting themselves with her private affairs, and gossiping with the back-door fraternity are often much more agreeable occupations than washing dishes and saucepans, or polishing floors and furniture. And if such perfunctory attention as they may see fit to give, with a huge expenditure of soap, soda, &c., will not keep a house clean, that is not their fault; and as for things being broken, the cat does it, and Florence and Beatrice are outraged and indignant young persons if taxed with pussy's misdemeanours, or called to account for the dirt and disorder everywhere apparent. Only old-fashioned and prejudiced persons could expect these superior young women to take any interest in such matters as cooking and cleaning, or question their right to be paid for amusing themselves instead of doing the work they have undertaken, to say nothing of breakage and damage. The thought of any obligation on their part to fulfil their duties to the best of their ability seems to have no place in their mind. And this deplorable lack of conscientiousness is not confined to the Florences and Beatrices or the domestic department; it is equally evident among the Johns and Thomases—we mean the Sydneys and Ernests—of the national workshop.

Some cry out upon education as the cause of the trouble; and if by education is meant only a smattering of book-learning, we think they are right. It was long ago demonstrated that 'a little learning is a dangerous thing,' and the truth of the old saying was never more apparent than at the present day. We give the children in our schools just so much book-knowledge as serves to give them highly-inflated ideas of their own wisdom and importance, and little or no sense of moral responsibility, and then turn them loose, with untrained hands and undisciplined minds, to become the despair of employers and the pests of society. What is wanted is not less, but more, education, in the shape of such practical training as shall qualify its recipients in some degree for the work which lies before them, and enable them to take an intelligent interest in its performance. And as the basis of all, a careful inculcation of the simple precepts of Holy Writ, the plain 'Thou shalt' and 'Thou shalt not' as regards heaven and our neighbour. He whose legs are unequal must needs walk lamely; and unless we take care to nourish and develop the still quite imperfect moral sense of the popular mind, our national progress, great as it may be, must still be a halting one. So long as we shirk our duty in this regard, the blame for the social discomforts and embarrassments we have commented on will lie mainly on our own shoulders.

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SIXTH SERIES.

HOLY ISLAND.

By Sarah Wilson.

WE have a singular geographical feature on our north-east coast, between Bamborough and Berwick-upon-Tweed, that has been called from time immemorial a semi-island. When the tide of the great North Sea, or German Ocean, is high it is a complete island; and when it is low it becomes part of the mainland, or connected with it by nearly three miles of wet, flat sands, which are sometimes smooth and sometimes wrinkled, for the most part firm to the tread, but in some places sloshy and 'quick.' This has been noticed and described by Bede, and by Scott in *Marmion*. In common parlance it is always called 'the island' by the residents, though the necessary traffic between it and the mainland is carried on as much by conveyance as by boat. Those who have no vehicles nor horses take off their shoes and stockings at low-tide and walk over the long stretch of intervening sands. The removal of these articles of apparel is not necessary till the foot-passengers are confronted by the first of a few small streams left by the tide, or by the rivulet known as 'the Low,' in which the water remains at a stationary depth of several inches. At long intervals of time there are casualties. The tide comes in with great force and speed, and sometimes people are overtaken by it and carried away. Benighted foot-passengers have lost their way and been drowned, and conveyances have been occasionally overwhelmed by the racing-in waters and swept away. For many years there has been a line of tall wooden guide-posts passing from the mainland to the island to show where the route is free from quicksands, but nevertheless, as stated, accidents still occur, though happily but rarely. Not long since a solitary and venturesome artist returning from the island was intercepted by the rapidly incoming tide, and only saved his life by climbing to the sort of cage fixed to the top of one of these posts, and remaining on it till the waters receded again. Two residents, too, returning to the island in the deepening dusk in a conveyance, became uncertain, owing to a sharp swerve of their horse, as to which was the right direction to take, and only saved themselves from disaster by climbing one of the poles and feeling for the indicator on the top. Still more recently a traveller crossing in a gig was swept out of it and drowned. And the parish register tells of many losses in former times.

This geographical curiosity is Holy Island, formerly known as Lindisfarne, but thus designated anew in later times on account of the sanctity of the lives of the missionaries who took up their abode on it in the days of the Saxon kings. With rough-and-ready reckoning it may be said to contain about a thousand acres, and to be about three miles long and half that extent in width. To the visitor from the mainland there are various items of interest on this small area—the village, the castle, the church, the majestic ruins of the priory and priory church, the vicarage, the Heugh, which is a long, sloping basaltic rock, forty feet high, that the fishermen use as a lookout; the cliffs, the coves, the harbour, a lakelet, the flora, birds, seals, and the ancient traditions, to say nothing of the hardy, hearty population of somewhere about six hundred souls, and the various modern efforts at progress, which include a schoolhouse, a chapel, a manor-house, and a telephone connected with the telegraph on the mainland. Curiously, there is also an island on the island, or, rather, about a hundred yards from the verge of its shore facing the mainland. This consists of about half an acre of basalt rock that rises considerably higher than the rest of the beach, on which may still be traced the foundations of a small chapel. This was St Cuthbert's Chapel. Tradition has it that the austere recluse often retired from the life in the community to this little island for long periods of isolation, when his comrades made their way to it over the rocks at low-water to convey food to him.

The history of the island begins in the days of the Heptarchy, when Oswald, king of Northumbria,

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then residing at Bamborough, invited the Christian community in Scotland to send a missionary to instruct his subjects. The first delegate, who was sent from the island of Iona, after a year's trial returned with the conviction that the Northumbrians were too ignorant, and their minds too unreceptive to be instructed; but a second one, Aidan, less faint-hearted, established himself permanently on the island of Lindisfarne, which probably recommended itself to him on account of its correspondence with the insular situation of the abode of the community that he had left. For sixteen years he carried out the work thus undertaken, with the assistance of twelve followers, erecting churches (then built of wood), baptising in one week, as is reported, as many as fifteen thousand people, and travelling about preaching the gospel in remote places; and then he died, almost in harness. His successor, Finan, equally ardent and devout, baptised two royal converts, the kings of Mercia and East Anglia.

The three succeeding bishops also further increased the usefulness and renown of the settlement; but it is to the sixth bishop, Cuthbert, or to his biographers, that most of the romance of the island is due. His long, solitary seclusions, the austerities he practised, the disdain and dislike of women imputed to him, all enlarged upon by his biographers and embroidered with their pious fancies, and followed up by the singular appearance of exemption from decay presented by his remains when examined centuries after his death, created a personality that takes rank below but few of our celebrities. After a succession of sixteen of these Saxon bishops, an incursion of the Danes caused the brotherhood to gather their valuables together and depart for the mainland, when the island became uninhabited once more.

Nearly two hundred years afterwards, when St Cuthbert's remains were enshrined in the magnificent cathedral on the high bank of the Wear at Durham, it came into the heart of those in authority there to take possession of the deserted site once more, and eventually to raise upon it the superb fabric of which there are such considerable remains. Besides providing the necessary accommodation for the community of monks they established, one Ædward laid out the dimensions of the priory church on an extensive scale: a hundred feet of length for the nave and thirty-five more for the chancel, with wide transepts and a great central tower. Those under him reared vast cylindrical columns to aisles that widened the building to forty-four feet, and some of these were incised with chevrons, and some enriched with semi-detached columns, similar to examples in Durham Cathedral, and crowned with cushioned capitals. They made inviting doorways with receding columns, and pierced the massive walls with many windows, all showing the unmistakable features that give the distinguishing touches to Norman architecture. And in this majestic building services were performed for nearly five hundred years. Then came the dissolution of monasteries, and it was used as a storehouse; and after that many of the stones were taken away for various purposes. In 1723 the old bell-tower of the parish church and the battlements were repaired with stones taken from the priory church. Nevertheless there is sufficient of the august masonry remaining to impart an indescribable charm.

There is an open space in the village with a cross in it, telling of the time when a market, now discontinued, was periodically held there. There is also an old house, known as the Bishop's House, in which there is an Elizabethan panelled chamber. For the rest, there are four inns, a new two-storied hotel, the fishermen's cottages, a few larger houses, a farm or two, and a rocket and lifeboat house. Around on all sides is the sea, glittering like diamonds, and gently lapping or rolling in with dull, angry waves according to the weather, ever coming or going. Boats bask in the sunshine or bear the burden of the rains and winds on the shore, or rise and fall upon the waters; and black and white ships pass by, in the distance, in silence. From certain points as you walk about the island you can see the great castle on the steep rock at Bamborough across the intervening sea, or sands, as the case may be, as well as the twenty-eight Farne Islands, with their two lighthouses, one of which, the Longstone, has the special interest of having been the home of Grace Darling. Everywhere close at hand you see the steep-sloping Heugh, with sun-bronzed seafaring men on it with telescopes, ever on the lookout; the island castle, with its three cannons on its batteries; the village houses, with their fluted-tiled and slated roofs; and the priory ruins, with their majestic arches high in the air.

The pale-gray old parish church is only fifty-two feet west of the priory ruins. In the churchyard are many sea-bleached tombstones, mostly standing up out of the arrowy grasses, inscriptions on which tell of frequent deaths at sea, and many of which have the sacred monogram I.H.S. upon them, understood locally to mean, 'I have suffered.' By contrast with the richness of the ornamentation on the priory ruins, the church looks plain at a first glance, but a closer examination reveals features and facts of much interest. We may see that it was a small Norman building to begin with, to which an arcade of Transitional columns, still strong, was added on the north side a few years afterwards, with chamfered arches built with red and white stones alternately. In the next century, known architecturally as the Early English period, a new chancel, nearly fifty feet long, was built; and in the succeeding one the south side of the original church was taken down and a south aisle thrown out. The walls are thick and strong, and pierced with splayed windows of these different centuries of workmanship. There are some minor features, such as two porches, a priest's door in the chancel, a piscina marking the site of

a chantry in old times, and three ambries. There are also a few ancient grave-slabs marking the last resting-places of persons of distinction. A few years ago there were several small models of various sea-going crafts in different parts of the church, which had been placed there by the fishermen as decorations. These have now been removed, but there remains a general aspect of devotional simplicity and severity. Below the wooden top of the communion-table are the original stone supports of the ancient altar. The register begins in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and the communion-plate bears the date 1575. So —just as we take it for granted there is only grass under foot as we approach the edifice, till we notice sea-lavender here, tufts of thrift there, the hemlock-leaved crane's-bill farther on, the sea-side thistle and soft-knotted clover, and many another of Nature's floral profusions near at hand—we find, when we come to look, that there are many fragments of the times between the days of Ædward and ourselves embalmed in it.

The castle, now occupied by coastguardsmen, has its own romance. In the Border Survey made by Sir Robert Bowes in 1550, it is described as likely to be of 'great purpose,' both for defence and for the annoyance of enemies should such arrive on any part of the island. A hundred and sixty-five years afterwards an enemy did arrive in the persons of two brothers named Errington, who, when five out of the seven men composing the garrison were absent, took possession of it in the name of the Pretender. The possession only lasted for a short time, but the possibility so carefully considered long beforehand came to pass. Sir William Brereton, writing a diary of his travels in 1635, calls the castle 'a dainty little fort,' and mentions that the governor, Captain Rugg, was as famous for his generous entertainment of strangers as he was for his great bottle-nose, which was the largest the traveller had ever seen. There are traces of another small fortress on the eastern end of the Heugh that was probably intended to assist in the protection of the harbour. From the evidence of its stones we can tell it mounted two guns. The parish register records the burial of thirty soldiers in the churchyard in 1639—'About this tyme were sundrie sogers buryed,' it states simply.

Then there are the coves. These are far-reaching recesses or caves, hollowed out into the cliffs on the north side of the island. They are dark, steep cliffs, full of fossilised encrinites, and rise to a height of about forty feet. The fragments known as St Cuthbert's beads are found in abundance here. Those who have an eye for such things will note boulders and pebbles of granite, porphyry, syenite, graywacke, basalt, and other stones from distant sources strewn on the beach. The waters under these cliffs are so clear that pebbles have been seen at the bottom through a depth of many feet. There is a sandbank, too, called the Seal-bat, where seals are frequently seen and young ones occasionally captured. Nearer to the Castle Point shoals of porpoises are often noticed, especially in the herring season. As we wander over the sandy flats and links sea-birds fly overhead; sometimes a flock of brent geese. Underfoot grow the elk's-horn cup-lichen, the grass of Parnassus, the water-pimpernel, the blue fleabane, the catch-fly, the wild larkspur, spoonwort, marsh-arrow grass, and the dwarf tufted centaury, among other plants. Wall-flower, said to be indigenous to the island, is conspicuous at the priory.

Macready tells us in his *Memoirs* that he resided on the island for a time in his young days, and that in the remoteness and quietude of his surroundings he almost forgot his native tongue. As the curtain descended upon his histrionic triumphs, amidst the deafening applause of enraptured town-bred audiences, the remembrance of the lonely sands, the quiet, breezy links, the richly-wrought ruins, the ancient church and all the medieval associations with which it is fraught, the brave fisher-folk, thinking naught of their countless unrecorded deeds of heroism, and passing quietly to and fro on their allotted tasks, must have afforded a contrast that was strong indeed.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXIV.—HOW TWO OF HIS MAJESTY'S SERVANTS MET WITH THEIR DESERTS.

THE next morn broke fair and cloudless, and ere the sun was up I was awake, for little time must be lost if we sought to win to Smitwood ere the pursuit began. The folk of the cave were early risers, for the need for retiring early to rest made them so; and we broke our fast with a meal of cakes and broiled fish almost before daylight. Then I went out to enjoy the fresh air, for it was safe enough to be abroad at that hour. Nothing vexed the still air on the green hillside save the flapping peewits and the faint morning winds.

Marjory meantime ran out into the sunshine with all the gaiety in the world. She was just like a child let loose from school, for she was ever of a light heart, and care sat easily upon her. She left me to go out from the little glen, which was the entrance to the cave, into the wider dale of the Cor Water, which ran shallow between lone green braes. I heard her singing as she went down among the juniper-bushes and flinty rocks, and then it died away behind a little shoulder of hill.

So I was left to my own reflections on the plight in which I found myself. For the first

time a sort of wounded pride began to vex me. It made me bitter as gall to think of it, and by whose aid my misfortune had been effected. A sort of hopeless remorse came over me. Should I ever win back the place I had lost? Would the Burnets ever again be great gentlemen of Tweeddale, a power in the country-side, having men at their beck and call? Or would the family be gone for ever? Would I fall in the wilds, or live only to find my lands gone with my power; and would Marjory never enter Barns as its mistress? I could get no joy out of the morning for the thought; and as I wandered on the hillside I had little care of what became of me.

Now at this time there happened what roused me and set me once more at peace with myself. And though it came near to being a dismal tragedy, it was the draught which nerved me for all my later perils. And this was the manner of it.

Marjory, as she herself told me afterwards, had gone down to the little meadows by the burnside, where she watched the clear brown water and the fish darting in the eddies. She was thus engaged when she was aware of two horsemen who rode over the top of the glen and down the long hill on the other side. They were almost opposite before she perceived them, and there was no time for flight. Like a brave lass, she uttered no scream, but stood still that they might not see her. But it was of no avail. Their roving eyes could not miss in that narrow glen so fair a sight, and straightway one called out to the other that there was a girl at the burnside.

Now, had the twain been out on an ordinary foray it would have gone hard indeed with us; for they would have turned aside to search out the matter, and in all likelihood the hiding-place would have been discovered. But they had been out on some night-errand, and were returning in hot haste to their quarters at Abington, where their captain had none too gentle a temper. So they contented themselves with shouting sundry coarse railleries, and one, in the plenitude of his great-heartedness, fired his carbine at her. Without stopping further they rode on.

The bullet just grazed her arm above the wrist, cutting away a strip of dress. She cried out at the pain; but though frightened almost to death, she was brave enough to bide where she was, for if she had run straight to the cave it would have shown them the hiding-place. As soon as they passed out of view she came painfully up the slope, and I, who had heard the shot, and rushed straightway to the place whence it came, met her clasping her wounded wrist and with a pitiful white face.

'O Marjory, what ails you?' I cried.

'Nothing, John,' she answered; 'some soldiers passed me, and one fired. It has done me no harm. But let us get to shelter lest they turn back.'

At her words I felt my heart rise in a sudden great heat of anger. I had never felt such passion before. It seemed to whelm and gulf my whole being, and my soul was steeled into one fixed resolution.

'Let me carry you, dear,' I said quietly, and lifting her, I bore her easily up the ravine to the cave.

When I got her within our shelter there was a very great to-do. The women ran up in grief to see the hurt, and the men at the news of the military wore graver faces. Master Lockhart, who was something of a surgeon, looked at the wound.

'Oh,' he says, 'this is nothing—a scratch and no more. It will be well as ever to-morrow. But the poor maid has had a fright which has made her weak. I ha'e some choice French brandy which I aye carry with me, for the fear of such accidents. Some of that will soon restore her.'

So he fetched from some unknown corner the bottle which he spake of, and when her lips had been moistened Marjory revived, and declared her weakness gone. When I saw that the wound was but trifling, the anger which had been growing in my heart side by side with my care wholly overmastered me. All my pride of house and name was roused at the deed. To think that the lady who was the dearest to me in the world should be thus maltreated by scurrilous knaves of dragoons stirred me to fury. I well knew that I could get no peace with the thought, and my inclination and good judgment alike made me take the course I followed.

I called to Nicol, where he sat supping his morning porridge by the fire, and he came to my side very readily.

'Get the two horses,' said I quietly, that none of the others might hear of my madness; 'one for me and one for yourself.' Now the beasts were stabled in the back part of the cave, which was roomy and high, though somewhat damp. The entrance thereto lay by a like rift in the hillside some hundred yards farther up the glen. When I had thus bidden my servant I sauntered out into the open air and awaited his coming with some impatience.

I asked him, when he appeared, if he had the pistols, for he had a great trick of going unarmed and trusting to his fleet legs and mother-wit rather than the good gifts of God to men—steel and gunpowder.

'Ay, laird, I ha'e them. Are ye gaun to shoot muir-fowl?'

'Yes,' said I; 'I am thinking of shooting a moor-fowl for my breakfast.'

Nicol laughed quietly to himself. He knew well the errand I was on, or he would not have consented so readily.

I knew that the two dragoons had ridden

straight down the Cor Water glen, making for the upper vale of Tweed, and thence to the Clyde hills. But this same glen of Cor is a strangely winding one; and if a man leave it and ride straight over the moorland he may save a matter of two miles, and arrive at the Tweed sooner than one who has started before him. The ground is rough, but, to one used to the hills, not so as to keep him from riding it with ease. Also, at the foot of the burn there is a narrow nick through which it thrusts itself in a little cascade to join the larger stream; and through this place the road passes, for all the hills on either side are steep and stony, and offer no foothold for a horse. Remembering all these things, a plan grew up in my mind which I hastened to execute.

With Nicol following, I rode aslant the low hills to the right, and came to the benty table-land which we had travelled the day before.

After maybe a quarter-hour's stiff riding we descended, and keeping well behind a low spur which hid us from the valley, turned at the end into the glen-mouth, at the confluence of the two waters. Then we rode more freely till we reached the narrows which I have spoken of, and there we halted. All was quiet, nor was there any sound of man or horse.

'Do you bide there,' said I to my servant, 'while I will wait here. Now I will tell you what I purpose to do. The two miscreants who shot Mistress Marjory are riding together on their way to their quarters. One will have no shot in his carbine; what arms the other has I cannot tell; but at any rate we two with pistols can hold them in check. Do you cover the one on the right when they appear, and above all things see that you do not fire.'

So we waited there, sitting motionless in our saddles, on that fair morning when all around us the air was full of crying snipe and twittering hill-linnets. The stream made a cheerful sound, and the little green ferns in the rocks nodded beneath the spray of the water. I found my mind misgiving me again and again for the headstrong prank on which I was entered, as unworthy of one who knew something of better things. But I had little time for self-communings, for we had scarce been there two minutes before we heard the grating of hoofs on the hill-gravel, and our two gentlemen came round the corner not twenty yards ahead.

At the sight of us they reined up and stared stock-still before them. Then I saw the hands of both reach to their belts, and I rejoiced at the movement, for I knew that the arms of neither were loaded.

'Gentlemen,' said I, 'it will be at your peril that you move. We have here two loaded pistols. We are not soldiers of his Majesty, so we have some skill in shooting. Let me assure you on my word that your case is a desperate one.'

At my words one of them still looked with a haughty, swaggering stare, but the jaw of the other dropped and he seemed like a man in excess of terror.

'To-day,' I went on, 'you have shot at a lady not half-an-hour agone. It is for this that I have come to have speech with you. Let us understand one another, my friends. I am an outlawed man, and one not easy to deal with. I am the Laird of Barns—ah, I see you know the name—and let this persuade you to offer no resistance.'

One of the twain still stood helpless. The other's hand twitched as if he would draw his sword or reach his powder-flask, but the steely glitter of our barrels and my angry face deterred him.

'What do you want with us?' he said in a tone of mingled sulkiness and bravado. 'Let me tell you, I am one of his Majesty's dragoons, and you'll pay well for any ill you do to me. I care not a fig for you, for all your gentrice. If you would but lay down your pop-guns and stand before me man to man, I would give you all the satisfaction you want.'

The fellow was a boor, but he spoke like a man, and I liked him for his words. But I replied grimly:

'I will have none of your bragging. Go and try that in your own sty, you who shoot at women. I will give you as long as I may count a hundred, and if before that you have not stripped off every rag you have on and come forward to me here, by God I will shoot you down like the dogs you are!'

And with this I began solemnly to count aloud.

At first they were still rebellious, but fear of the death which glinted to them from the barrels of the pistols won the mastery. Slowly and with vast reluctance they began to disrobe themselves of belt and equipments, of coat and jack-boots, till they stood before me in the mild spring air as stark as the day they were born. Their faces were heavy with malice and shame.

'Now,' said I to Nicol, 'dismount and lay on to these fellows with the flat of your sword. Give me your pistol, and if either makes resistance he will know how a bullet tastes. Lay on, and do not spare them.'

So Nicol, to whom the matter was a great jest, got down and laid on lustily. They shouted most piteously for mercy, but none they got, till the stout arm of my servant was weary.

'And now, gentlemen, you may remount your horses. Nay, without your clothes; you will ride more freely as you are. And give my best respects to your honourable friends, and tell them I wish a speedy meeting.'

But as I looked in the face of one, him who had been so terror-stricken at the outset, I saw that which I thought I recognised.

'You, fellow,' I cried, 'where have I seen you before?'

And as I looked again, I remembered a night in the year before, on the Alphen road, when I had stood over this very man and questioned him on his name and doings. So he had come to Scotland as one of the foreign troops.

'I know you, Jan Hamman,' said I. 'The great Doctor Johannes Burnetus of Lugdunum has not forgotten you. You were scarcely in an honest trade before, but you are in a vast deal less honest now. I vowed if ever I met you again to make you smart for your sins, and I think I have kept my word, though I had the discourtesy to forget your face at first sight. Good-morning, Jan; I hope to see you again ere long. Good-morning, gentlemen both.'

So the luckless pair rode off homeward, and what reception they met with from their captain and their comrades who shall say?

Meanwhile, when they were gone for some little time, Nicol and I rode back by a round-about path. When I began to reflect, I saw the full rashness of my action. I had burned my boats behind me with a vengeance. There was no choice of courses before me now. The chase would be ten times hotter against me than before; and besides, I had given my pursuers some clue to my whereabouts. You may well ask if the danger to my love were not equally great, for that by this action they would know at least the airt by which she had fled. I would answer that these men were of Gilbert's own company; and one, at least, of them, when he heard my name, must have had a shrewd guess as to who the lady was. My cousin's love affairs were no secret. If the man had revealed the tale in its entirety, his own action must necessarily have been exposed, and God help him who had insulted one whom Gilbert cared for! He would have flayed the skin from him at the very mention.

To my sober reason to-day the action seems foolhardy in the extreme, and more like a boyish frolic than the work of a man. But all I knew at the time, as I rode back, was that my pride was for the moment soothed and my heart mightily comforted.

THE SHAN STATES.

IN a recent issue of this magazine we called attention to the Chin Hills, bordering on Burma, and to the improvement which had taken place amongst the wild savages inhabiting them, who had always been a thorn in the side of the Burmese government, until we occupied Upper Burma some twelve years ago. A still greater degree of success has been attained in the Shan States, also bordering on Upper Burma, and some of them touching territory belonging to China, France, and Siam. Here we have to deal mostly with inhabitants sufficiently civilised to appreciate the blessings of peace, although during King Thebaw's sovereignty they were accustomed to scenes of anarchy and rebellion. The Shans, who form the majority of the inhabitants, are Buddhists in religion, and are keen traders, often travelling hundreds of miles in the dry season with heavy loads of merchandise to reach the nearest market. They have their own hereditary chiefs; and our policy, justified in its results, has been to support the rule of these chiefs, who now pay us the tribute they formerly gave, or were supposed to give, to the kings of Burma, whilst we interfere as little as possible with their customs, and support their authority. The record of the past year has been one of peace, progress, and prosperity for the Shan States, and the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma notices with pleasure that a sum of nearly six thousand rupees was contributed to the Famine Relief Fund by the chiefs and people of the southern Shan States. This by no means fully represents the amount of the charity displayed by these good Buddhists. Crowds of Burmese came from the adjoining two districts in Upper Burma, which suffered last year from scarcity owing to the failure of the rains, to purchase rice. For several days two of the Shan chiefs gratuitously fed all travellers passing along the public roads between sunrise and sunset, besides sending seven hundred and fifty bushels of grain by Buddhist priests for free distribution amongst those who had no means to purchase food. Fortunately there was an excellent harvest in the Shan States, and the chiefs had paid attention to the opening out of cart-roads, enabling trade to be carried on to an extent previously unknown. Unhusked rice was selling at about one-sixth of the price asked for it in Burma, pointing to the advisability of an extension of the Burma railway system to this fertile country; for, except in years of scarcity, however good the roads are, cart-hire is too costly to allow of grain, however cheap, being carried any great distance at a profit.

Amongst imports Swiss condensed milk in tins bulks largely. The Shans do not care for fresh milk, and allow the calves to take all their mothers produce. But they like the sweetened canned article, eating it with rice and rice-cakes. The sepoys and natives of India settled in the Shan States are the only milk-venders, and they and the Europeans are the only consumers of fresh milk. As cattle thrive well all over the Shan States, milk might easily be preserved on the spot, and be sold very much cheaper than the imported condensed milk.

Our French neighbours have tried to get over

the exchange difficulty by valuing their *piastre de commerce* at two rupees six annas, but at Kengtung, the nearest British Shan State, it only fetches two rupees, and is often melted down by traders into lumps and used in crude silver as a medium of exchange. Trade was carried on to a small extent between the Shan States and the French provinces, in a friendly way and with no remarkable incidents, in the past year.

Mr A. H. Hildebrand, C.I.E., the able British superintendent of the southern Shan States, points with pride to the fact that it is only a decade since these states were annexed and the chiefs acknowledged the suzerainty of the British Crown. The record of progress in these short ten years is not unworthy of the British government, under which it has taken place, and reflects the highest credit on the half-dozen British officers who assist Mr Hildebrand and the chiefs in governing states many times larger than England. There were no disturbances in the past year, and but little crime. Three durbars were held, numerously attended by the chiefs and their followers. These same chiefs were at each other's throats before our advent, but now only vie with each other in improving communications with a view to increasing trade. Most of them recognise the fact that their own positions and emoluments are improved when their subjects are prosperous and contented, and as far as in them lies they work loyally for this end. The superintendent, who spends at least six months of the year in visiting the various states, notes the great improvements visible in the various buildings. Substantial wooden houses are now taking the place of the bamboo huts which formerly predominated. Gardens neatly fenced in are the rule now in the principal places, instead of the exception, whilst roadside trees are also planted and carefully tended for the benefit of the shade they confer. Every variation of climate is observable in the Shan States. The valleys are often insufferably hot in the dry season; but the hills, varying from three thousand to five thousand feet in height, give an almost European climate, and nearly every description of English fruit and vegetable is produced in perfection. The out-turn of potatoes was so large last year in one state that in some bazaars they were selling at two pice, or about one halfpenny, per *viss* (three and three-quarter pounds). Their cultivation continues steadily to increase. Wheat is also grown, and its production might be much larger if a railway joined the Rangoon line and ensured a ready market for it. The seaports of Lower Burma are dependent now on Calcutta for their wheat and potatoes; but, judging from appearances, there is no reason why, in another decade, Rangoon should not export instead of importing wheat, if only a branch-line of railway connected the present Rangoon and Mandalay line with the fertile southern Shan States.

The superintendent regrets that nothing has been done yet in the direction of starting a school which the sons of chiefs might attend. He is assured it will be built next year. The chiefs have promised to support it. It is hardly advisable for them to send their sons to Rangoon, away from their homes; but at Taunggyi, the head-quarters of the superintendent, where many of them have residences, and where they would be under Mr Hildebrand's eye, the advantages of such an educational establishment would be great.

The government are to be congratulated on the successful administration of the Shan States, and on the officers chosen to carry out their policy. It has been a success partly on this account, but also no doubt on account of the fact that, instead of the fanatical Mohammedan tribes who yearly, in some part or other of our scientific frontier on the north-west of India, are the cause of such constant warfare and disturbance, we have in the south-east comparatively peaceful and law-abiding Buddhists, satisfied with our rule, and ready to acknowledge that, although a foreign one, it is an improvement on its predecessor. It is only by acknowledging that we have such contented races in the Shan States to deal with that we can carry on the administration as economically as we do, without a single British soldier on the spot, and with so few British officers, sepoys, and policemen. Both rulers and ruled deserve to share the credit of the present happy and prosperous state of things in the Shan States, which has every prospect of being lasting.

English visitors to India would do well to pay the Shan States a visit. Taunggyi, the headquarter-station, is within four days' ride of Thazi, on the Rangoon and Mandalay railway line. It has a club with about a dozen members, who are always willing to show hospitality to the stranger. Twenty miles to the south-west of Taunggyi is a large lake ten miles in length and three in breadth. Fort Stedman, where a Burma rifle-battalion is quartered, is on its shores. The lake-men paddle their canoes with one foot, balancing themselves on the other. Good snipe and duck shooting is to be had on this lake, whilst in other parts of the states are to be found bison, bear, cheetas, deer, sambur, and occasionally tigers. A sportsman might pass a few months in many worse places than the Shan States, where he would be welcomed by any of his own countrymen he might meet on his travels, and also be certain to find in every village hospitable Buddhists who would do all in their power to make him comfortable. Taunggyi is spoken of as a possible sanatorium for Burma. In the hottest weather the thermometer seldom exceeds eighty-five degrees in the shade, whilst in December and January it rarely rises higher than seventy. At night a fire is welcomed, and turning into bed with a couple of blankets the usual thing. It is to be hoped that the southern Shan States will some day be made more accessible to travellers; but in the meanwhile, for those who have

leisure, there is no spot in the East better worth visiting, or from which one would return with happier recollections of a bright and cheery population, or greater gratification at the happy results which have followed in the short time which has elapsed since the British annexation. That was the first event in this generation to give peace and prosperity to these fertile hills and valleys.

It may be mentioned that the Shan chief of Hsipaw, one of the northern Shan States, who has visited England with his sons, is one of the two Asiatic nominated members in the new Burma Legislative Council, which held its first sitting in Rangoon in November last. This chief has had an eventful and romantic history. Rebelling against King Thebaw some seventeen or eighteen years ago, he travelled in Siam and Burma. In Rangoon he seemed to think he could exercise the same power of life and death over his followers that he did in his own state; and having information that one of them was plotting against him, he deliberately shot him. For this he was tried and found guilty of murder by a jury. The government, however, pardoned him, and there is not the slightest doubt now that the chief thought he was acting within his rights as a sovereign ruler, and that he went in fear of his own life from the supposed treachery of his follower, on whom he took such summary vengeance. From the date of his release this chief seems to have thrown in his lot with us, and has proved himself a capable and energetic ruler. His nomination on the Burma Council has gratified both the chief and his subjects, and his state of Hsipaw is progressing favourably in the paths of civilisation and good government. He some time ago was made a Companion of the Indian Empire, and is very proud of the distinction. It is perhaps too much to hope that he will ever publish his life and recollections, but they would, if truthfully told, form interesting and instructive reading to the British, Burmese, and Shan public, abounding in sensational incidents of love and war.

'SANTA ANNA.'

CHAPTER III.

THE disappearance of the so-called Da Vinci created quite a mild sensation in London. The papers gave it in the same type which they devoted to Baron Brantano's latest and greatest scheme—nothing less than the syndicating and running of the Turkish Empire as a limited company, capital four hundred millions.

For the next two or three days the life of Messrs Hunt & Roscoe was anything but a bed of roses. The Piccadilly establishment was haunted by detectives, who dropped in at all sorts of times and asked all kinds of personal questions. The partners were wonderfully shy of answering some of these.

The robbery appeared to have been worked by way of the cellar. Through an opening in the grating the padlock had been filed away; indeed, the outside of the trap still bore the marks of the tool.

The circular trap had then been pulled up, and an entrance to the cellar effected. A jemmy had been forcibly used in removing certain obstacles in the way of doors, and thus the shop was reached. Afterwards a fireproof safe had been opened, and the picture abstracted from its frame. The whole thing was the work of some one who knew the craft passing well.

Usually sufferers from this kind of thing are prone to gird at the tortoise-like movements of the police. Hunt & Roscoe found the authorities much too busy. Shorter noticed this and wondered. And when he entered the shop two days later, and found Inspector Morton there, he wondered still more.

'I think we've got your man,' the officer said cheerfully.

Roscoe's jaw dropped. He muttered something. Why should this joyful news have disturbed him so terribly? However, later in the day the recalcitrant burglar was able to prove a satisfactory *alibi*, and Roscoe beamed. Shorter was present on both occasions.

'Afraid of the forgery coming out, perhaps,' he mused.

Roscoe was in a frame of mind now to listen to all that Shorter had to say. The latter explained his visit to Pau, and what had come of it. Then Shorter proceeded to allude to the fact that Moss next door was the man who had brought Baron Brantano into the skein.

'That struck me as jolly suspicious,' Shorter remarked, 'especially as Moss has not been near any one for his commission. So I have had two days' hunting up the antecedents of our friend Moss.'

'A man of indifferent reputation,' Roscoe said severely.

'*Rather.* Real name Morris, and no more a Jew than you are. Narrowly escaped a conviction for arson, Surrey Sessions, 1878; twelve months in connection with a bogus money-lending office, 1884; two years over those Paris picture frauds,

1887; then passing as the Count of Malibran. You remember?'

'Perfectly. But he's been all right for the last five years, for certain.'

'Hasn't been found out, you mean, Mr Roscoe. He's in this swindle for a certainty; how, I shall make it my work to discover. The idea of getting that telegram delivered to you was immense.'

Roscoe changed the subject. He did not feel that his own share in the transaction was one he would care to have blazoned on the housetops.

'What's your next move?' he asked.

'I'm going to see Manders. Lord Maplehurst accompanies me. I'll let you know the result of the interview the first thing in the morning.'

Maplehurst and his companion found Manders not only perfectly sober, but also engrossed in the rare occupation of painting. He nodded to Shorter with an air of resigned boredom, and motioned his other visitor to a seat.

'This is Lord Maplehurst,' said the detective.

'Another of 'em?' Manders muttered. 'Oh, this is the branded article, I suppose?'

'I assure you I am the genuine article,' said his lordship; 'and as my character is at stake, I hope you will do your best in assisting me to clear it. The man who passed himself off as me was Pearson, my late secretary. I should very much like to know how you first met him, and under what circumstances; also, how and when you copied my picture.'

'That is easily told,' Manders replied. 'This Pearson came to me as yourself, and said I had been recommended to him by Moss of Piccadilly as an expert picture-copyist. I'm *facile princeps* at this sort of thing; learnt it in Amsterdam, you understand. His lordship made no bones about the matter; he was desperately hard up, and wanted to dispose of his picture to some private collector. The idea was to paint another picture to hang in the place of the original. With the aid of a genuine old canvas and the original before me, I worked away in the bogus lord's chambers in Albemarle Street, and in three weeks it was finished. It's all easy enough when you get the touch. I got £100 for my trouble, and I deemed myself pretty well paid. That's all I know.'

'And, now you know why your picture was required,' Shorter observed, 'can you call to mind any suspicious circumstances connected with it?'

'Certainly I can,' Manders replied. 'In the first place, this Pearson seemed a little bit annoyed when he slipped out Moss's name. And the day I went to get my money Moss was in Albemarle Street. They were in the next room to the one I was shown into, examining the picture. I remember Moss distinctly saying: "That will do the touch all right!" Moss went away soon after without seeing me; and when Pearson came in he seemed put out by my presence, and asked me if I had been there long. I suppose my manner reassured him.'

Shorter's eyes glistened. Fortune was favouring him in this matter.

'This is a complicated case,' he said—'a very complicated case. Of course you know that Messrs Hunt & Roscoe had your work substituted for the picture they bought?'

Manders smiled. We all know the famous aphorism that there is something in the misfortunes of our friends which is not displeasing to us, and any fraud perpetrated upon the dealers always filled Manders with unalloyed satisfaction. It was the same kind of shamed joy we all feel when we read in the press of a money-lender being made a victim.

'Of course I do,' he said. 'Rare joke, wasn't it? If I liked to open my mouth I could ruin those beggars in a week.'

'I sincerely hope you will do nothing of the kind,' Maplehurst put in. 'I have done you no harm; and you could ruin me as well.'

'I was only jesting,' said Manders, who, in spite of whisky and abnormal hours, was still a gentleman. 'I will say nothing.'

Shorter expressed his satisfaction. He pointed out to Manders that a dual fraud had been committed, and that any blind confidence on the latter's part might lead to the escape of Moss, at any rate; and Manders having again pledged himself to secrecy, his visitors left.

There was one lingering drop of gall in Shorter's cup. He was getting on splendidly—far better, indeed, than he had expected; but he was only a private inquiry agent. Whoever got the public credit for the arrest of Moss and the solution of the mystery, it would not be he.

At this stage it became absolutely necessary to consult the police. If a raid was to be made upon Moss's premises, the police alone could do it. Shorter invaded Scotland Yard, and there interviewed Morton, the latter being the officer who had the Piccadilly burglary part of the mystery in hand. Morton received his visitor coldly, as a captain in the Guards might have met one holding similar rank in the volunteers.

'Got anything to tell me?' he said. 'In our line we recognise the axiom that you can learn something from every fool.'

'That's the very reason why I came here,' Shorter replied, with cheerful equanimity. 'We are going to teach one another, my friend.'

'Oh, indeed! Tell me something worth knowing, and you shall hear what you like.'

'A bargain! In the first place, I'll tell you all about that picture.'

'I know all about that confounded picture already.'

'No, you don't. You don't know that the one stolen from Piccadilly is a forgery. Now, I'm going to make a full confession to you.'

And Shorter proceeded to open Morton's eyes considerably. When he had digested the facts he began to revolve them in his mind slowly.

'This may be of great value later on,' he said; 'but for the present the knowledge is useless. My business is to find who stole that picture.'

'Have you got any one in your mind?' Shorter asked.

'Well, I don't mind telling you that I have. But on one condition only.'

'Fire away. One gets nothing for nothing in these hard times.'

'Very well, then. You have told me certain things. In all probability the whole of this case will be placed in my hands later on. I see you have got a clue to the founder of the scheme.'

'I have. I won't tell you the why and wherefore at present. I'm only telling you this because I'm more or less bound to come to you. I can help you, and you can help me, because I'm certain that this later development is part and parcel of the same plot.'

'Quite right. But come to the point, man.'

'I'm coming,' said Shorter. 'The author of the scheme is Moss of Piccadilly. You know all about *him*, of course?'

'Rather. And I'm much obliged to you for the tip. I won't interfere with you more than I can help. What do you want?'

'To know if you have done anything *re* the burglary.'

Morton placed his hands together judicially. He proceeded to lay down his points calmly and logically. Not without good cause was he spoken of at the Bar as the best witness in the metropolitan police force.

'Well, I think I have,' he said. 'The whole thing is vague and shadowy at present, but I fancy I've got the right man. In our business, as I need hardly tell *you*, one thing so frequently leads to another. The fellow in question is quite a stranger to us; I can find out nothing about him. The name he gives is, of course, assumed, and he refuses his address. Looks a respectable man, too. He was handed over to the police drunk and incapable at Waterloo, charged with travelling without a ticket. Where he got in and how far he travelled we can't yet say. On being searched we found upon him some hundreds of pounds in Bank of Bechuanaland notes. If I can dribble on with a remand or two I shall be able to trace them in time. They may prove a lot, and, on the other hand, they may prove nothing. But that is not quite all. There were letters in the fellow's pocket, none of them signed or headed, and one of them clearly relates to some fraud in connection with a picture. The letters "S. A." occur more than once. To my mind "S. A." means "Santa Anna."'

'Where is this fellow now?' Shorter asked.

'In Holloway, under remand for a fortnight. By that time I hope to have all the strings in my hands.'

'I suppose I can see these letters, Morton?'

Morton crossed over to a safe, opened it, and produced two half-sheets of paper. Shorter examined them carefully, and as he did so his eyes flashed. He said nothing, however, for to go out of his way to enlighten Morton was no part of his business.

'Valuable clues, no doubt,' he said as he carefully studied a sentence. 'Still, it would take some time to identify the writer. If you hear any more in the meantime let me know.'

Shorter rose as he spoke, and Morton gave the desired promise. Then the former went westward slowly and thoughtfully.

'This has been a lucky day for me,' he muttered. 'But my clients are keeping something from me, all the same. What an ass Morton is! In less than an hour's time I shall know who wrote those letters.'

And in less than an hour's time an elderly gentleman, with blue glasses and his hand tied up, dropped casually into Mr Moss's establishment and began to potter about the pictures there.

The proprietor of the establishment came forward. There was nothing lavish or gorgeous about the place, it being a mere sandwich sliced in between the big premises on either side, a slip cut from Hunt & Roscoe's some years before. Pictures there were few, neither would a *connoisseur* have sighed for their possession.

Shorter took stock of all these things. Rents in Piccadilly, even for sandwiches, run high, and obviously Mr Moss had other means of making profits large and yet not ostentatious enough to bring him in conflict with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue.

There was nobody else in the shop; even the assistant was absent, a fact upon which Shorter had counted in working out his little scheme. Moss came forward rubbing his hands politely.

'What can I do for you, sir?' he asked.

'A mere trifle,' Shorter mumbled. 'Something pretty to suit a girl of about fourteen. Hang in a little boudoir and that kind of thing. About £5 is the figure to which I should feel disposed to go.'

Moss indicated a taking little landscape, and added the perfectly mendacious rider that it had cost him £15 a year before, exclusive of the frame. Plenty of the same kind can be found in every print-shop, painted by clever artists at so much per dozen and a discount for cash.

The commercial side of the matter troubled Shorter but little. He permitted Moss to choose for him, and to pack up the parcel.

'Stop a minute,' he said; 'it's for a godchild of mine, a birthday present. Would you mind writing a few lines for me on a slip of paper and enclosing the same in the parcel?'

Moss raised no objection. Then Shorter dictated as follows:

'To my dear godchild, S. A., from the other S. A., with best love and wishes for a happy birthday.'

Moss scribbled off the message, and handed it to his customer for approval. Shorter's eyes again flashed as he read.

'Perfectly well,' he said. 'Kindly pack it up and send the parcel to the address I will dictate. Here's a five-pound note. The parcel postage will be threepence? Thanks. Good-day;' and Shorter shuffled out of the shop.

The parcel was consigned to some imaginary Sarah Allen at his own private address, Hampstead way. Needless to say it was the handwriting, not the picture, that Shorter required.

'It's the same fist,' he muttered to himself—'the same for a million. Moss wrote those letters that Morton showed me. The "S. A." is identical. And now to report progress to my esteemed employers.'

A little later, clothed and in his right mind, Shorter entered the establishment of Messrs Hunt & Roscoe. He found the latter at his post, looking anxious and worried. He seemed nervous also.

'Have you any further information?' the junior partner asked.

'Heaps,' was the cheerful reply. 'I told you Moss was in the conspiracy, and I am right. Any more about the burglary?'

'Confound the burglary!' Roscoe flashed out. 'I'm sick of it. And in any case we lose nothing by it, as you know. What you have to do is to lay your hands upon the man who has stolen the real picture. Until then we can't hope to recover our money from Forrest's people.'

'I suppose not,' responded Shorter, with ruminative forefinger to his nose; 'but my theory is that the thief and the burglar are one and the same person. And Morton is pretty sure he's got him.'

Roscoe turned pale. Then he laughed scornfully, if forcibly.

'So they have told us before,' he said. 'They were equally certain about the other man. This will be another felonious Mrs Harris.'

'I don't think so,' Shorter replied. 'Nobody ever saw Mrs Harris, and they have actually got this one. I'll tell you what Morton said.'

And Shorter proceeded to do so. Roscoe followed dismally. He wiped the beads of perspiration from his face.

'Shorter,' he whispered, 'this sounds like our man. It must be stopped at any cost. If Crouther splits to save himself?'

'Crouther! You actually know the name of the man!'

'Of course we do. But you are all in the dark. Our biggest customer came to purchase the "Santa Anna." We could not say it was sold; we could not declare how we had been taken in. So we procured a professional burglar, who for a ten-pound note burgled our premises for us in our presence, and stole the picture, after which it was destroyed.'

Shorter was too astonished to laugh.

'But the marks on the grating?' he gasped.

'The grating was removed into the shop under pretence of coals, and then filed. If the police have really got Crouther we are lost. The thing will become public property, and we shall be laughed out of the trade.'

'Well, it can't be helped now,' Shorter said consolingly. 'In any case, you can't get your money back from Forrest.'

Whilst the subject was still under discussion a hansom cab dashed up to the door, and Lord Maplehurst emerged. He seemed to be considerably ruffled, considering the usual placidity of his temper.

'Confound it all!' he cried. 'Look here, I've just left your painter friend, Manders. I picked him up in the Strand, eloquently intoxicated, and ready to blab all he knows to the first fool who came along. I put him in a cab and sent him home. Then I deemed it as well to come along here and warn you. That fellow will have to be carefully watched.—Eh?'

The last remark was addressed to a burly individual who advanced into the shop, and who touched the speaker on the shoulder.

'Lord Maplehurst, I think?' he said.

'My name, right enough. What do you want?'

'Warrant for your arrest, my lord,' was the reply. 'Lordship knows all about it: Court of Chancery, and all that. Very sorry, but'——

'Do you mean to say I'm your prisoner?'

'Yes, my lord; and it's my duty to conduct you to Holloway forthwith. No, my lord; I must take you straight there.'

Maplehurst made no reply. He was too utterly staggered. He allowed the bailiff to lead him gently away. Shorter was the first to recover himself.

'My lord,' he exclaimed, 'what a farce for the Gaiety this would make!'

The partners made no rejoinder, and Shorter lapsed into silence. The bogus burglary had recalled an old theory to his mind—the theory as to the way in which his clients had been swindled. That Hunt & Roscoe had bought the real 'Santa Anna' Shorter had been convinced from the first.

'Moss's shop was once part of yours?' he asked.

'Years ago,' Roscoe replied languidly. 'We let part of it under the old lease, and it has remained separate ever since. That door yonder used to lead into the part which is now occupied by Moss.'

Shorter was alert in a moment. The door was fastened up, and apparently had not been opened for years. But Shorter had been long enough

in his profession to know that what the eye sees is generally the last thing to be credited.

'Um,' he muttered; 'give me one of your most powerful magnifying-glasses, please.'

With this in his hand, and mounted on a chair, Shorter examined the door critically. As he jumped to the ground his eyes were sparkling.

'I told you Moss was in this business all the way through,' he said, 'and the more I see the more convinced I am of the fact. That door has been recently opened.'

'Impossible!' the partners cried in a breath.

'Why impossible? Aren't doors made to open? Look for yourselves. See the marks left where those bolts and bars have been pulled. On the top of the door there is no dirt at all, and the hinges are smothered with recent oil. Moreover, these screws have been removed, for I can make out steel filings wrenched off by a screwdriver applied not so long ago. And look here; this panel has moved half-an-inch. The beading on the other side has been taken off, and the panel pulled away so as to give the people on the other side free play with the bars. Pooh! I can point out to you a hundred proofs of my statement.'

Shorter proceeded to do so. Roscoe was satisfied so far.

'But what good could it do?' he asked.

'Plain as a pikestaff,' Shorter replied. 'Everything was arranged beforehand. There is the way in, and there stands the safe where the "Santa Anna" *was*.'

'Which safe I locked myself and pocketed the key,' said Roscoe.

'My dear sir, these rascals had three months to perfect their scheme. This Pearson would have put obstacles in his master's way till his confederates were ready. Did you never hear of an impression of a safe-key being taken?'

'The thing is just possible,' Hunt murmured. 'Our present staff'——

'Present staff will keep,' Shorter put in. 'Discharged anybody lately?'

Hunt explained that they had done so. An assistant named Frederic, a Swiss, who had been with them for two months, had been dismissed a week or two before for insolence. The lad proved a good servant; he had come from Paris with excellent references, and the firm had seen him depart with regret.

Before Shorter left the shop he had extracted all the information he required. The next day he spent ostensibly hunting for rooms in Canonbury, and ere night had fallen he found his way westward once more with a photograph of Monsieur Frederic in his pocket. That he had deliberately purloined the same from the album of a whilom landlady of Frederic's did not trouble Shorter's conscience in the least.

Hunt and Roscoe recognised the face directly.

'And a capital likeness, too,' Hunt summed up the argument.

Shorter declined to be drawn, however, as to the clue he was working out. Before bedtime—if a detective is supposed to share in such a luxury—Shorter had dropped in quite casually upon Morton.

The latter appeared to be gloomy and abstracted.

'Well, and what do you want?' he asked pointedly.

'My friend,' responded the visitor, 'I came in for a sight of your engaging and ingenuous countenance. It is a continual feast to me; and incidentally I may ask if you will give a little information as to somebody else's face—a photo?'

Morton's professional instinct was aroused.

'Hand it over, then,' he said.

Shorter proceeded to do so. Morton relaxed into a smile.

'Still on the same trail,' he said. 'Yes, I do know the fellow. You remember Moss getting into trouble years ago for those Paris picture frauds? You do? Well, one of the gang got off by the skin of his teeth—a chap named Lemaire. I was in the case, you know.'

'Yes, yes,' Shorter said eagerly.

'Very well, then. Your friend of the photo and Lemaire are one and the same. I would swear to the fact anywhere.'

Shorter said nothing. All the same, the crux of the mystery was his. He knew now how the genuine picture had been taken and the forgery substituted. And how easy it all seemed now that it was explained!

RHUBARB, THE RHEUM-FOE.



ITH spring comes ever the rheumdish. In shape of jam or tart, pie or pudding, the inevitable rhubarb appears upon the table; and, as if in dutiful answer to its annual coming, all folk feel compelled to eat of it because of the marvellous power of body-refreshing it is known to hold.

Rheum Rhaponticum is the curious name of the English garden order of the rhubarb-plant, and of it there are several species, the rounded knobs of which, instinct with pulsing life, push upward yearly from the bare, brown ground, and give us one of the earliest indications of Nature's great annual self-renewal.

Of this plant the petioles or leaf-stalks only are used for food. Of the leaves no use seems to be as yet made in England, unless it be for fruit-packing

purposes; though some farmers' wives prefer them to dock or lettuce leaves as cool butter-wrappers, and cottage-women, to whom meat-safes are unattainable luxuries, like to lay them over their cold joints in summer as a sure means of keeping away the blow-fly. Abroad they are bruised and used to allay the inflammation showing in wounded limbs, just as the silver-lined colt's-foot leaf is used with us in old-world houses.

The word 'petiole' is derived from *petiolus*, which signifies 'a little foot.' The rhubarb-petioles form the foot-stalks for each spreading leaf, and into their juicy composition enter substances of the utmost value in the matter of the purification of the blood and, through it, of the body generally. Oxalic acid, the sour principle of sorrel, is strongly in the juice, and with it mingles also, in large measure, malic acid, the tart property of the apple and of the gooseberry. Neither of these two keen acids mingling in the rhubarb has power to counteract, or make neutral, the other; hence the petioles become doubly strong in tart principles, and to this mixing of the acids they owe their peculiar flavour. What wonder that rhubarb is remarkable for sourness, seeing the twofold acid-strength it has? And thus we know why teeth are set on edge directly at the common sight in spring of hardy urchins chewing chunks of raw rhubarb, as children are prone to do.

In the leaves and in the roots the acids mingle also, though in a proportion different from that in the petioles. In the roots, too, much oxalate of lime is present, and this bestows on them a peculiarly valuable medicinal property, as is exemplified in a high degree in the Turkey rhubarb to be obtained in every chemist's shop. The kind grown for root-supplying is *Rheum officinale*, and this provides most of the sorts sold under the names of 'Turkey' and 'Russian' rhubarb. By the latter part of its name—that is, *officinale*—is understood a medicine approved by the faculty, and kept prepared by the apothecary in his *officina*, or shop—properly, a workshop.

Binoxalate of potash is present in some quantity in the petioles of all kinds of Rheum. The combination of the potash, an alkali, with the different acids produces most valuable salts of various sorts; and these take action immediately on the membranes of the body wherever they come in contact with them. Through the eating of rhubarb the stomach is highly stimulated and all the intestinal juices excited to good action; the salts enter the liver and the blood, doing excellent work in both; the acids, by inherent astringent property, clear away all unnecessary and unwholesome mucus, overpowering and neutralising all weaker acids of noxious nature generated in the tissues; and the alkalies aid the bile-flow and help the pancreatic juice to do its work of fat-emulsifying. Thus rhubarb labours in the human organs, every one of which receives its benefits abundantly.

The Rheum-plant is a natural tonic that braces up the whole system—a general strengthening and purifying agent; and its good properties are brought out and improved by proper cooking. Especially does rhubarb prove a good friend to the owner of a bad skin, for it has a peculiar property of tightening the relaxed and gaping pores, that yawn to receive the tiny stoppers of dirt-particles ever afloat in the air, which, once caught by the pores, become unsightly blackheads a little later. If the blackheads be already present in unwelcome arrays of ugliness, the astringent rhubarb-influence is able to expel them, causing a rapid increase of the skin action; thus it becomes a sure complexion cleanser, and, as a consequence, a beauty-giver.

Through stimulation of the liver, and by the bestowing of restored tone on that organ, this good food-medicine can remove the dull look from the eyes, take the yellow tinge from the flabby eyeballs, which it renders firm again, and destroy the baggy, livid appearance that a slow-working liver is wont to bring under the lower eyelid. By taking the heaviness from the eye it also takes the tired lines that would speedily develop into the wrinkle so dreaded as the age-sign, though often it is more likely to be the signet set by weariness. Through the giving of salts much needed by the blood, that the vegetable scarcity of winter is apt to impoverish, rhubarb becomes a preventer of pimples, and scurvy itself would yield ground to it as quickly as to lemon-juice. Skin-blotches cannot long afflict the eater of it; and one excited well-nigh into feverishness would find his system cooled deliciously and his nerves soothed into restfulness by means of a long draught of life-giving rhubarb juice made palatable and sweet.

For a gratefully-acid and most cooling summer drink can be very quickly made when this good garden-gift is especially plentiful, by infusing a couple of well-crushed, raw stalks in a jugful of boiling water, which is then sweetened to taste and left to cool. This is rhubarb tea. Apple tea, which some prefer, is made in exactly the same way.

The inhabitant of far Eastern lands well recognises the sterling qualities of the Rheum-plant, and thankfully accepts the gifts it has in store for the human body; and he puts it to splendid uses. From the Orientals, left by us so far behind in many ways, came the knowledge our doctors hold of the plant's medicinal properties; and they use the petioles extensively—especially those of *R. Ribes*—in the preparation of that most cooling and delicious drink, sherbet, the making of which prevails throughout the Orient. The Turks and the Persians—who are most noted for the excellence of their snowy, foaming beverage, the sherbet sold in all bazaars and found so cunningly commingled,

so gratefully sweet and yet acidulated—could tell of rhubarb gardens rifled for the sherbet-making, did they care to speak their secrets. Rheumatism is an ailment not greatly prevalent in the sherbet-lands; and, in spite of our damp, insular climate, it would be less of a curse here if the folk would only make closer acquaintance with the rheum-foe, and use it more.

Rheum its name is, rheum's enemy though it be, and that name was given because the roots and petioles were found to be sovereign specifics in the curing of all rheumy, or mucous, disorders.

Anciently all ailments were ascribed to the flowing of rheum, or humour, through the parts affected, and that painful muscle-ill we term rheumatism received its name because of this notion. It is uric acid generated in the blood that is the dire cause of the pangs endured by the rheumatic person, and this acid is neutralised by the alkaline matter contained in the rheum-foe, and by the strong counteracting powers of its oxalic and malic acids. Any excess of limy matter or chalky deposits in the system can be neutralised by the same agencies.

Various are the methods of rhubarb-cookery. A favourite dish with children is the petiole well sweetened, stewed with a little water, and flavoured with the peel of a lemon. Orange-peel is a good flavouring for it, and cloves with rhubarb are found excellent. Rhubarb juice extracted, mingled bulk for bulk with water, and made into syrup, using therefor a pound of white sugar to each pint, makes a drink-foundation of the best teetotal kind, and it will keep a long while.

Rhubarb wine is a strong intoxicant, as abstainers from spirituous drinks ought to know. The wine generates in keeping, through its fermentation, a really large quantity of alcohol, and when two or three years old is as cunning a betrayer of the unwary as ever was port wine. A lady who was a total abstainer once proved this at the cost of her self-respect. Being thirsty one day at a friend's house, she drank off a tumblerful of rhubarb wine. 'Oh dear, whatever is the matter with the street?' she exclaimed on getting into the open air. 'All the houses are moving about, and it's awfully uphill somehow, yet my feet keep dropping into some dreadful ditches!'

A SINGULAR EXPERIENCE.

By Lucy Hardy.

LITTLE did I imagine, when I accepted the invitation of my newly-made acquaintance to visit at his country house, what a singular and terrible experience was to befall me while under his roof. I had been weather-bound at a small Swiss hotel, and had there fallen into friendly chat with the only other English visitor—a middle-aged gentleman, who, as I discovered in course of conversation, shared many of my peculiar tastes and hobbies, and also proved to be acquainted with some of my own friends. Intimacies ripen quickly in similar circumstances, and before parting I had received and accepted an invitation to pay my travelling companion a visit as soon as I returned to England—an engagement of which a note addressed to my club reminded me soon after I arrived in London.

I am an engineer by profession, and devoted to the study of mechanics in every form; my new acquaintance, whom I will call Mr Beltram, though 'a mere idle country squire,' as he called himself, was equally addicted to the same pursuit. Possessed of a comfortable private income, he had amused himself by travelling and studying mechanics *en amateur* (as George Selwyn did executions) until the death of an uncle, some six years previously, had placed him in possession of a small estate in the west of England, and of an old-fashioned country mansion, which he had been amusing himself for some while past in altering and fitting up with his own inventions and arrangements. The house, indeed, though thoroughly comfortable in its appointments, was as full of whimsical surprises as was the mansion of the famous Winstanley (builder of the first Eddystone Lighthouse), where, 'if you sat in a certain chair, the arms clasped you around; . . . if you entered an arbour you found yourself afloat on a canal.' Bells could be rung by all manner of unexpected devices, and fountains in the garden set agoing from a distance; but what my friend chiefly prided himself upon was having erected a lift working on a principle of his own invention, which he conceived to be immeasurably superior to any yet in use. When the mechanism was fully explained to me I cannot say that I thought it differed very materially from that of most other similar contrivances; but my host was as pleased with his lift as is a child with a new toy; and I refrained from damping his enthusiasm by ill-timed criticisms.

I passed a couple of days agreeably enough in my new quarters. Mr Beltram, who was a bachelor, possessed an excellent housekeeper, cook, and cellar, and was a kindly and genial host, although fuller of eccentricities than I had perceived on our first acquaintance. He was a dabbler in many arts and sciences, had a laboratory on the ground floor and an observatory

on the roof of his house, but was, withal, a clever and highly-educated man, who had read much, travelled far, and seen the world in various ways. We lingered late in the smoking-room on the third evening of my visit, Beltram expounding a new idea by which he believed something akin to that philosopher's stone of mechanics, perpetual motion, could be discovered. I rather differed from his views, and we grew eager and excited, though in quite a friendly way, as we compared sketches and figures; continuing our discussion even in the lift, in which we were slowly rising to our bedrooms—it would have broken Beltram's heart had I suggested walking up the staircase. The lift was worked by the occupants, Beltram taking charge of it on this occasion, and halted mechanically for a moment or two at each floor we passed. A small landing, some four feet long by three and a half feet wide, met the lift at each of these halting-places; these small landings being closed at the other end by a door which gave entrance to the passage which ran along that floor of bedrooms. Like many old-fashioned country houses, the Manor was built with a huge square hall, having galleries round it, upon which the bedrooms opened. The lift had been erected in one corner of this hall, and was connected with the various floors by these small landings, underneath which the machinery of the lift was stored.

'Well, here's your floor,' said Beltram as the lift made one of its usual halts for a few moments, 'and so I'll say good-night. I'm going up to my observatory to have a look at the sky; there's a fall of stars predicted for to-night, and I mean to keep a lookout for them. I suppose you won't care to come up farther?'

'Thanks, no; I'm rather sleepy,' I replied, stepping out on the landing. 'I'll run over those figures again,' I called out as the lift swept upwards; 'but I really think you will find I am right regarding the pressure to the square inch.' But Mr Beltram had already soared away into space. The lift when once started could not, without a deal of complicated manœuvring, be arrested longer than a few moments at each halting-place, until it was finally at rest at the top of the building.

But there were certain (supposed) advantages connected with his improved lift which fully compensated for this rather inconvenient peculiarity, as Mr Beltram had carefully explained to me. I turned to the door which closed the landing, but, to my great surprise, I found that it would not open. I struggled vainly with the lock for a few moments, but it was certainly fastened upon the other side; and it then flashed upon me that, being engrossed in our argument, Beltram must have mistaken the floor, and put me out at a wrong landing—one probably opening on a disused floor of apartments; for the Manor was a roomy, rambling abode, and by far the larger proportion of its rooms were unoccupied. Each of the doors which closed the small landings off the lift had a square of glass in its top panel outside, while in the passage an electric light was fixed.

As I stood in the narrow gangway I was therefore in the enjoyment of light—for a few moments! The sonorous old hall-clock struck twelve, and simultaneously with the last stroke I found myself plunged in total darkness—literally 'a darkness which could be felt'—the light on the other side of the door abruptly going out.

I remembered that this sudden extinction of the lights was one of my friend's many ingenious household contrivances, an apparatus (which could, of course, be disconnected if desired) connecting the clock and the electric arrangements, 'so that the lights are all switched off at midnight, which is quite late enough for any of the servants to be out of their beds,' Beltram had remarked to me; for my host, though a liberal and kindly master in the main, was rather a martinet in his household regulations, and as fidgety an old bachelor as ever existed. This rule of 'lights out' had been explained to me upon my arrival; however, as my apartment was amply supplied with candles, it had mattered little to me—until now. But as I stood in the narrow landing, with an abyss below me on one side, I certainly 'longed for light' as earnestly as did ever Ajax!

The position was anything but a pleasant one. I knew that Beltram must be by this time star-gazing from his observatory on the roof, too engrossed with his telescope to think of aught else, and also, of course, wholly unaware of the mistake which he had made. The servants were all probably in bed by this time, or at least quartered in a far-distant part of the house; so, although I shouted lustily for several minutes, until my throat was sore, I was well aware that there was not the slightest chance of any one hearing me. The landing-door was of good, solid oak, and would have resisted the efforts of half-a-dozen men to force it open. I remembered I had still some matches in my fusee-case; I struck one, and cautiously surveyed my surroundings.

I was standing, safely enough, with several feet to spare between myself and the darkness below; and yet, as I looked across that narrow strip of carpet, ending in a black, blank space beyond, I must confess that my heart began to beat and my head to swim. I was safe—quite safe, of course, as I told myself, and had only to wait patiently until the morning came, when I should be missed and sought for. To wait—it was now just midnight, and the Manor household was not an early-rising one. It would be fully other eight hours before Beltram's valet would bring the hot water to my bedroom, and discover that I was not there. Eight hours to wait on this narrow ledge, where a false step

might—— I started at the disagreeable reflection, and in so doing dropped my match-box; it rolled along the landing, and then—but after a moment—I heard it strike the bottom of the well of the lift; and by the delay I knew I must be a very considerable height from the ground. If I too should fall over? I resolutely braced myself against this thought.

'What a fool I am!' I said aloud. 'I am safe—*perfectly* safe—as long as I keep against this door. It is most disagreeable of course, but there is no danger—*absolutely* none.'

Some minutes went by. I was already tired, having made a long ramble on foot that day with my friend, and found my position, standing against the door, rather fatiguing. I would sit down, I thought, and did so. I am a tall man, over six feet in height; as I thoughtlessly stretched out my legs, one foot slightly slipped over. I was up again in a second, clinging to the door-handle and trembling in every limb. *That* position was certainly not to be thought of. The absolute darkness, which seemed to press upon my eyeballs, the silence, the loneliness, were beginning to tell upon my nerves; and then a horrible thought occurred to me: 'What if I should become faint, and fall, *too near the edge, as my match-box had done?*'

I am not ashamed to confess that this thought turned me sick with dread. I roused myself, however, and stood again closely against the door; but after a while such absolute weariness overpowered me that I was compelled to sit down, keeping crouched together, and packing my inconveniently long limbs into as small a compass as possible. I took the additional precaution of fastening my wrist by my handkerchief to the handle of the door, and then prepared to wait for the day as best I might.

I resolutely reasoned out the position with myself. The danger was a purely imaginary one, I argued again and again, speaking aloud to have the comfort of hearing some sound amid that awful stillness and darkness. I even tried to whistle a tune, but the echoes gave back so strange and reverberating a sound that I abruptly desisted. So the time crept by—was it *hours* or *days?*—and I began to grow chilled and cramped in my constrained position. But *I dared not stretch my limbs again.* I would not risk such another shock as I had recently received when my foot had slipped over the edge of the landing.

My head now began to grow dizzy, strange whispers seemed to echo in my ears, and faces—mocking, evil faces—appeared to rise out of the dark abyss beyond and grin at me.

There is a gruesome story of Erckmann-Chatrian's which describes a certain haunted room, whose occupants are irresistibly compelled to commit suicide. As I sat cowering in the darkness, I began to feel a horrible impulse growing upon me to plunge forward—*and*—— I fought against it steadfastly, but the voices seemed to surge round me louder and louder, and hands seemed to beckon—even to *drag* me forward. I shrieked in my despair—and yet I felt convinced that presently I must yield. Yes, it would be easier to do so. And I took a step forward.

. . . . . .

'Are you better now? I shall never, never forgive myself for being such a fool.' Such were the words which fell upon my ears as I opened my eyes to find myself lying—not at the bottom of the lift, but in the passage—the centre of an excited group of servants in various stages of dress and undress, while Beltram, with a countenance of the deepest concern, was kneeling by my side, holding brandy to my lips, and alternately begging my pardon and execrating his own folly for the mistake which he had made—a mistake which might certainly have had very tragic consequences for me. But the good fellow was blaming himself so severely that no one could be churlish enough to add to his self-reproaches. It had luckily happened that the expected shower of meteors had proved such a brilliant one that my host had hurried off to my bedroom to call me to share in the spectacle. Not finding me there, nor in any of the living-rooms, the idea that he had put me out at a wrong landing flashed upon his mind; rousing the servants, he had hastily run to all the doors opening upon the lift, and found me—*just in time.*

And, after all, I had been imprisoned for barely a couple of hours, although it had seemed like an eternity; and the danger was always more imaginary than real. But our imaginations can often play strange tricks with our nerves, as I had learnt during that night's adventure.

TO A MODERN PORTIA.

To-day among a crowd I passed,
And 'mid the faces gay or sad
I sought for one to make me glad;
And, seeking, gazed on yours at last.

Your eyes, whose glance of pleasure told,
Within me woke a sudden thrill;
And yet I dared not gaze my fill,
Lest you should think me over bold.

But, glancing often as I dare,
Oh! what a lasting joy was mine
To see a face so near divine,
So sweet, and more than passing fair!

For, lo! at once in you I found
The lovely soul for whom I yearned;
And in your slender form discerned
A queen of women, though uncrowned;

A truthful creature, chaste and pure;
A woman one might die to kiss;
Not too reserved for human bliss,
Yet strong to suffer and endure.

SAM WOOD.

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THE MOUJIK AND HIS HOME.

By FRED WHISHAW.

TSAR ALEXANDER the Liberator, by the exercise of his autocratic authority, changed the Moujik from a *quasi* slave into a *bona-fide* landowner and peasant proprietor. The former owners of Ivan Ivanitch (which is the familiar name by which the peasant classes are known in Russia) were, naturally enough, dissatisfied; for they were deprived by a single stroke of the pen of land and free labour, receiving little in return. As for Ivan Ivanitch, one would suppose that he would have shown a proportionate sense of delight, for he was, one would think, as much a gainer as the lord of the manor was a loser. But in many instances the reverse was the truth.

As a serf, Ivan had been, in a sense, personally conducted through life by his master. When his lord was a respectable sort of person—as was frequently the case, in spite of the general belief among Englishmen that the serf was systematically down-trodden and persecuted by his master, the lord of the soil—his lot was a fairly happy one. It did not pay to allow him to starve or die; for, according to the old dispensation, the Moujik was obliged to work for his lord two, three, or four days in every week, or else to pay the equivalent in coin of the realm. Therefore he was kept alive and well fed. If he fell ill, there was a doctor to cure him and a manor-house from which a watchful eye was kept upon his welfare; his life was valuable to the proprietor of the soil, and so was that of his wife and children. All felt that the lord of the manor was at their back, and that it paid him to look after them; and this feeling gave them a sense of security. In some parts of the country, serfs and lords formed a happy family, of which the proprietor was the head and father, and the Moujiks his children; the entire village looked to the manor-house for guidance in all the affairs of life. Many of the peasants acted as domestic servants, and received good wages; marriages were arranged by the head of the community; each man was employed to do that kind of work for which Nature had specially adapted him. The head assisted the members, and the members were in entire sympathy with the head, and all went happily and propitiously. For such a community, the emancipation of the serfs was by no means an unmixed blessing. The lord now became an absentee, and was estranged from his old Moujik children; he could no longer afford to live in his country-seat, and rarely visited it. The peasants had now to look after themselves. Theoretically they should have been able to do this well enough; for, according to the new dispensation, each of them suddenly found himself the happy proprietor of far more than the proverbial 'three acres;' while, as for the cow, many already possessed not one but half-a-dozen of these useful animals. Naturally enough, those who had lived under a grinding or cruel landlord were glad to be rid of him and to be their own absolute masters; but many had been in sympathy with and dependence upon their old proprietors, and felt lost and insecure under the new conditions of life. They knew well enough that they were incapable of managing for themselves without a head to look after them and see that they did not drink themselves into a condition of incapacity every day of the week.

However, the fiat went forth; and, whether Ivan Ivanitch liked it or not, he was a peasant proprietor, and must make the best of it; and, to tell the honest truth, as a matter of fact, Ivan generally makes a very poor business of it indeed. It is not that his share of land will not support him; it will support him well enough if he goes the right way to enable it to do so. But there are certain inveterate enemies of Ivan Ivanitch which arise and confront him, and prevent his progress and prosperity, because it is not in the Russian character to resist them.

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The first of these is his unconquerable aversion to work of any sort. The Russian calendar is full of saints' days and of holidays of every kind; and Ivan would sooner see his hay or his oats rot upon the ground than do a stroke of work upon any day which offers the smallest canonical excuse for remaining idle. Then there is 'the drink.' This is the darling vice of the country, and the real cause of the poverty of the peasant classes, and of half the misery that exists throughout the land.

The fields remain half-cultivated because Ivan cannot spare the time to go out to work, and his really exemplary wife cannot do it all, though she does her best, because of the small children at home, of whom she has any number from three to a dozen. As for Ivan himself, he is in the *kabak* or drinking-shop, and cannot be expected to tear himself away for any very prolonged period, for all his friends are there, and why should he be the exception?

If any money comes in—by the sale of hay, or oats, or milk, or anything else—the monopolist who keeps the village drinking-shop knows well enough what becomes of it; so perhaps does Ivan; but it is quite certain that poor, patient, hard-working Masha, his wife, and the small children, see nothing of it. They have their lump of black bread for dinner, and perhaps a particle of the same is left over for supper, and that is good enough for them. Ivan lives on *vodka* chiefly, and leaves most of the rye-bread for his family; but occasionally he indulges in a wooden bowlful of *schee*, which is a kind of cabbage soup, or toys with a trifle of salted herring. He is no great eater.

Let me describe, briefly, the village life of a Russian peasant proprietor; for theoretically the system is excellent, though the practice is spoiled by the idleness and drunkenness of the Moujik himself.

In the first place, I may state, as a curious paradox, that though Russia is presumably the most autocratically governed state in the civilised world, yet each and every village in the Tsar's dominions is a complete and compact little democracy in itself, managing its own affairs without interference from the outside, and managing them, too, with complete and almost unvarying success, in a manner peculiarly its own, and in many ways decidedly worthy of imitation.

The community starts with the data that a certain amount of land is apportioned by authority for the use of the village, and that a certain tax must be paid by the inhabitants into the state coffers as the equivalent. The question is, how to divide the land so that all may have a fair share, and how to divide the tax so that each proprietor may pay according to the benefit derived by him from the communal land. First, then, it is necessary to elect a committee to deal with this question, and to place at the head of the committee a chief who shall be its mouthpiece and administrator. The committee is easily settled. Each adult male who is old enough to work and to accept a share of land for cultivation becomes a member of it; and the body of men thus selected are called the Souls of the Village. They are the peers, and constitute the Mir or world—by which modest designation they style their own community. One of themselves is elected each two or three years, and is called the Starost or Elder, and the council is complete. Then this Mir proceeds to settle the affairs of the community; the most important of which, by far, is the distribution of the land, which is done periodically—once in every two or three years, and is revised by the state inspectors once in fifteen or so. This is a matter in which it is, of course, exceedingly difficult to please all parties. For, if the land be of good, productive quality, of a kind which gives excellent results for a minimum of labour, each person entitled to a share is clamorous for his full rights, and is not happy until he gets them. Every male who is old enough to work is nominally entitled to his share, and consequently—when the land is good—the Mir has a very delicate business before it in settling the claims of those fathers or widow-mothers who possess sons old enough to claim their full share of the communal soil. Such fathers are, of course, themselves members of the apportioning committee, and this makes the settlement a still more delicate question.

The matter is no less difficult when the land is unproductive, and the object of each person is to claim as little of it as possible. Under such circumstances it is wonderful how modest each family shows itself in estimating its own working capacity. The same able-bodied family group which would have clamorously insisted upon being provided with seven shares of good land will now tearfully protest that one share is all it can possibly cultivate; the fact being that when the land is good all will work at it, and it will even pay to engage labourers, if necessary; while, if it be bad and poor, it will pay the family better to send some few members to work for wages in the towns, while one, or perhaps two, remain at home to cultivate the smallest share of land that the Mir can be induced to allot to them: the principal object being to avoid as much as possible of the tax by undertaking as little as possible of the communal land. But gallantly as each family will fight for its rights while the distribution of the land is still in suspense, no one thinks of disputing the ruling of the Mir once the decision has gone forth. When that has happened the Moujiks go out and make the best of their lot, and those who drink a great deal will starve with their families on the best of land, and those who are moderate will do well enough.

If there be a total abstainer in the district (a *rara avis* indeed!) he may easily become a rich man, especially if he has many sons and the land is fairly good. But, however rich he may become, the Moujik never raises the standard of civilisation and comfort (or rather barbarism and discomfort) in which he lives, and in which his fathers have lived for hundreds of years. As they lived and fed, so he feeds and lives; his occupation is upon the land, his relaxation in the drink-shop. His traditions are his ancestors', and he does not desire to change them. He would not care to dress better, or to use soap, or to possess a bed to sleep upon instead of the top of his stove. He would not know what to do with a house of more than one room; a wash-stand would amuse and bewilder him; fresh air (even in summer) in his living room would kill him; he would sooner perish than breathe it. He is the most unbending of conservatives, and would not change or improve his surroundings were he ever so rich.

The Emperor Alexander II. was once indebted to a peasant for saving his life. The Moujik had observed a man raise a pistol as the Tsar passed; and, imagining that the assassin intended to shoot, not the Tsar, but himself, he jogged his arm. As a matter of fact the pistol was aimed at the Tsar, and the fortunate or unfortunate peasant received a gratuity of several thousand pounds for the service he had rendered to his sovereign. That Moujik went home and drank himself to death quicker than that process had ever before been accomplished, and so—under similar circumstances—would ninety-nine out of every hundred of his brethren throughout Russia.

Nevertheless, education is making good strides in the country of this tipsy peasantry; and it may be hoped that the children of the present generation of hard-drinking 'Souls' may be taught to recognise that there are other and higher ideals of amusement than that of their fathers and forefathers, which was and is to sit in the drinking-shop until the *vodka* has so befuddled their foolish brains that they are unfitted for the healthy work of the fields, and who, therefore, put in, on an average, but half-a-day's real labour out of every possible six working days. Let every well-wisher hope that such a day of enlightenment may soon arrive; for the Russian peasant would be a capital fellow if only he would drink less and wash more, and—even occasionally—speak the truth.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXV.—OF OUR WANDERINGS AMONG THE MOORS OF CLYDE.

IF there had been haste before in our journey there was the more now, when in a few hours the countryside would be alive with our foes. I hurriedly considered in my mind the course of events. In three hours' riding the soldiers would come to Abington, and in three more the road to Douglasdale would be blocked by a dozen companies.

We were not long in reaching the cave. Here, to my joy, I found Marjory all recovered from her fright, and the wound hurting her no more than a pin's scratch. When I spoke of immediate progress she listened gladly and was for setting out forthwith. I did not tell her of the soldiers' discomfiture, for I knew that she would fall to chiding me for my foolhardiness, and besides she would have more dismal fears for my future if she knew that I had thus incensed the military against me.

It was with much regret that I bade farewell to Master Lockhart and the old man; nor would they let me go without a promise that if I found myself hard pressed at any time in the days to come I would take refuge with them. So amid the speaking of farewells and well-wishes we rode out into the green moors.

We crossed the river without slacking rein, for the water scarce reached above our horses' pasterns. And now we struck up a burn called the Badlieu, at the foot of which was a herd's sheiling. The spirit of the spring seemed to have clean possessed Marjory, and I had never seen her so gay. She, who was for usual so demure, now cast her gravity to the winds, and seemed bent on taking all the joys of the fair morning. She laughed, she sang snatches of old songs, and she leaped her horse lightly over the moss-trenches. She stooped to pluck some early white wind-flowers, and set some in her hair and some at her saddlebow.

'Nay, John,' she cried, 'if you and I must take to the hills let us do it with some gallantry. It is glorious to be abroad. I would give twelve months of sleepy peace at Dawyck for one hour of this life. I think this must be the Garden of Endless Youth in the fairy tale.'

The same mad carelessness took hold on me also. Of a sudden my outlook on the world changed round to the opposite, and the black forebodings which had been ever present to distress me seemed to vanish like dew before the sun. Soon I was riding as gaily as she; while Nicol, as he ran with great strides and unfaltering breath, he too became light-hearted,

though to tell the truth care was not a commodity often found with him.

Soon we had climbed the low range which separates the Clyde glen from the Tweed, and turned down the narrow ravine of the burn, which I think they call Fopperbeck, and which flows into the Evan Water.

We kept over the rocky ravine through which the little river Evan flows to Annan, and came to the wide moorlands which stretch about the upper streams of the Clyde. Here we had a great prospect of landscape; and far as eye could see no living being but ourselves moved in these desolate wastes. Far down, just at the mouth of the glen where the vale widens somewhat, rose curling smoke from the hamlet of Elvanfoot, a place soon to be much resorted to and briskly busy, since it is there that the by-path goes off leading to the famous lead-mines at the two places of Leadhills and Wanlockhead. But now it was but a miserable roadside clachan of some few low huts, with fodder for neither man nor beast.

As we rode we looked well around us, for we were in an exceeding dangerous part of our journey. To the right lay Abington and the lower Clyde valley, where my sweet cousin and his men held goodly fellowship. To the left was the long pass into Nithsdale, where half-a-score of gentlemen did their best to instil loyalty into the Whigs of the hills. I hated the land to that airt, for I had ever loathed the south and west countries, where there is nought but sour-milk and long prayers, without a tincture of gentrice or letters. I was a man of Tweeddale, who had travelled and studied and mingled among men. I had no grudge against sheltering with the Tweedside rebels, who were indeed of my own folk; but I had no stomach for Nithsdale and Clydesdale rant and ill fare. Had not necessity driven me there, I vow I should never have ventured of myself; and as I rode I swore oftentimes that once I were free of my errand, I would seek my refuge in my own countryside.

And now we were climbing the long range which flanks the Potrail Water, which is the larger of the twin feeders of the Clyde. Again we turned more to the north, and, skirting the wild hills which frown around the pass of Enterkin, sought the upper streams of the Duneaton Water. After crossing a little burn called, I remember, the Snar, which flowed very quietly and pleasantly in a deep heathery glen, we halted and suffered our horses to graze, while we partook of some of the food which the folk of the Cor Water had given us. Now the way which we had come had brought us within seven miles of the dragoons' quarters at Abington, for it was necessary to pass near them to get to Douglasdale and Smitwood. But here in this narrow glen we were in no danger save from some chance, wandering soldier. This danger was the less to be feared since, if Gilbert had any large portion of his men out on one errand, he would be sure to set the rest to their duties as garrison. For my cousin had no love for lax discipline, but had all the family pride of ordering and being obeyed to the letter. So we kindled a little fire by the stream-side, and in the ashes roasted some eggs of a moor-fowl which Nicol had picked up on the journey; and which with the cheese and the cakes we had brought made a better meal than I might hope for for many a day to come. Marjory was somewhat less cheerful than in the morning, partly from the fatigue of riding, which in these waste places is no light thing, and partly because anxiety for my safety and sorrow at our near parting were beginning to oppress her. For herself I verily believe she had no care, for she was brave as a lion in the presence of what most women tremble at. But the loneliness of a great house and the never-appeased desire for knowledge of my safety were things which came nearer so rapidly that I did not wonder she lost her gaiety.

'Oh what will you do alone in these places?' she said. 'If you had but one with you, I should be comforted. Will you not let Nicol accompany you?'

Now when my lady looked at me with melting eyes and twined her hands in her eagerness, it was hard to have to deny her. But I was resolved that my servant should abide at Smitwood to guard her and bring me tidings if aught evil threatened.

'Nay, dear,' I said, 'that may not be. I cannot have you left with an old man who is helpless with age and a crew of hireling servants. I should have no heart to live in the moors if I had not some hope of your safety. Believe me, dear, I can very well defend myself. My skill of hillcraft is as good as any dragoon's, and I have heard folk say that I am no ill hand with a sword. And I know the countryside like the palm of my own hand, and friends are not few among these green glens. Trust me, no ill will come near me, and our meeting will be all the merrier for our parting.'

I spoke heartily, but in truth I was far from feeling such ease of mind. For my old cursed pride was coming back, and I was beginning to chafe against the beggarly trade of skulking among the moors when I had a fine heritage for my own, and above all when I was a scholar and had thoughts of a peaceful life. I found it hard to reconcile my dream of a philosophic life, wherein all things should be ordered according to the dictates of reason, with the rough-and-ready times which awaited me, when my sword must keep my head, and my first thought must be of meat and lodging, and cunning and boldness would be qualities more valuable than subtle speculation and lofty imagining.

In a little we were rested and rode on our way.

Across the great moors of Crawfordjohn we passed, which is a place so lonely that the men in these parts have a proverb, 'Out of the world and into Crawfordjohn.' We still kept the uplands till we came to the springs of a burn called the Glespin, which flows into the Douglas Water. Our easier path had lain down by the side of this stream past the little town of Douglas. But in the town was a garrison of soldiers—small, to be sure, and feeble, but still there—who were used to harry the moors around Cairntable and Muirkirk. So we kept the ridges till below us we saw the river winding close to the hill and the tower of Smitwood looking out of its grove of trees. By this time darkness was at hand, and the last miles of our journey were among darkening shadows. We had little fear of capture now, for we were on the lands of the castle, and Veitch of Smitwood was famed over all the land for a cavalier and a most loyal gentleman. So in quiet and meditation we crossed the stream at the ford, and silently rode up the long avenue to the dwelling.

CHAPTER XXVI.—I PART FROM MARJORY.

'I'VE travelled far and seen many things; but, Gad! I never saw a stranger than this. My niece is driven out of house and home by an over-bold lover, and you, Master Burnet, come here and bid me take over the keeping of this firebrand, which, it seems, is so obnoxious to his Majesty's lieges.'

So spake the old laird of Smitwood, smiling. He was a man of full eighty years of age, but still erect with a kind of soldierly bearing. He was thin and tall, and primly dressed in the fashion of an elder day. The frosty winter of age had come upon him; but in his ruddy cheek and clean-cut face one could see the signs of a hale and vigorous decline. He had greeted us most hospitably, and seemed hugely glad to see Marjory again, whom he had not set eyes on for many a day. We had fallen to supper with a keen appetite—for the air of the moors stirs up the sharpest hunger; and now that we had finished, we sat around the hall fire enjoying our few remaining hours of company together. For myself, I relished the good fare and the warmth, for heaven knew when either would be mine again. The high, oak-roofed chamber, hung with portraits of Veitches many, was ruddy with firelight. Especially the picture in front of the chimney by Van Dyck of that Michael Veitch who died at Philiphaugh, was extraordinarily clear and life-like. Master Veitch looked often toward it; then he took snuff with a great air of deliberation, and spoke in his high, kindly old voice.

'My brother seems well to-night, Marjory. I have not seen him look so cheerful for years.' (He had acquired during his solitary life the habit of talking to the picture as if it were some living thing.) 'I can never forgive the Fleming for making Michael hold his blade in so awkward a fashion. Faith, he would have been little the swordsman he was if he had ever handled sword like that. I can well remember when I was with him at Etzburg, how he engaged in a corner two Hollanders and a Swiss guard, and beat them back till I came up with him and took one off his hands.'

'I have heard of that exploit,' said I. 'You must know that I have just come from the Low Countries, where the names of both of you are still often on men's lips.'

The old man seemed well pleased.

'Ah,' he said, 'so you have come from abroad. In what place did you bide, may I inquire?'

'In the town of Leyden,' said I; 'for my aim was no more than to acquire learning at the college there. But I foregathered with many excellent Scots gentlemen, from whom I heard the talk of the camp and the state.'

'Say you so? Then, what do you here? Did you return on the single errand of protecting my fair niece? But stay! I am an old man who cares not much for the chatter of the country, but I have heard—or am I wrong?—that you were not of the true party, but leaned to the Whigs?'

'Nay,' I cried, 'I beseech you not to believe it. God knows I am a king's man out and out, and would see all whigamores in perdition before I would join with them. But fate has brought me into a strange mixture of misfortunes. I land at Leith, expecting nothing save a peaceful homecoming, and, lo! I find my cousin waiting with a warrant for my arrest. I am accused of something I am wholly innocent of; but I cannot prove it; nay, there is evidence against me, and my enemies in the council are all-powerful. Moreover, if I suffer myself to be taken, Marjory is at the mercy of my foes. I take the only course: give the dragoons the slip, and ride straight to Tweeddale, escort her to a house where she will be safe and unknown, and when this is done take to the hills myself with a light heart. They are too ill-set against me for setting any hope in going to Edinburgh and pleading my case. Was there any other way?'

'None,' said Master Veitch. 'But it is a hard case for yourself. Not the hiding among the moors—that is a noble trade for any young man of spirit; but the consorting with the vile fanatics of these deserts must go sore against your heart.'

Now I, who had just come from the folk of the Cor Water, had no such dread of the hillmen, but I forbore to say it; for Master Veitch had been brought up in one school, these men in another. Both were blind to the other's excellencies; both were leal-hearted men in their own ways. It is a strange providence that has so

ordered it that the best men in the world must ever remain apart through misunderstanding.

'But to come to my errand,' said I. 'I have brought you your niece for protection. You are a king's man, a soldier, and well-known in the countryside. It is more than unlikely that any troops will come nigh you. Nor is it possible that the maid can be traced hither. I ask that you suffer her to abide in the house, while I take myself off that there be the less danger. And, oh! I beseech you, do not refuse me. She is your own flesh and blood. You cannot deny her shelter.'

The old man's face darkened. 'You take me for a strange kinsman, Master Burnet,' he said, 'if you think I would refuse my best aid to a kinswoman in distress. Do you think that you are the sole protector of my house?'

I bowed before his deserved rebuke.

'But for certain, Marjory may abide here as long as she will,' he added cheerfully. 'We will do our best to entertain her, though I am too old to remember well the likings of girls. And if any one comes seeking her on errand of no good, he will learn that William Veitch has not lost the use of his arm.'

'May I ask,' said I, 'that my servant be allowed to stay. He knows the hills as scarce any other living man, and he is faithful and clever as you would hardly believe were I to tell you. With him in the house I should have no fear for its safety.'

'So be it,' said the old man. 'I will not deny that my servants are not so numerous nor so active that another would not be something of an improvement. Has he any skill in cooking?' This he asked in a shamefaced tone, for old as he was he had not lost his relish for good fare.

'I will ask him,' said I; and I called Nicol from the servants' quarters.

'Your master gives me a good account of you,' said the cracked voice of the laird of Smitwood, 'and I would fain hope it is true. I wish to interrogate you about—ah, your powers—ah, of cooking pleasing dishes,' and he waved his hand deprecatingly.

'Oh, your honour, I am ready for a' thing,' said Nicol. 'Sheep's heid singit to a thocht, cocky-leeky, and a' kind o' soup, mutton in half-a-dozen different ways, no' to speak o' sic trifles as confections. I can cook ye the flesh o' the red-deer, and the troots frae the burn, forbye haggis and brose, partan-pies, and rizzard-haddies, crappit-heids, and skate-rumples, nowt's feet, kebbucks, scadlips, and skink. Then I can wark wi' custocks and carlings, rifarts and syboes, farles, fadges, and bannocks, drammock, brochan, and powsowdie.'

'That will do; you may go,' said the old man, rubbing his hands with glee. 'By my word, a genuine Scots gastronome, skilled in the ancient dishes of the land. I anticipate a pleasing time while he bides here.'

It was long ere the worthy gentleman could get over his delight in the project of my servant's presence. Even after he had gone he sat and chuckled to himself, for he was known among his friends to have a fine taste for dainties. Meantime the light was dying out of doors, and more logs were laid on the fire till it crackled and leaped like a live thing. I have ever loved the light of a wood-fire, for there is no more heartsome thing on earth than its cheerful crackle when one comes in from shooting on the hills in the darkening of a winter's day. Now I revelled in the comfort of it, since on the morrow I would have no other cheer than a flaming sunset.

So we sat around the hearth and talked of many things till the evening was late. The old man fell to the memories of former folk, and told us tales of our forebears as would have made them turn in their graves could they have heard them. Of my house he had scarce a good word to speak, averring that they were all 'scape-the-gallows, every one, but gallant fellows in their way. 'There was never a Burnet,' he cries, 'who would scruple to stick a man who doubted his word, or who would not ride a hundred miles to aid a friend. There were no lads like the Burnets in all the countryside for dicing and feasting and riding break-neck on the devil's errand. But, Gad! if they were stubborn as bulls when they were down themselves, they were as tender as women to folk in trouble.'

'There's one of their name like to be in trouble for many days to come,' said I.

'Meaning yourself? Well, it will do you no ill. There's naught better for a young man than to find out how little the world cares whether he is dead or alive. And above all, you that pretend to be a scholar, it will ding some of the fine-spun fancies out of your head. But for the Lord's sake, laddie, dinna get a bullet in your skull, or you'll have me with all my years taking the field to pay back them that did it.' He spoke this so kindly that I was moved to forget the first half of his words through the excellency of the latter. In truth I much needed the rough lessons of hardship and penury, for at that time I was much puffed up in a self-conceit and a certain pride of letters as foolish as it was baseless.

'I must be off in the morning before the dawning, for I have to be on the hills ere the soldiers get abroad. I must beg of you not to disturb yourself, Master Veitch, for my sake, but just to bid them make ready for me some provisions; and I will slip off ere the household be awake. It is better to say farewell now than to have many sad leave-takings at the moment of departure. I have no fear of my journey, for my legs are as good as any man's, and I can make my hands keep my head. Also, my mind is easy since I know that Marjory is safe here.'

'Then I will even bid you good-bye, John,' said he, 'for I am an old man, and keep early

hours. If you will follow me, I will take you to your chamber.—Alison will take you to the old room, Marjory, where you have not been since you were a little lass scarce up to my knee.' And with obvious intent he walked out.

'God keep you, John,' my dear lass whispered on my shoulder. 'I will never cease to think of you. And oh! be not long in coming back.'

And this was the last I saw of my lady for many days.

VISITORS FROM SPACE.

THE round earth upon which our lives are passed is surrounded by an envelope of air which, a few miles from the surface, becomes so attenuated that life can no longer be supported in it. A few years ago some daring aëronauts rose to a height of nine miles in this thin medium, nearly losing their lives as a reward for their temerity; and it is a matter of common knowledge that this attenuation of the air is the most serious obstacle to progress with which mountaineers at high altitudes have to contend. Hence, it is obvious that we are confined to this earth by a barrier which, 'light as air' though it be, is as effectual as if it were composed of solid metal.

But although none of us can get away from this earthly prison to visit those other worlds which astronomy teaches are circling round about our own, the reception by us of visitors from space is by no means an uncommon occurrence. These strangers take the form of stones or masses of metal called meteorites, which have for convenience been arranged in three classes. The first consist mainly of iron, and are called *siderites;* the second class consist of iron and stone, and are known as *siderolites;* and the third class, being wholly or chiefly composed of stony matter, are called *aërolites.* In addition to iron, some twenty-five elementary substances such as are found in the earth's crust have been detected by analysis in meteorites; and up to the present no body unfamiliar to chemistry has been discovered in them.

Up to the beginning of the present century the fall of these stones from the sky was a matter of tradition in which very few believed. There were vague ideas as to the possibility of thunderbolts falling to the earth from the clouds, born, no doubt, of the terror excited by the noise and tumult of a storm and of the fatalities connected with lightning-stroke combined. But the fall of solid matter from the sky—except as thunderbolts—was a superstition woven from tradition and the exaggeration of some of the old historians.

Such traditions are numerous, the most ancient record of the kind being found in the tenth chapter of the book of Joshua, in which we read of great stones being cast down from heaven, and many men being slain by them. Possibly hailstones may here be referred to, but there are other records in which actual stony matter is indicated. Thus, in Livy's *History of Rome* is found an account of a rain of stones which was regarded with such awe that a nine days' festival was ordered by the senate. The fall of a stone from the sky has often been regarded by semi-civilised peoples as such a miraculous occurrence that the object itself has become a kind of fetich or subject of adoration. The most recent instance of the kind may be found in the records of the Geological Survey of India for 1885, where we are told that a meteoric stone which had recently fallen in that country was regarded with the greatest veneration, being decked with flowers, anointed with oil, or rather ghee (clarified butter), and dusted with sandalwood powder, a shrine being erected over it in the place where it fell.

At the close of the last century the German philosopher Chladni—to whom the world is indebted for some valuable researches and experiments with regard to sound—collected a mass of evidence with regard to the fall of sky-stones; and boldly stated, in opposition to the general scientific opinion of the day, his belief that such bodies came from space. He showed how many of these objects had been picked up at the top of mountains or in other situations where nothing of the same metallic composition could be found; and although some had asserted that such stones might have been ejected from volcanoes, he pointed out that they were found where volcanoes were only conspicuous by their absence.

But Chladni's theory was altogether discredited, although shortly after its enunciation there was a remarkable fall of stones at Siena, in Tuscany. This shower happened to occur during a violent thunderstorm and about eighteen hours after an eruption of Vesuvius; so that those who paid no heed to Chladni's reasoning were able to put forward two theories of their own. One was that the stones were generated in 'the igneous mass of clouds which produced such unusual thunder; and the other was that Vesuvius, two hundred and fifty miles away, had shot these missiles from its subterranean recesses. This latter idea was shortly after improved upon by the notion that stones from the sky were formed by a condensation of the ashes and mineral matter which form dense clouds above volcanoes during a period of activity.

At length, a labourer working in the fields near Scarborough, Yorkshire, saw to his dismay a stone fall close to him, and bury itself in the

ground. This occurrence took place on a fine afternoon in December 1795. The stone weighed half-a-hundredweight, and on contact with the earth pierced twelve inches of soil and six inches of chalk rock. The observer of this phenomenon was possibly too terrified to note anything but the fall of the stone; but those in the near neighbourhood heard a series of explosions like the firing of guns at sea, and hastened to the spot to ascertain the cause. A few years later a shower of stones at a place near Benares, in India, was preceded by the appearance in the sky of a ball of fire and an explosion like thunder. Fragments of the Yorkshire stone, of those others from India, as well as bits of two more which had fallen at other widely-separated places, were analysed, and showed such remarkable points of agreement that the subject was brought before the Royal Society (London) in 1802 by Edward Howard, who strongly favoured the opinion that the stones had their origin outside the earth.

A year later a big shower of stones occurred in France, and the well-known scientist Biot was directed by the Minister of the Interior to visit the district where the occurrence had happened, and to report upon the subject. He reported that on a certain date, at one o'clock in the afternoon, in the neighbourhood of L'Aigle (in the department of Orne), a violent explosion lasting several minutes was heard for a distance of seventy-five miles around; that just previously a fireball in quick movement was seen from many adjacent towns and villages, and that many stones fell on the same day. The report of M. Biot was far too complete and circumstantial to be lightly regarded, and it compelled even those who had laughed at Chladni's theory to turn round and acknowledge that they had been wrong. From this date, 1803, the fact has never been questioned that masses of solid matter—stony, metallic, or mixed in composition—occasionally fall from the sky, and often in such clear weather that they may fairly be described as 'bolts from the blue.'

One of the latest events of the kind was the explosion and fall of stones which occurred at Madrid on 10th February 1896. This happened on a fine morning, and the explosion seemed to come from a rapidly-moving cloudlet in the blue sky. The description is probably correct, for it agrees with what is taken as the accepted theory with regard to these visitors from the heavens. Whatever be their origin, it would seem that these solid bodies are hurtling through space at velocities which may be anything between ten and forty miles a second. If they come near enough to this earth to be attracted by it, their course is changed, and presently they enter our atmosphere. The result is a sudden check to their speed, owing to the intense resistance and friction engendered by contact with the air particles. What happens may be likened to the sudden application of the wooden brake-block to the rapidly-moving wheel of an express train. Heat is generated in exchange for motion, and the trail of sparks from the checked wheel is represented in the checked meteorite by a luminous trail. We commonly call it a shooting-star; and if its mass be small it is possibly altogether dissipated in heat and gas—or it may ultimately find its way to our earth as dust. Such 'meteoric dust' has been found on the eternal snow of mountains, where dust of the ordinary type would be impossible. If, on the other hand, the mass of matter be large, its surface only will be affected by the sudden heat generated, and it may fall to the ground entire, or possibly—as in the case of the Madrid stone—may explode and be scattered in fragments over a wide area.

Many are the theories which have been advanced to account for the origin of meteors and shooting-stars, taking meteors to mean the larger and more prominent of these moving bodies, and shooting-stars to represent those smaller ones which for a brief moment attract the observer's notice. Some have held that they are ejected from the sun itself, but we can hardly reconcile this with the undoubted fact that many of the bodies found are combustible in their nature. The moon has also been credited with ejecting these stony masses from its volcanoes; but as far as we know there are no active volcanoes in the moon now, whatever might have been in the past. Even supposing that once upon a time the queen of night threw these missiles at us, the chance of hitting the earth would be very small, and the chance of such missiles, after missing us, ever coming into our neighbourhood again is too remote to be seriously considered.

Sir Robert Ball has pointed out that if we want to give a volcanic origin to meteoric stones it is much easier to believe that they were ejected in bygone times from terrestrial volcanoes, for in that case they would naturally take up a path round the sun which would intersect the earth's orbit. Whenever, therefore, the earth touched this particular point in her annual journey, the presence of some wandering meteorite might be rendered apparent by contact with our atmosphere. Still, there remains the potent argument that the many volcanoes on the earth do not eject stones or metallic masses of the composition peculiar to meteorites. For, long after the extra-terrestrial origin of meteorites was conceded, it was believed that the smallar bodies, or shooting-stars, were generated in our atmosphere; but the occurrence of meteor swarms at recurring periods, and the establishment of their close connection with comets, demolished the idea.

A question of absorbing interest arises with the endeavour, hitherto abortive, to find out the origin of these masses of matter. Do they bring with them evidence of the existence of living beings in those realms of boundless space from

which they come? Do they, in other words, tell us anything about the possibility of life on other worlds than ours? The answer must be in the negative. The presence in certain meteorites of carbon compounds, which might be the indirect result of animal or vegetable life, at one time gave credence to the idea that we here had proofs of life on other spheres; but it has since been pointed out that such compounds are present only in the pores of the stone, and can be removed without breaking it up, indicating that such products may have been gathered in a gaseous state as it tore through our atmosphere.

'SANTA ANNA.'

CHAPTER IV.

FOR the next few days, perhaps the angriest woman in London was Lady Maplehurst. She had made light of the danger threatening her liege; she had a hazy idea that no minion of the law would dare to lay hands upon an earl. After the first flood of tears she hardened herself for the fray.

She had read somewhere that a peer was free of arrest for anything short of a capital offence, a point on which the family lawyer speedily undeceived her. As a matter of fact, Maplehurst was no hereditary legislator, and even a noble duke was not free where contempt of court was concerned. Did not a certain duchess a while ago taste the indignity of Holloway for the same thing?

It was scant comfort for Lady Maplehurst that her husband had his own apartment, and that he could partake of regular and well-cooked meals provided that he paid for them himself. She began to lose faith in the blandishments of sister Lucy, and to regard the Lord Chancellor as a heartless philanderer. Meanwhile the Privy Council preferred to dally with puerile matters of state, and the Queen still remained at Balmoral, utterly indifferent to the sufferings of the noble lord, whose ancestors had bled for the crown.

'How long is it likely to last?' her ladyship asked with the calmness of despair.

'Well—er—I don't apprehend his lordship will be released for at least a fortnight,' said the lawyer blandly. 'Fortunately a voluntary settlement of all your money has been made on you by Lord Maplehurst. This is, of course, all in his favour. We'll make an application on Friday week.'

And with this her ladyship had to be content. Had she seen her husband taking exercise in the same yard with quite ordinary prisoners she might have felt less satisfied than she was.

Meanwhile the pieces of the puzzle in the deft hand of fate were being put rapidly together. The mystery seemed as inexplicable as ever; but every moment was bringing it to completion.

Morton was still puzzled, however. He had a clew that more than ever convinced him that the prisoner under remand in Holloway was concerned in the robbery of the supposed 'Santa Anna.' He hoped to make much out of proving that the notes found on the culprit had been unlawfully obtained; but things were unsettled in Bechuanaland at present, and the matter was more difficult than it seemed at first blush.

Moreover, the magistrate at Bow Street had hinted to Inspector Morton that, unless something more tangible was offered at the next hearing, he should have no alternative but to release the prisoner. Morton smiled in a superior manner, but he was at his wits' end all the same.

With a vague idea that he might make use of the man, he dropped in upon Shorter, and incidentally mentioned his trouble.

'I'm cock-sure I have the right man,' he said.

'Well, you may,' Shorter responded. He had no intention of disclosing the fact that the burglary was a bogus affair altogether. 'And one thing proves your deduction. The man who wrote the letters found on your prisoner is Moss.'

'You feel quite sure of this?'

'I am going to prove it to you. Here is a scrap of paper written by Moss, which I got from him by a little stratagem. Compare it with your capture.'

Morton did so, and professed himself satisfied. Shorter shook his head knowingly. As a matter of fact, he was as much in the dark as Morton, only the latter was entirely on the wrong track, and Shorter wasn't.

Nevertheless, he could not even yet see the connection between Moss and the swindle perpetrated upon Hunt & Roscoe. These letters, Morton very naturally supposed, related to the burglary. That he was called in to investigate the burglary as a mere blind, Morton did not dream. And Shorter was much nearer the mark in connecting the letters with the swindle proper.

'I'll tell you what,' he said after a long pause. 'I've got a permit to see Lord Maplehurst in Holloway to-day at three. I want you to arrange for me to see him in the exercise-yard. If the other prisoners are paraded at the same time, I

may be able to identify your man. Remember, I have encountered a few criminals in my time.'

Morton nodded his head gloomily.

'Oh, I'll arrange it if you like,' he said. 'Not that I anticipate anything of real importance. Still, you *might* know the fellow. I'll see the thing is arranged before this afternoon.'

With this promise Morton departed, and when Shorter arrived at grim Holloway, later in the day, he found Lord Maplehurst gravely pacing a gloomy yard at a respectful distance from a group of men tastefully dressed in the artistic livery thoughtfully provided by the state.

Maplehurst was looking somewhat pale. Evidently the confinement was telling upon his health and spirits. He welcomed Shorter with a warmth which would have been lacking under more lively conditions. Contrary to rules and regulations governing such cases, his lordship was smoking a cigarette.

'I managed to screw this concession out of the doctor,' he said; 'but it's most awfully slow here, Shorter. Look at those poor beggars tramping round yonder. I wanted to get up a game of leap-frog with them, but the warders wouldn't have it. And the fools here call that kind of thing exercise.'

As his lordship spoke, a big door clanged open, and a lot of other men entered the paved quadrangle. In their case the livery was conspicuous by its absence. Being prisoners under remand, vigilance in their case was not so great.

A warder with long chain and clanking keys came up to Shorter.

'The fellow in the gray overcoat and brown hat is Morton's man,' he whispered.

Shorter nodded, and the warder passed on. As the prisoners under remand came round in drooping couples, Shorter kept a keen eye upon his man. When the latter passed he gave a violent start and turned away.

Shorter marvelled, but said nothing. That he had never seen the fellow before he felt certain, that he himself had not been recognised he was equally positive. In that case Lord Maplehurst must be the cause of the agitation.

Shorter waited further developments. He was pleased to notice that the delinquent fought shy of his side of the yard. Then he and Maplehurst crossed the intervening space and literally forced the man into a corner.

'Look at that chap yonder,' he whispered eagerly; 'he's avoiding your lordship, and I should very much like to know why. Do you recognise him?'

'I don't think so,' Maplehurst replied. 'Anyway, you're quite right. He certainly is fighting shy of us. I'll soon see.'

Without further ceremony, Maplehurst strode up to the shifty prisoner, and taking him by the shoulders, turned him round. He gave a cry of astonishment. Shorter hurried to the spot.

'I was right, your lordship,' he exclaimed.

'Rather. It's a funny thing, by George! and a good one for your clients that they happened to send you here. This is my late secretary, Pearson.'

The detected rascal gave a groan and grew calm again. There was nothing to be gained by a further display of assumed innocence.

Shorter struggled with a tendency to throw up his hat and dance a *pas seul* upon the flagged pavement. Never since he had been in business had such a streak of luck as this come his way. He saw his way now to recover the whole of the money lost by his clients, who, out of common gratitude——

'What are you doing here?' Maplehurst demanded.

'Haven't a notion,' Pearson said coolly. 'Burglary they call it. And I'm as innocent of it as your lordship is himself. That I'll swear.'

'Never committed a burglary in his life,' Shorter said cheerfully. 'But look here, my good sir, there are other things besides. Pictures, for instance. You might just as well make a clean breast of it. I can lay my hand on Moss at any moment; and he's certain to squeak. Now, whereabouts in Southampton can I find that "Santa Anna"?'

Pearson's face was a study. A peculiar green hue, a kind of sickly varnish, glistened upon his smooth features.

'I don't know what you are talking about,' he muttered.

'Oh yes, you do,' Shorter went on in the same sanguine strain. 'But for his lordship being detained here under an order for contempt of court you might have got clear away altogether. Unfortunately certain letters were found upon you which led to the belief that you had been guilty of burglary; and so they remanded you here. I happen to know that you didn't commit that burglary.'

'I swear I didn't,' Pearson cried eagerly.

'I know—I know. But you can't deny that you took advantage of your master's enforced absence from England to personate him; you can't deny that you and Moss hit upon the happy idea of getting Manders.'

'Manders,' Pearson gurgled.

'Yes, Manders. And Moss, and Lemaire *alias* Frederic, and a secret way of getting into Messrs Hunt & Roscoe's premises. Never heard of such a thing as the wax impression of a safe-key perhaps. It was a pretty idea, but you overdid it. Most men would have been satisfied with the cash for the original picture; but you wanted two big lots of cash and the original plunder to boot. And the thing turned out trumps apparently. Had Lord Maplehurst not trusted you so implicitly this thing never could have happened.'

'You're right there,' Pearson muttered.

'And a nice mess you've got me into,' Maplehurst remarked. 'Only I shall be away from here before you, after all.'

Pearson very wisely confined himself to silence.

'Unfortunately for you,' Shorter resumed, 'the law was allowed to slacken. On the strength of the success of your venture you allowed yourself to indulge in the flowing bowl to such an extent that you found yourself in Southampton station instead of in the dock there.'

'The dock will come in due course,' Maplehurst suggested.

'Very neat, your lordship, very neat,' Shorter murmured. 'Well, after that, you probably got into the train in a muddled condition and consequently found your way to London. Upon what happened subsequently I will not enlarge. What I am anxious to discover now is what has become of the picture and where are the notes for which you changed the cheque received from Messrs Forrest.

By this time Pearson had practically recovered his equanimity. He knew that he could gain nothing either by a defiant or an apologetic attitude.

'Well,' he said coolly, 'as you seem to be so confoundedly clever, you had better find out for yourself. Pity to spoil the riddle by telling it.'

With which Pearson turned upon his heel after politely saluting his late employer.

'A wonderfully neat swindle,' said the latter.

'Well, yes, my lord,' Shorter remarked. 'You see we can afford to admire the neatness of it, seeing that the entertainment is not likely to be costly. Barring a few pounds, we shall recover all the money and the picture to boot.'

'It's been costly enough for me,' Maplehurst said grimly.

Indeed his lordship seemed likely to be the only sufferer. But Shorter's mind was too full of other things to concern much about Maplehurst. As speedily as possible he hunted out Baron Brantano and informed him what had happened.

'Of course I can help you further,' said the latter. 'I certainly paid Pearson for the "Santa Anna" in Bank of Bechuanaland notes, as his spurious lordship objected to a cheque, seeing that he was about to travel. I can give you the numbers of these notes if you like.'

Baron Brantano did more than this. He not only produced a list of the numbers of the notes, but he was in a position to inform Shorter the name of the hotel where Pearson had stayed.

Armed with this information, Shorter journeyed down to Southampton. With very little trouble he found out all about 'Lord Maplehurst.' The latter had been staying at 'The Old Yacht' hotel, and had announced, prior to his departure, that he intended sailing by a certain boat for Jersey. By so doing no doubt he intended to reach the coast of France by a less conventional route. On the day fixed for his departure he had lunched somewhat freely, and afterwards departed for the station with a friend who was going somewhere by train, thus proving the correctness of Shorter's theory. Before his 'lordship' quitted the hotel he left instructions as to the disposal of his luggage; but as he did not return, and his bill remained unpaid, the same was detained.

'Eccentric, very eccentric,' Shorter said with a Solon-like expression. 'Just what my foolish friend told me. However, I've come to pay the account, and as I'm returning to London, where his lordship now is, I'll take his traps with me.'

It was a bold stroke, and one which, moreover, cost Shorter sixteen pounds in hard cash; but as a packing-case and a Gladstone-bag were produced he felt pretty assured that he was getting good value for his money. And so it transpired; for, when London was reached, Shorter drove straight to Piccadilly, and there, in the presence of Hunt & Roscoe, forced open both parcels.

'Heaven be praised,' Hunt gasped fervently.

'I feel like a new man,' Roscoe said in the same tone.

For there before them, in all its beauty, stood the 'Santa Anna.' There was more to come also, for in the Gladstone-bag, crushed between silk mufflers, was a bundle of Bank of England notes to the value of £19,560, and somewhere about the same in Bechuanalands. Taking it altogether, Hunt & Roscoe looked like getting their own back, like saving their reputation both for probity and artistic acumen, and all for less than £500.

'I tell you what we'll do,' Shorter observed when at length the partners were sufficiently sane to discuss business. 'So long as the Baron gets his money back he has promised me that he will say nothing. And if there is a trial, at which it comes out that a telegram, apparently intended for some one else was used by you to—er—that is, in the way of business, people may talk. We'll get Lord Maplehurst to prosecute Pearson merely for stealing a picture, you understand, and we might safely add the charge of forgery too. Morton doesn't know about anything besides the burglary; at least not much.'

Needless to say, Messrs Hunt & Roscoe were only too willing to agree to this course. And in the fullness of time Pearson was put upon his trial and sentenced to ten years for larceny and five for forgery, having pleaded guilty to the charges; so that the name and nature of the painting formed no feature at the trial.

Another fortunate thing transpired for the partners. How it was done and how it came about will always remain a mystery; but the fact remains that Pearson found some way to communicate with Mr Moss; for when the police paid the latter rascal a visit he was nowhere to

be found. He had managed to get clear away and still continues to elude the vigilance of the authorities.

Lord Maplehurst came up to give evidence at the trial of Pearson on the same day that an order was made for his discharge, so that when he left the witness-box he stepped out of it a free man. He was quite prepared, he said, to waive his claim to the 'Santa Anna,' but Lady Maplehurst declared that now she would not part with it under any circumstances, and Baron Brantano gracefully yielded.

A present of £1000 from Hunt & Roscoe to Shorter amply compensated him for all his trouble in the matter.

'You need not thank us,' said Roscoe. 'You have saved us a great deal more than that;' which was true, considering how perilously near the firm had been to becoming bankrupt in both estate and reputation.

AUSTRALIAN SNAKES AND SNAKE-YARNS.

SOME time ago I read in an English journal what purported to be an account, from personal knowledge, of Australian or rather Victorian snakes. It was a tissue of errors, the most notable of which was the assertion that the carpet-snake was one of the most venomous. Almost every one knows that the carpet-snake is one of the pythons, and therefore non-venomous.

The snake is pre-eminent in this respect, that it is the only Victorian animal which is really dangerous to man.

One may hear at times wonderful tales of old-men kangaroos trying to drown men in water-holes, or of dingoes going in mobs and endangering the lives of belated travellers; but these are tales which, in most instances, are intended to interest or terrify new-comers, or, as we call them, 'new chums.'

It is, however, an undoubted fact that the presence of venomous snakes is a real danger to life; and therefore it is that every man's hand is against them, although they, as a rule, do not show fight unless they are attacked or at any rate prevented from reaching their holes.

In and around the snake, also, there lingers a weird fascination, caused in part by religious history and partly by the *beauté du diable* which it possesses.

Many people will scoff at the idea of a snake's possessing any beauty, *du diable* or of any other kind; but they are blinded by the repulsive feeling which the sight of the reptile evokes.

Just as in England, around the fireside on winter nights, the conversation turns on ghosts, so in Australia, particularly in the bush, and doubly so when there are visitors from other lands, the talk centres a good deal on the snake. The visitor will be wise if he takes what he hears with a grain of salt. It is the nature of man to exaggerate, and snake-yarns and fish-yarns are notorious in Victoria as possessing less truth to the acre than any others.

In travelling about one hears strange accounts of various snakes which are not known to the field-naturalist—namely, of the hoop-snake, which, when it wants to go downhill, takes its tail in its mouth and rolls down; of the whip-snake, which is so like a whip-lash that men have taken them and tried to fasten them to whip-handles; but, most of all, in many districts there is a collection of tales about 'the big snake' which has been seen by one and another at various times. Just as the sea-serpent is still occasionally seen by imaginative persons, so some of the Victorian ranges are haunted by snakes far surpassing in size any Victorian snake that has ever been measured by scientists.

Some years ago, while staying at Dean's Marsh, a little hamlet in the Otway Ranges, I had a good chance of hearing part of the snake-lore of the place: how one man had seen a huge snake at least fifteen feet in length lying basking by the road-side, and was afraid to tackle it, but on going a little farther had met a man on horseback with a twenty feet stock-whip, and he also on seeing the monster feared to disturb it; how another had seen it sleeping under a cliff, and creeping up to the top had dropped a rock on it, and then run away without waiting to see the effect.

The fact is, that no Victorian snake exceeds seven feet, if I except the carpet-snake, which is found only in the extreme north of the colony.

This, as I mentioned above, is non-venomous, and kills its prey by squeezing it to death.

There are five kinds of venomous snakes in Victoria: the tiger-snake, the black snake, the brown snake, the copperhead, and the death-adder.

The last mentioned is very rare in Victoria, and very venomous. It is about two feet long, very thick in proportion to its length, of a dull-brown colour, and with a flat, wide head. The strangest thing about it is that many people believe its sting is contained in the tail.

Leaving the death-adder out of the count, there are four species which are fairly common. The tiger-snake comes first, in popular estimation, if not in reality. It is regarded as the most venomous and the most savage. It attains in some districts a length of about six feet, but the

majority of specimens are from three to four feet long. Its colouring is variegated, black and brown on the back and pale-brown on the belly. When attacked it sometimes raises its head to the height of about a foot from the ground; and its appearance then, as it rests on its coils with its head seemingly widened out, its neck contracted, its forked tongue flickering out of its mouth, and its eyes blazing with rage, makes the average man rather chary of approaching. One good point is that the backbone of all snakes is easily broken by a blow from a stick, and the power of locomotion is thus taken away. Next on the list is the black snake. This is rather larger than the tiger, and the handsomest of all Victorian snakes. The back is jet-black, and shines like a well-polished boot, and the belly is a beautiful salmon-pink. It is less common than the tiger-snake, and is very frequently confounded with the copperhead. The brown snake is brown on the back, whity-brown on the belly, and about the same length as the other two. The commonest of all, at any rate near Melbourne, is the copperhead, which is found in most parts of Victoria. As its name implies, it has a coppery head, a dark back, and a yellowish belly. It is very hard in some cases to distinguish the various species, as they vary so much in size and colour in different places. For instance, in the Otway Ranges, near Lorne, which is now a fashionable watering-place, a snake four feet long is considered large, while in Gippsland it is a common thing to find them five or six feet in length.

Another circumstance which causes confusion is the fact that the male and female are not exactly alike.

Having now briefly described the chief kinds of snakes, I shall mention a few facts in connection with them which have come under my own notice or have been told me on reliable authority.

In travelling through the bush, nearly everybody carries a stick, and so is prepared if a snake is seen. One peculiarity of snakes is that they seem to vanish if the eye is once turned away from them. You may see a snake lying seemingly asleep, you look round for a moment, and when you look back the snake is gone. It is surprising how small a hole or covering serves as a retreat. They are rather partial to rabbit burrows, and rabbits and snakes seem to dwell together in amity, though I expect the snake never goes hungry while there are young rabbits about. Hollow logs are a favourite haunt, and in this way they are sometimes brought into the heart of Melbourne by wood-carters. Snakes are generally plentiful in swamps; snipe-shooters at times get more snakes than snipe, and dogs are sometimes bitten. The 'record' bag was five snipe and fifteen snakes; and, though I cannot vouch for its truth, it may be true, as I got the same average myself—namely, one snipe and three snakes.

Dogs often learn to kill snakes, but they are certain to be killed themselves sooner or later. Their *modus operandi*, when they find a snake, is to spring on it, seize it near the neck, give it a vigorous shake, let go, and jump back before the snake can strike; if the first shake does not disable, they seize and shake again till they kill it. I once saw two dogs kill a snake in this way very neatly; the moment one dog let go the other seized hold, and the snake had no chance at all.

Another snake-destroyer is the laughing-jackass or giant kingfisher, a bird as large as a small pigeon, and possessing a very powerful bill. This bird seizes the snake by the neck, flies up twenty feet or so into the air and then drops it; if the first fall is not enough it continues the operation till its prey is thoroughly disabled. I may mention that this bird is the champion humourist of the 'bush,' though I am sorry to say no Australian poet has yet risen to celebrate it as it deserves.

Eagles, hawks, and crows also destroy snakes; the iguana, a large lizard which attains a length of five or six feet, and has an armoured skin like the crocodile, is also regarded as a snake-killer; and tame and wild cats take part in the good work.

Summer is of course the time of activity for all the snakes, as they lie dormant or semi-dormant in winter. They begin to come out from their holes in September, and are found from then till May. Their food consists of lizards, mice, frogs, and other small deer, and they are popularly credited with possessing a fondness for milk. They are all fond of the water, and are strong swimmers.

As a proof of this, I may mention that, on one occasion, when yachting in the Gippsland Lakes, we met a tiger-snake swimming from one point of land to another, and at least three miles from the nearest land. He was swimming strongly and well; but a charge of shot broke his back, and the last we saw of him was his body floating belly upwards. I have also seen snakes swimming across rivers, and have known them to be found at the bottom of wells.

There are few bush farmhouses which have not had their snake-history. One of the most remarkable tales, and one which I know to be true, was told me at Hedi, a little place on the King River, about one hundred and twenty miles from Melbourne as the crow flies. The eight-year-old son of one of the settlers was accustomed to sleep with the other children in a small room a little distance from the house. All at once the little fellow began to tell his sisters and then his father and mother that a snake used to come into his bed. When sent to bed at night he used to cry, and say he was afraid of the snake. His parents, not believing the story, and thinking it was an invention, threatened to

whip him if he said anything more about it, and this silenced him. However, a few mornings after, the little fellow overslept himself, and when one of his sisters went to call him, she, to her horror, saw a large black snake coiled on the pillow by the boy's head. She at once rushed out and gave the alarm, and an elder brother ran to the spot, armed with a pitchfork; he went in, deftly thrust the handle of the fork into the middle of the coil, yanked the snake on to the floor, and then despatched it with a couple of blows. The little fellow was none the worse in one way, but his nerves were so shaken that his parents had to send him to town for a time.

In another house, the lady on going down to her dairy one day found it tenanted by an unwelcome intruder in the shape of a snake. None of the menfolk were near the house, so she seized the broom, killed the snake, and then fainted. I expect most ladies would have fainted first; but in the bush familiarity breeds, not exactly contempt, but at any rate fearlessness.

On the other hand, I was once out wallaby-shooting with a man who insisted on poking his gun into every tussock of grass before he would put his foot down; and I heard of another who, when the cry of snake was raised, dropped his gun, made a bee-line for the nearest house, and refused to budge from it until they came for him with a buggy. When they returned to the hotel to spend the night, the practical joker of the party put an eel into the timid one's bed and nearly frightened him into a fit.

I was once walking along the Erskine River, at Lorne, in company with two friends, one of whom was rather afraid of snakes. We were stepping from rock to rock, whiling away the journey with talk, when suddenly my timid friend 'shied' across to the other side like a flash. 'What's up?' said I; and looking forward I saw, about three feet from me, a tiger-snake, partly coiled, but with head upraised about a foot and flattened out, just as it seemed in the act to strike; however, my stick was the quicker, and one well-directed blow broke his back. This explained my timid friend's 'shy;' and after chaffing him a bit, and smashing the snake's head with a stone, we went on our way.

We had not gone far when another snake was espied. It at once dived into the water, which was about three feet deep, and seemed to be trying to hide itself under a rock at the bottom of the pool. My friend, anxious to retrieve his reputation, shouted, 'Let me at him,' and rushed forward with lifted stick to the edge; but the edge was slippery, and next moment he and stick and snake were in the pool together. Surely never man was frightened more; one frantic leap, and he was yards away. We roared with laughter at his plight, and the joke was so good that we were almost tempted to let the innocent cause escape; but that could not be.

There are no professional snake-charmers in Australia; but we have professional snake-catchers, as the following anecdote will show. A friend, a chemist in Melbourne, was one day standing behind his counter when a sleepy-looking countryman strolled into the shop, and accosted him with the question, 'I say, boss, do you want to buy any snakes?' 'What!' said my friend; 'have you any?'

'Oh yes, boss,' said the man, plunging his hand into a bran-bag which he was carrying, and bringing out three or four. He was coming up to the counter with them, when my friend yelled to him to stand still, as he was quite near enough.

'Oh! they won't bite, boss,' said the man, continuing to handle them as if they were kittens.

'You stand where you are, and put the brutes back in the bag, and then I'll talk to you,' shouted my friend.

The man obeyed, and my friend then asked him what he was doing with the snakes.

'Well, boss,' said he, 'I brought them from the country to sell to the Zoological Gardens in the Royal Park; but none are wanted there just now, and so I am trying to sell them elsewhere.'

'I'll give you a crown for the largest, if you will put him into a bottle for me,' said my friend.

'Done, boss,' said the fellow; and plunging his hand again into the bag, he drew out a tiger-snake about five feet long; and, again remarking 'he won't bite,' he proceeded to stuff it head first into the bottle.

It was so large that its head began to get perilously near the mouth of the bottle before its body and tail were all in; but the man pooh-poohed the idea of danger, and continued to push away till his task was accomplished.

My friend at once filled the bottle with spirits, corked it tightly, and now exhibits it to admiring friends as a memento of 'what may happen to a man in Melbourne.' There is a sequel to the story which also presents some comical features.

Another chemist, who had a collection of curios, lived a few streets away, and my friend, thinking to do him a good turn, sent the man there.

A week or two afterwards they met, and chemist No. 2 started the conversation by asking angrily, 'What on earth did you mean by sending that infernal lunatic to my shop?'

'What lunatic?' said No. 1.

'Why, the fellow with the snakes. He marched into my shop, said you had sent him, and immediately hauled out a handful. I bolted out of the door, rushed to the nearest policeman, and had the fellow arrested; and I'll thank you to keep your lunatics to yourself in future.'

A good many adventures, some comic and some dangerous, happen to sportsmen when out shoot-

ing; and with one of them, which happened to myself, and is quite inexplicable by me, I will conclude.

Two of us were walking on opposite sides of the river Campaspe, near Woodend, a country-town about fifty miles from Melbourne. It was not far from the source of the river, and so the stream was only about twelve feet wide. The banks on either side rose to the height of about four feet. Suddenly my mate shouted out something to his dog, and at the same moment I saw a large copperhead glide quickly down the bank into the water. Bang went the gun, and the shot, striking the water, raised a little cloud of spray. Out of this cloud soared about twelve inches of the business end of the snake—that is, his head and neck. It rose to the height of about ten feet, passed directly over my head, and fell on the grass about five yards away, alive and wriggling. The charge of shot had of course cut the snake clean in two, and the body had floated down the stream; but how the head and neck could rise to such a height, and be propelled to such a distance, was then, as it is still, a puzzle.

MY EXPERIENCES AS A COLLABORATOR.



HAD written three comedies, and spent a small fortune getting them typewritten (for managers are remarkable for two things, an anxiety to get plays and a capacity for losing them), before any one in authority had given me the slightest encouragement. It was, therefore, with delight that I read and re-read the following letter: 'DEAR SIR, —I have read your comedy with much interest, and shall be glad to see you at the —— Theatre at twelve o'clock next Wednesday.' The signature which followed was that of a well-known London manager.

I need hardly say I was there at the appointed time; indeed I was in the Strand a good hour before it, wondering if the passers-by took me for a celebrity. What dreams I indulged in during that hour's perambulation! What pleasant, idiotic dreams! They were dispelled quickly in the actor-manager's dressing-room. The play was hopelessly unactable, he said; and he rattled off its faults of construction with such amazing rapidity that I felt ready to sink through the floor.

'Then you don't want it,' I gasped finally.

'Certainly not,' he replied; 'but I have a proposal to make. Your dialogue is excellent; and as I have a good plot, and know all about stage requirements, I think we might write a play together.' Then he produced several pages of foolscap and read to me for twenty minutes. Not a ghost of a plot could I see; only a bewildering set of old stage incidents and situations having little or no connection with each other.

'Don't you think there's too much material here,' I protested mildly, 'for one play?'

'Certainly not, my dear fellow,' he answered. 'What the public want is fat and plenty of it; it will be your business, of course, to weld the material into a homogeneous whole.'

I thought of my own play lovingly, with its scenes fresh from life, and its characters drawn from my best friends—or enemies, as the case might be—and sighed.

However, I told him I would think it over, and left, feeling years older, a hack, a mere machine. My friends—confound them!—said I was very lucky, and should accept the great man's offer forthwith; and when I asked them hopelessly what could be done in this present year of grace with a repentant convict and a comic man who saves the heroine from the villain of the piece, they said grimly that that was my business. I made it my business, and a dreary, wretched business it was.

When the scenario was completed I took it with me to the manager's house, with little hope that he would be satisfied. But he was delighted. Perhaps he saw in it some faint resemblance to the child he had entrusted to me, and had parental feelings with regard to it. He spent a whole evening, anyway, making marginal corrections in pencil. I spent another proving to him the corrections were wrong.

Then came the dialogue, at which he confessed, modestly, he was no hand, so *that* I completed act by act, and he passed it with approval. It would be altered and cut, he said, at rehearsal, but he wouldn't bother about it now. Then he made two stipulations: (1) that I should tell nobody what work in the play was mine and what his; and (2) that I shouldn't attend rehearsals till he asked me to.

'An author's only in the way, my boy,' he said; 'he gets nervous and puts all the company out.'

I agreed to both stipulations wearily. I was in two minds about the play: I wanted it to be a success and yet I didn't. I felt, if it succeeded, the public wouldn't care for my own plays; for it was the embodiment of everything stagy, everything I detested in plot and treatment. Yet success would mean money, which I wanted badly, and managers would thereafter read my work at any rate.

Rehearsals had been going on for a week when my presence was requested at the theatre. I was shown into the stalls, which were very dark and

draughty, and told to listen. I had my typewritten copy of the play, and tried to follow the acting in the dim light. It was a difficult matter, for even at this stage the dialogue had been altered a great deal. Unlooked-for retentions occurred, however, in the shape of typewriter's blunders, which had not been corrected in the manager's copy, and which made absolute nonsense of many of the sentences. I mentioned this to my collaborator, and he was quite annoyed; not at the fact, but with me.

'It's of no consequence,' he said; 'and it's too late to alter anything now.'

I wish it had been.

After this rehearsal I felt certain that the play was doomed. At times I tried to think differently, especially when it was praised, as it generally was, by the actors and actresses; and then I would remember the well-known adage, 'When actors praise a play during rehearsal, look out for a dead failure,' and would return to my original mind. It is in the nature of things that actors should be bad prophets. Their art is the art of imitation, and they are, as a class, imitative in character. They like parts and situations which have succeeded before, and forget that what the public want is life, not stage life.

In spite of the manager's dictum, alterations went on apace, and everybody lent a hand.

'That'll fetch 'em,' said the low-comedy man one day to me, as he reeled off some lines he had interpolated from an old play by Boucicault.

'I think I have improved my love-scene, don't you?' said the pretty leading lady, as she read me a passage from *Sweet Lavender* which she thought fitted in so nicely. 'It was so effective at Terry's, don't you know?'

'I hope you won't mind,' exclaimed a modest young man, who acted in a small part as the mayor of a provincial town, 'but I've put in one or two wheezes from my old part in *The Private Secretary*. Will take 'em out if you object; but they got me a lot of hands in the provinces.'

My friends congratulated me on all sides, and wondered why I looked so gloomy; and female relations went so far as to choose a future home for me in Eaton Square, and began to think of furniture.

At last the fateful night arrived, and I found myself in the pit, after an altercation with the man at the door, who wouldn't admit me. The first two acts seemed to go well—fairly well, at any rate; and I went up to the stall bar, among the critics, in order to move about and be seen. Nobody knew me, however, and perhaps it was just as well. The critics were hostile to a man. I slunk back into the pit and waited there during the final act. At the last rehearsal the actor-manager, in spite of my protests, had altered the original unhappy ending. 'They won't stand it, my boy. They must go away happy, you know,' he had said, and the company echoed the sentiment. Consequently none of them knew their parts, and stumbled through them anyhow. At first the audience was tolerant; but I didn't like it when the man next to me began to eat an orange; then another followed suit; and there was some tittering, followed by a remark from the gallery which set it in a roar. It was all up, I could see; but I went behind, determined to face the music; and, after 'making up' in the orthodox manner, was discovered by a jeering crowd hand-in-hand with my collaborator. He had insisted on taking my hand, with the view, I suppose, of encouraging me. We looked, said a lady friend afterwards, like two linked cherubs about to be immolated.

The next morning I had six papers brought to me by a considerate brother before I was out of bed, all containing long hostile criticisms; also, a letter from the manager, begging me to come to the theatre at once. 'Further alterations,' he wrote, 'would have to be made, or the play was done for.' Further alterations! I smiled grimly and went off without breakfasting. When I reached the theatre all the principal actors were present, and all talking at once. A number of them had been up most of the night 'writing up' each other's parts. Not their own parts now! They had done that before, and were quite satisfied with them, but each other's! For all thought the faults of the play lay outside their own spheres of influence. Asked casually for my views, I suggested harking back to the original manuscript; but as this proposition was hailed with derision, I washed my hands of the affair. In a week the run came to an end, and the theatre was closed. I still send out my three original comedies occasionally, and they sometimes come back to me after many days. But I have not yet written a fourth. Perhaps I shall some day. Who knows?

MAY-BLOSSOM.

Soft blossom-snow, so white and sweet,
That drifts about my aimless feet,
As far afield I stray,
You call to mind those bygone hours
When all the paths were bright with flowers,
And life was sweet as May.

The earth's a mist of growing things,
The sunny air a world of wings
Which cleave the lustrous blue;
I reach and break a fragrant spray,
And then go singing all the way,
For summer comes with you!

E. Matheson.

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A CHAPTER ON CONVERSATION.

OF all the arts, the art of talking is that in which the greatest number practise and in which the smallest number are proficient. The Scotsman can argue, the Irishman can joke, the Londoner can gossip, the English peasant can enjoy empty meditation; but few can talk, and still fewer can converse. We might find a partial explanation of this, no doubt, in the fact that very few people try to talk their best; hence we might address our readers like the preacher in the park, and say: 'You have every one of you a pussonal and hindividual responsibility in this tremenjous matter; and you're a-shirkin' on it;' but we fear the expostulation would be futile. The fact is, people are so busy that they have no time to cultivate good talk, and conversation has fallen out of fashion like Watteau bodices and Louis Quatorze high heels and buckles. Ah! those good old times—we shall never see the like again—Sydney refinement, Bayard courtesy, Grandison politeness—chivalrous manner with good talk. The times are out of joint for such things now.

We have no intention of furnishing our readers with any rules or canons of good conversation with a view to its revival, like Baron le Knigge, for example, who, in two portly volumes on the subject, devotes some twenty pages to 'rules for lovers and those that converse with them.' Fancy making love by rule! That is worse than the college don who always went into society with a *multum in parvo* book of wit in his pocket, and kept peeping at it under the table to refresh his memory. This was regarded as by far the best joke about him, and the laughter before he spoke was always greater than after. Such attempts must defeat the end in view, for the moment any one is felt to be talking by rule all the charm of his conversation vanishes. No doubt conversation has always excelled in artificial ages; but this is only one of the paradoxes of truth—and truth is always paradoxical. 'Conversation,' says Mr Payn, 'is a gift of nature, and where artificial is never really good.' Our object, therefore, in this paper is not to supply rules for talkers, but simply to write a chatty chapter on conversation which will interest our readers and help to while away an idle hour.

One reason why conversation so often falls flat is because people will consider it their duty to say something though they have nothing to say. Perhaps, like Montesquieu, they lose their ideas before they can find words for them; more frequently we fear they simply force the conversation. These people form a fraternity of boredom. Instead of threadbare coats they carry about threadbare ideas, and hunt to the death every 'stale, flat, and unprofitable' subject within the domain of human knowledge. Now, the Israelites in Egypt found it very difficult to make bricks without straw, and good conversation will never flourish among those who have no material with which to make it. As for bores, never knowingly begin with them. You will find them more difficult to get rid of than your own shadow.

The mistake of those who do talk is that they are seldom content with that 'leisurely speech' of Bacon's, that restful talk in which the mind is not fatigued or the temper tried, that talk which Stevenson beautifully calls 'a higher power of silence, the quiet of evening shared by ruminating friends.' They seem to emulate Disraeli discussing Beckford of Fonthill, who talked 'like a racehorse approaching the winning-post.' Talk of this kind can never leave the most pleasing impression. It is vitiated by that self-assertiveness and want of sympathy which the social instinct resents, and encourages that monopolisation of the talk which Lamb once playfully reproved in Coleridge. 'Did you ever hear me preach?' asked the poet. 'I have never heard you do anything else,' replied Lamb. Dr Johnson disliked self-assertiveness in others however leniently he may have judged himself. Speaking of Goldsmith, he said: 'He was not an agreeable

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companion, for he talked always for fame. A man who does so can never be pleasing.' Probably, had they met, he would have said the same of Richardson, who talked little except about his own works. Swift (who hated rivals) had a very caustic way of dealing with ambitious talkers. Happening to be in company with a petulant young man who prided himself on saying pert things, and who cried out: 'You must know, Mr Dean, that I set up for a wit!' 'Do you so?' said the Dean; 'take my advice and sit down again.' The absence of jarring elements like these explains why groups of the same class talk better than mixed companies. The talk of authors, for example—probably the best talkers in the world—is much better among themselves than with the outside world. One of the *Tatlers* says the same thing in other words: 'This particular pleasure, which gives the only true relish to all conversation, a sense that every one of us liked each other.'

Argumentative talk cannot be recommended, because it is seldom convincing, and generally ends in the defeat of both parties. No doubt it was a grand intellectual treat to watch such tournaments as took place between Johnson and Burke, Berkeley and Dr Samuel Clarke, Voltaire and Dr Young, or Lord Macaulay and Charles Austin; but even such great men as these could not avoid an occasional unhappy exchange of amenities—as, for example, when Dr Johnson called Adam Smith a liar, and Adam Smith in return denied the humanity of Johnson's mother. Another instance of the same kind took place in the famous discussion between Voltaire and the poet Young on the merits of *Paradise Lost*. Voltaire objected to Milton's method of giving to abstractions like Sin and Death offices proper only to living beings. The parallel between the hungry monster of Milton's, 'grinning horrible its ghastly smile,' and the meagre form of the speaker—his thin face lighted up, as it always was in conversation, with a peculiar sardonic smile—prompted Young to close the argument with the epigram:

> You are so witty, profligate, and thin,
> At once we think thee Death and Sin.

One of the chief difficulties to good conversation is to know how to open with strangers. There is nothing better for such occasions than Hazlitt's advice: 'If you really want to know whether another person can talk well, begin by saying a good thing yourself, and you will have a right to look for a rejoinder.'

> For wit is like a rest
> Held up at tennis, which men do the best
> With the best players.

People often complain that the company is so dull they cannot talk; but if we find the company dull we should blame ourselves. The thing is to touch the right vein in people. If we do that, nearly everybody can talk well enough to relieve the monotony of a railway journey or a short sea-voyage. It is foolish to seek a reputation for wisdom in a rigid taciturnity. Coleridge's story of the silent man with a large forehead, who seemed the very incarnation of wisdom till he burst into a rapturous cry at the sight of apple-dumplings, has made us rather chary about mistaking silence for genius. Of course there are cases of reserve with which we cannot help sympathising. Miles Peter Andrews was one such case. Being asked why he looked serious when everybody was laughing loud at a jest perpetrated by the most convivial of the company, answered, 'My dear sir, I can see no fun in a man who owes me five guineas.'

The man who imagines that the art of conversation consists in asking questions spoils conversation as much as the man who never asks any. People of this description will interrupt a speaker as frequently as they do in the French Chamber, and run anxiously from subject to subject with their interrogatories, like a cackling hen that is going to lay an egg. Horace Walpole, when exiled at Houghton, bemoans the existence of such a pest in the person of an aunt. Writing to his friend Sir Horace Mann, he says: 'I have an aunt here, a family piece of goods, an old remnant of inquisitive hospitality and economy. She wore me so down by day and night with interrogations that I dreamt all night she was at my ear with who's, why's, when's, and what's, till at last in my very sleep I cried out, "For heaven's sake, madam, ask me no more questions."' Dr Johnson's dislike of being questioned is well known, and he gives the classic refutation of the habit in his own inimitable style: 'Sir, questioning is not the mode of conversation among gentlemen. It is assuming a superiority, and it is particularly wrong to question a man concerning himself.'

A careful study and comparison of the conversation of the great talkers would go so far to show how the charm of conversation depends on other gifts than the purely intellectual. Orrery, for example, tells us that Pope's voice in common intercourse was so naturally musical 'that I remember honest Tom Southerne used always to call him "the little nightingale."' Much the same might be said of Robert Hall, who used language 'like an emperor,' or of Coleridge, who used words 'like a necromancer;' but we have no space to go into the subject here. Lest our remarks should seem to have a merely negative bearing, we will close with a few hints on the subject from an acknowledged master. Many men of genius—like Sir William Temple, Dean Swift, Bacon, De Quincey, and others—have written entertaining and profitable essays on the art of conversation; but no one has stated the qualifications necessary to excel in it with greater clearness and force than that prince of talkers—Samuel Johnson:

'There must, in the first place, be knowledge—there must be materials; in the second place,

there must be a command of words; in the third place, there must be imagination to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in; and in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind and a resolution that is not to be overcome by failures. This last is an essential requisite; for want of it many people do not excel in conversation.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXVII.—OF THE MAN WITH THE ONE EYE AND THE ENCOUNTER IN THE GREEN CLEUCH.

I PROMISE you I slept little that night, and it was with a heavy heart that I rose betimes and dressed in the chill of the morning. There was no one awake, and I left the house unobserved, whistling softly to keep up my spirits.

Just without, something came behind me and cried my name. I turned round sharply, and there was my servant Nicol, slinking after me for all the world like a collie-dog which its master has left at home.

'What do you want with me?' I cried.

'Naething,' he groaned sadly. 'I just wantit to see ye afore ye gaed. I am awfu' feared, sir, for you gaun awa' yoursel'. If it werena for Mistress Marjory, it wad be a deal mair than your word wad keep me frae your side. But I cam' to see if there was nae way o' gettin' word o' ye. My leddy will soon turn dowie gin she gets nae sough o' your whereabouts. Ye'd better tell me where I can get some kind o' a letter.'

'Well minded!' I cried. 'You know the cairn on the backside of Caerdon just above the rising of Kilbucho Burn. This day three weeks I will leave a letter for your mistress beneath the stones, which you must fetch and give her. And, if I am safe and well, every three weeks it will be the same. Good-day to you, Nicol, and see you look well to the charge I have committed to you.'

'Guid-day to you, sir,' he says, and I protest that the honest fellow had tears in his eyes; and when I had gone on maybe half-a-mile, and looked back, he was still standing like a stone in the same spot.

At first I was somewhat depressed in my mind, for it is a hard thing thus to part from one's mistress when the air is thick with perils to both. And it was not till I had crossed the wide stream of the Douglas Water and begun to ascend the hills that I wholly recovered my composure. The world was before me, that wide undiscovered world which had always attracted the more heroic spirits. What hardship was there to live a free life among the hills, under the sunshine and the wind, the clouds and the blue sky?

Now I dared not go back to Tweeddale by the way by which I had come, for the Clyde valley above Abington would be a hunting-ground of dragoons for many days. There was nothing for it but to make for the lower waters, ford the river about Coulter, and then come to Tweeddale in the lower parts, and thence make my way to the Water of Cor. Even this course was not without its dangers. For the lower glen of Tweed was around Dawyck and Barns, and this was the very part of all the land the most perilous to me at the moment. To add to this, I was well at home among the wilder hills; but it was little I knew of Clydesdale below Abington, till you come to the town of Lanark. This may at first seem a trifling misfortune; but in my present case it was a very great one. For unless a man knows every house and the character of its inmates, he is like to be in an ill way if close watched and threatened. However, I dreaded this the less, and looked for my troubles mainly after I had once entered my own lands in Tweeddale.

At the time when the sun rose I was on a long hill called Craigcraw, which hangs at the edge of the narrow crack in the hills through which goes the bridle-road from Lanark to Moffat. I thought it scarce worth my while to be wandering aimlessly among mosses and craigs when something very like a road lay beneath me; so I made haste to get down and ease my limbs with the level way. It was but a narrow strip of grass, running across the darker heath, and coiling in front like a green ribbon through nick or scaur, or along the broad brae-face.

In less than an hour I had turned a corner of hill, and there before me lay the noble strath of Clyde. I am Tweedside born, and will own no allegiance save to my own fair river, but I will grant that next to it there is none fairer than the upper Clyde. Were it not that in its lower course it flows through that weariful west-country among the dull whigamores and Glasgow traders, it would be near as dear to me as my own well-loved Tweed.

I crossed it without any mishap, wading easily through at one of the shallows. There was no one in sight, no smoke from any dwelling: all was as still as if it were a valley of the dead. Only from the upper air the larks were singing, and the melancholy peewits cried ever over the lower moorlands. From this place my course was clear; I went up the prattling Wandel Burn, from where it entered the river, and soon I was once more lost in the windings of the dark hills. There is a narrow bridle-path which follows the

burn, leading from Broughton in Tweeddale to Abington, so the way was easier walking.

And now I come to the relation of one of the strangest adventures of this time, which as often as I think upon it fills me with delight; for it was a ray of amusement in the perils and hardships of my wanderings.

A mile or more up this stream, just before the path begins to leave the waterside and strike towards the highlands, there is a little green cleuch, very fair and mossy, where the hills on either side come close and the glen narrows down to half a hundred yards. When I came to this place I halted for maybe a minute to drink at a pool in the rocks, for I was weary with my long wanderings.

A noise in front made me lift my head suddenly and stare before me. And there, riding down the path to meet me, was a man. His horse seemed to have come far, for it hung its head as if from weariness, and stumbled often. He himself seemed to be looking all around him and humming some blithe tune. He was not yet aware of my presence, for he rode negligently, like one who fancies himself alone. As he came nearer I marked him more clearly. He was a man of much my own height, with a shaven chin and a moustachio on his upper lip. He carried no weapons save one long basket-handled sword at his belt. His face appeared to be a network of scars; but the most noteworthy thing was that he had but one eye, which glowed bright from beneath bushy brows. Here, said I to myself, is a man of many battles.

In a moment he caught my eye, and halted abruptly not six paces away. He looked at me quietly for some seconds, while his horse, which was a spavined, broken-winded animal at best, began to crop the grass. But if his mount was poor, his dress was of the richest and costliest, and much gold seemed to glisten from his person.

'Good-day, sir,' said he very courteously. 'A fellow traveller, I perceive.' By this time I had lost all doubt, for I saw that the man was no dragoon, but of gentle birth by his bearing. So I answered him readily:

'I little expected to meet any man in this deserted spot, least of all a mounted traveller. How did you come over these hills, which if I mind right are of the roughest?'

'Ah,' he said, 'my horse and I have done queer things before this,' and he fell to humming a fragment of a French song, while his eyes wandered eagerly to my side.

Suddenly he asked abruptly: 'Sir, do you know aught of sword-play?'

I answered in the same fashion that I was skilled in the rudiments.

He sprang from his horse in a trice and was coming towards me.

'Thank God,' he cried earnestly, 'thank God. Here have I been thirsting for days to feel a blade in my hands, and devil a gentleman have I met. I thank you a thousand times, sir, for your kindness. I beseech you to draw.'

'But,' I stammered, 'I have no quarrel with you.'

He looked very grieved. 'True, if you put it in that way. But that is nought between gentlemen, who love ever to be testing each other's prowess. You will not deny me?'

'Nay,' I said, 'I will not,' for I began to see his meaning, and I stripped to my shirt, and, taking up my sword, confronted him.

So there in that quiet cleuch we set to with might and main, with vast rivalry but with no malice. We were far too skilled to butcher one another like common rufflers. Blow was given and met, point was taken and parried, all with much loving-kindness. But I had not been two minutes at the work when I found I was in the hands of a master. The great conceit of my play which I have always had ebbed away little by little. The man before me was fencing easily with no display, but every cut came near to breaking my guard, and every thrust to overcoming my defence. His incomprehensible right eye twinkled merrily, and discomposed my mind, and gave me no chance of reading his intentions. It is needless to say more. The contest lasted scarce eight minutes. Then I made a head-cut which he guarded skilfully, and when on the return my blade hung more loose in my hand he smote so surely and well that, being struck near the hilt, it flew from my hand and fell in the burn.

He flung down his weapon and shook me warmly by the hand.

'Ah, now I feel better,' said he. 'I need something of this sort every little while to put me in a good humour with the world. And, sir, let me compliment you on your appearance. Most admirable, most creditable!. But oh! am I not a master in the craft?'

So with friendly adieus we parted. We had never asked each other's name and knew nought of each other's condition, but that single good-natured contest had made us friends; and if ever I see that one-eyed man again in life I shall embrace him like a brother. For myself at that moment I felt on terms of good-comradeship with all, and pursued my way in a settled cheerfulness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—HOW A MILLER STROVE WITH HIS OWN MILL-WHEEL.

I LAY that night on the bare moors with no company save the birds, and no covering save a dry bush of heather. The stars twinkled a myriad miles away, and the night airs blew soft, and I woke in the morning as fresh as if I had lain beneath the finest coverlet on the best of linen. Near me was a great pool in a burn, and there I bathed,

splashing to my heart's content in the cold water. Then I ate my breakfast, which was no better than the remnants of the food I had brought away with me the day before from Smitwood; but I gulped it down heartily, and hoped for something better. There will be so much complaining, I fear, in my tale ere it is done that I think it well to put down all my praise of the place and the hours which passed pleasingly.

By this time I was on a little plateau near the great black hill of Coomb Dod, a place whence three streams flow—the Camps Water and the Coulter Water to the Clyde, and the burn of Kingledoors to Tweed. Now, here, had I been wise, I should at once have gone down the last-named, to the upper waters of Tweed, near the village of Tweedsmuir, whence I might have come without danger to the wilder hills and the Cor Water hiding-place. But as I stayed there, a desire came violently upon me to go down to the fair, green haughlands about the Holmes Water, which is a stream which rises not far off the Kingledoors Burn, but which flows more to the north, and enters Tweed in the strath of Drummelzier, not above a few miles from Barns itself, and almost at the door of Dawyck. There I knew there was the greater danger, because it lay on the straight line between Abington and Peebles, a way my cousin Gilbert travelled often in these days.

Now in Holmes Water glen there dwelled many who would receive me gladly, and give me shelter and food if I sought it. There were the Tweedies of Quarter and Glencotho, kin to myself on the mother's side, not to speak of a score of herds whom I had dealings with. But my uppermost reason was to see once more that lovely vale, the fairest, unless it be the Manor, in all the world. I know not how I can tell of the Holmes Water. It tumbles clear and tremulous into dark-brown pools, in the shallows it is like sunlight, and in the falls like virgin snow. And over all the place hangs a feeling of pastoral quiet and old romance, such as I never knew elsewhere.

Midday found me in the nick of the hill above Glencotho debating on my after-course. I had it in my mind to go boldly in and demand aid from my kinsman. But I reflected that matters were not overpleasant between us at the time. I knew that in any case if I entered they would receive me well for the honour of the name; but I am proud and like little to go to a place where I am not heartily welcome. So I resolved to go to Francie Smail, the herd, and from him get direction and provender.

The hut was built in a little turn of the water beneath a high bank. I knocked at the door, not knowing whether some soldier might not come to it, for the dragoons were quartered everywhere. But no one came save Francie himself, a great godly man who lived alone, and cared not for priest or woman. He cried aloud when he saw me.

'Come in by,' he says; 'come in quick; this is nae safe place the noo.'

And he pulled me in to the hearth, where his midday meal was standing. With great goodwill he bade me share it, and afterward, since he had heard already of my case, and had no need for enlightenment thereon, he gave me his good counsel.

'Ye maunna bide a meenute here,' he said. 'I'll pit up some cauld braxy and bread for ye, for it's a' I have at this time o' year. Ye maun get oot o' the glen and aff to the hills wi' a' your pith, for some o' Maister Gilbert's men passed this morn on their way to Barns, and they'll be coming back afore nicht. So ye maun aff, and I counsel ye to tak' the taps o' the Wormel, and syne cross the water abune the Crook, and gang ower by Talla and Fruid to the Cor. Keep awa' frae the Clyde hills for ony sake, for they're lookit like my ain hill i' the lambin' time; and though it's maybe safer there for ye the noo, in a wee it'll be het eneuch. But what are ye gaun to dae? Ye'll be makin' a try to win ower the sea, for ye canna skip aboot on thae hills like a paitrick for ever.'

'I do not know,' said I. 'I have little liking for another sea-journey, unless all else is hopeless. I will bide in the hills as long as I can, and I cannot think that the need will be long. For I have an inkling, and others beside me, that queer things will soon happen.'

'Guid send they dae,' said he, and I bade him good-bye. I watched him striding off to the hill, and marvelled at the life he led. A strange life and a hard, yet no man knows what peace may come out of loneliness.

Now, had I taken his advice I should have been saved one of the most vexatious and hazardous episodes of my life. But I was ever self-willed; and so, my mind being set on going down the Holmes Vale, I thought nothing of going near the Wormel. I set off down the bridle-way, as if I were a king's privy-councillor, and not a branded exile.

I kept by the stream till patches of fields began to appear, and the roofs of the little clachan. Then I struck higher up on the hillside, and kept well in the shade of a little cloud of birk-trees which lay along the edge of the slope.

Soon I came to a spot above the bend of the water near the house called Holmes Mill. There dwelt my very good friend the miller, a man blessed with as choice a taste in dogs as ever I have seen, and a great Whig to boot—both of which tricks he learned from a Westland grandfather. Lockhart was his name, and his folk came from the Lee, near the town of Lanark, to this green Tweedside vale. The wish took me strongly to go down and see him, to feel the wholesome smell of grinding corn, and above all, to taste

his cakes, which I had loved of old. So, without thinking more of it, and in utter contempt for the shepherd's warning, I scrambled down, forded the water, and made my way to the house.

Clearly something was going on at the mill, and, whatever it was, there was a great to-do. Sounds of voices came clear to me from the mill-door, and the rush of the water sang ever in my ears. The miller has summoned his family to help him, thought I. Probably it is the lifting of the bags to the mill-loft.

But, as I came nearer, I perceived that it was not a mere chatter of friendly tongues, but some serious matter. There was a jangling note, a sound as of a quarrel and an appeal. I judged it wise therefore to keep well in the shadow of the wall and to go through the byre and up to the loft by an old way which I remembered—a place where one could see all that passed without being seen of any.

And there, sure enough, was a sight to stagger me. Some four soldiers, with unslung muskets, stood in the court, while their horses were tethered to a post. Two held the unhappy miller in their stout grip; and at the back his wife and children were standing in sore grief. I looked keenly at the troopers; and, as I looked, I remembered all too late the shepherd's words. They were part of my cousin's company; and one I recognised as my old friend, Jan Hamman of the Alphen Road and the Cor Water.

The foremost of the soldiers was speaking:

'Whig though you be,' said he, 'you shall ha'e a chance of life. You look a man o' muscle. I'll tell you what I'll dae. Turn on the sluice and set the mill-wheel going, and then haud on to it; and if you can keep it back, your life you shall ha'e, as sure as my name's Tam Gordon. But gin you let it gang, there'll be four bullets in you afore you're an hour aulder, and a speedy meeting wi' your Maker. Do you wish to mak' the trial?'

Now the task was hopeless from the commencement, for, big though a man be—and the miller was as broad and high a man as one may see in Tweeddale—he has no chance against a mill-race. But whether he thought the thing possible, or whether he wanted to gain a few minutes' respite from death, the man accepted, and took off his coat to the task. He opened the sluice and went forward to the wheel.

Soon the water broke over with a rush, and the miller gripped a spoke like grim death. For a moment the thing was easy, for it takes some minutes for the water to gather body and force. But in a little it became harder, and the sinews on his bare arm began to swell with the strain. But still he held on valiantly, and the wheel moved never a jot. Soon the sweat began to run over his face, and the spray from the resisted water bespattered him plentifully. Then the strain became terrible. His face grew livid as the blood surged to his head, his eyeballs stood out, and his arms seemed like to be torn from their sockets. The soldiers, with the spirit of cruel children, had forgot their weapons, and crowded round the wheel to see the sport.

I saw clearly that he could not hold out much longer, and that, unless I wanted to see a friend butchered before my eyes, I had better be up and doing. We were two resolute men, I armed, and with considerable skill of the sword; he unarmed, but with the strength of a bull. The most dangerous things about our opponents were their weapons. Could I but get between them and their muskets, we could make a fight for it yet.

Suddenly, as I looked, the man failed. With a sob of weariness he loosed his hold. The great wheel caught the stream and moved slowly round, and he almost fell along with it. His tormentors laughed cruelly, and were about to seize him and turn back, when I leaped from the loft-window like a bolt from the clear sky.

My head was in a whirl, and I had no thought of any plan. I only knew that I must make the venture at any cost, or else be branded in my soul as a coward till my dying day.

I fell and scrambled to my feet.

'Lockhart,' I cried; 'here, man—here. Run!'

He had the sense to see my meaning. Exhausted though he was, he broke from his astonished captors, and in a moment was beside me and the weapons.

As I looked on them, I saw at a glance where our salvation lay.

'Take these two,' I said, pointing to the muskets. 'I will take the others.'

I cleared my throat and addressed the soldiers. 'Now, gentlemen,' said I, 'once more the fortune of war has delivered you into my hands. We, as you perceive, command the weapons. I beg your permission to tell you that I am by no means a poor shot with the musket, and likewise, that I do not stick at trifles, as doubtless my gallant friend, Master Hamman, will tell you.'

The men were struck dumb with surprise to find themselves thus taken at a disadvantage. They whispered for a little among themselves. Doubtless the terrors of my prowess had been so magnified by the victims in the last escapade to cover their shame that I was regarded as a veritable Hector.

'Are you the Laird of Barns?' said the leader at last, very politely.

I bowed.

'Then give us leave to tell you that we are nane sae fond o' the captain, your cousin,' said he, thinking to soothe me.

'So much the worse for my cousin,' said I.

'Therefore we are disposed to let you gang free.'

'I am obliged,' said I; 'but my cousin is my cousin, and I tolerate no rebellion toward one so

near of blood. I am therefore justified, gentlemen, in using your own arms against you, since I have always believed that traitors were shot.'

At this they looked very glum. At last one of them spoke up, for, after all, they were men.

'If ye'll tak' the pick o' ony yin o' us, and stand up to him wi' the sma'-sword, we'll agree to bide by the result.'

'I thank you,' I said; 'but I am not in the mood for sword-exercise. However, I shall be merciful, though that is a quality you have shown little of. You shall have your horses to ride home on; but your arms you shall leave with me as a pledge of your good-conduct. Strip, gentlemen.'

And strip they did, belt and buckler, pistol and sword. Then I bade them go, not without sundry compliments as one by one they passed by me. There were but four of them, and we had all the arms, so the contest was scarcely equal. Indeed, my heart smote me more than once that I had not accepted the fellow's offer to fight. The leader spoke up boldly to my face:

'Ye've gotten the better o' us the noo, but it'll no' be long afore ye're gettin' your kail through the reek, Master John Burnet.'

At which I laughed, and said: 'Twas a truth I could not deny.'

(To be continued.)

CHINESE TIN-SMELTING.

By E. H. PARKER.

AT different times I have visited the tin-mines at Maliwun, in the Burmese province of Mergui; at Renoung, Kopah, and Tongkah, in Siam; and at Taiping, capital of the British protected state of Perak. In all five cases I found that both mining and smelting were in the hands of intelligent Chinamen; and, as there is considerable similarity in the systems of working adopted at each place, one general description will answer fairly well for the whole three provincial centres, all of which are in the Malay peninsular sphere.

At Taiping the tin-mines cover an area of several square miles, and are worked almost entirely by Cantonese. They resemble nothing so much as the gold-washings of California and New Zealand: that is, a tin-washing is a series of delphs or hollows, like an ordinary English quarry, except that there is no stone. The sand or rubble is excavated and conveyed to the troughs, which are placed at a sufficient height to allow of the water running freely down an incline; one man rakes up to the topmost end the flakes of tin, which resemble bits of black pencil-lead, and which, when disengaged from all mud or other light clinging matter, sink at once to the bottom of the inclined trough. Other labourers pick out the larger stones from the rubble; whilst a man, stationed at the bottom of the trough, pushes up the accumulated mud from which the lead is not yet quite separated, so that it may pass through a second or third course of washing. The leaden ore is then carried in buckets to special cleansing houses, and there thoroughly washed once more. The furnace looks like a good-sized wine-cask set on end, but at a slight angle, and, as in the case of the alum furnaces which I described in the December number of *Chambers's Journal* (1897), each one is provided with an iron pan for a base. This iron pan, together with a number of cooper's hoops twined round the baked mud, serves as a stiffening, and helps to keep the furnace from collapsing. The lead ore is thrown, together with the charcoal which melts it, in one mass into this barrel-like furnace, when the molten metal soon passes through the charcoal and escapes (through a vent in the side of the lower portion of the barrel furnace) into a small pit dug into the ground below. The fire is kept active by a primitive but very effective bellows, consisting of a hollowed tree fitted with a wooden piston, and connected with the furnace by a short bamboo tube inserted into its side. The whole apparatus only costs (at present rates of exchange) fifty shillings. A workman rakes the slag out of the pit, and if the market price of tin is sufficiently high to make it pay to do so, this slag is passed a second time through the furnace. The pure molten tin, freed from the slag as it simmers in the pit, looks like so much quicksilver. No doubt many of our readers will have seen the tin in marketable form as it arrives in England; the 'pigs' are like so many large bricks, with one side rounded and the other flat, the flat side having a broad rim or border. The explanation of this is that blocks of wood of precisely this shape are pressed into the sand or mud which forms the natural floor of the smelting houses; when these wooden moulds are removed, of course corresponding holes remain, and into these holes the molten lead is ladled from the pit. It takes a whole day to cool sufficiently to get firm; when it has well set, it is lifted or dragged out of the holes with long rakes and dashed with water. After a little more cooling it is ready for shipment. When I was at Taiping, various Europeans (and even Chinese) had tried the effect of machinery; but, with the exception of steam-pumps, which were found cheaper than the ordinary Chinese chain-wheel worked like a treadmill by a number of coolies, no machinery had been able to compete with the exceedingly inexpensive and simple apparatus above described. But, five years later,

after I had seen the Burmese and Siamese mines, I found that British persistency had at last conquered all difficulties, and that a large steam-smelting establishment had been started upon one of the small islands in Singapore harbour. I visited this, and found that it now paid the Chinese washers better to send their ore down to Singapore to be smelted wholesale. Except that, instead of a mud barrel, the furnaces were better made and larger, and that, owing to the aid of steam, there was a certain amount of economy in movement, fuel, carriage, &c., the steam-smelting apparatus showed to my inexperienced eye no particular 'points' over the primitive Chinese gear. However, the company was making money.

At Perak in 1888, and at Maliwun in 1893, I found that four or five Chinamen could turn out seven hundredweight of tin pigs a day, worth (in 1893) about £28 in all. The Maliwun Chinamen were mostly from Amoy, but more than a fourth were from Canton.

The Renoung tin-mines in 1893 produced about five hundred tons a year, of which amount the Chinese rajah in charge of the state himself exported one quarter. The pigs are only a trifle over half the size of those smelted at Perak. Work went on night and day, each set of men taking four hours at a time. There were nine furnaces to do the work of twenty mines; and wages ranged from twelve shillings to a pound a month (at present rates of exchange), with unlimited meals of rice and salt fish. The hardest work is the bellows-blowing, which has to be done in short spells of an hour, or even half-an-hour, at a time.

At Kopah there was a Dutch auditor in charge of the native rajah's state accounts. The export of tin thence is much greater than that from Renoung, and there are as many as twenty furnaces. The Siamese government takes a toll of one pig out of every six, besides levying an export duty of about a shilling the hundredweight. Here and at Tongkah the labouring population chiefly consists of Fukien Chinese; and the tin production presents no novel features beyond what I have described above.

THE LOOTING OF THE *LY-CHEE.*

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY, Author of *Steve Brown's Bunyip; Last Voyage of Martin Vallance*, &c.

'MASTAH, mastah, you no lemember me?'

'No,' I replied, peering out of my bunk at the yellow, slant-eyed face that looked down at me and then to the door as if fearful of something behind.

'No lemember Cabbagee Jimmy, eh? Long time ago, Austlalia—Mellyong—station—dlought—eh. Now lemember, eh?'

And while the man spoke there came to mind memories of a far-away land, of torrid heat, of dead and dying sheep and cattle, of all the horror of an Australian drought, with amongst them one grateful recollection of a patch of verdure, sole thing, almost, that made life endurable at desiccated, God-forsaken, hateful Merryong. Why, of course, I remember 'Cabbagee' now, and how patiently during all those long rainless months he strove to keep the station in 'green stuff,' carrying water to the ash-heap called garden, morning, noon, and night, in his struggle against nature in that drear western wilderness.

And now, as I sat in my pyjamas on the edge of my bunk and looked at the bullet-headed ugly beggar, I felt quite pleased at the unexpected meeting, little thinking that it would turn out so badly for poor Jimmy. I suppose my face showed my thoughts, for he grinned, exhibiting all his discoloured fangs of teeth as he said 'All-li! Me cook's mate. S'pose steward catch me here he givee me hell! No gammon! Me see you come on board. You look out! Bad lot sailah fellah. All Amoy men. You no tell I say,' and, drawing a long finger suggestively across his throat, Jimmy disappeared.

Talk about the world being wide! Why, it was about ten years ago since, giving up squatting in disgust, I had gone back to my old profession, medicine, and practised mostly ever since in Sydney and Melbourne. Now, taking my first holiday in the East, I must needs stumble across 'Cabbagee Jimmy,' transformed into cook's mate of the *Ly-chee*, a coasting steamer in which I was making a trip from Singapore to Swatow. And as I sat there, through my mind ran thoughts of these long-gone dreary days of hopeless struggle with drought and disaster on ever-dry back-creeks; of the sultry stifling weather with never a break for months, whilst ruin was spelling itself slowly out, and the stink of rotting carcasses mingled with that of the gidyea. Merryong, yes, I 'lemembered' all right now! But what did Jimmy mean by his warning? It might be serious, and perhaps I had better tell the skipper at once. So, getting on deck, I ascended to the bridge. It was a beautiful morning, and the *Ly-chee* was punching along with the coast well in sight on the port hand, and a whole crowd of Chinese trying to put some kind of order into the cargo which lumbered the craft fore and aft.

I was the only white passenger; but occupying

a large deck cabin next to me were three Chinese gentlemen who I had heard were going to start business in Swatow as bankers. And, to judge from the pile of iron-bound boxes that filled a spare berth, they seemed to have brought lots of stock in the shape of dollars with them. They were quiet folk, well-mannered after their fashion, courteous and polite, but unable to speak a word of English, even the vile 'pidgin' universally in vogue, therefore our intercourse was limited.

Nothing was farther from my mind than to pose as an alarmist. Moreover, I had my doubts as to how the skipper, who was inclined to be bumptious and to fancy that he and his little iron tank owned the ocean, would take any warning from a stranger and a new chum. Also, I knew that times were quiet, gunboats plentiful, and pirates fast becoming an anomaly. Still, the ex-gardener of Merryong's words, few and slight as they were, had carried conviction with them. I had seen, too, that Jimmy was badly frightened. Therefore, considering all this, I felt it my duty to tell the captain our conversation word for word. He received it very much as I expected he would, perhaps rather more so.

'Pooh,' said he with a supercilious laugh, 'the fellow was only taking a rise out of you. Of course, some years back, we all had to go armed and keep a bright lookout. But now—why, I don't think there's a pistol amongst us! It's only raw passengers that get scared. My crowd's all right. They were especially recommended by Liu-chang, the company's compradore. Nor, in any case, would they be game to play any hanky-panky on me; I'm too well known. The other passengers, yonder, have got about thirty thousand taels on board, and you bet they wouldn't have shipped with me if they'd had any doubts. 'Bliged to you, mister, all the same. But don't be alarmed, nor raise a scare amongst the others if you can help it. You'll see Swatow, and the *Ly-chee* too, safe enough.' Which, after results considered, has always struck me as a good example of one of those random remarks that, after the event, one thinks a most perverse and unkind fate must have put into the speaker's mouth.

Besides the captain and myself, the only other Europeans on the *Ly-chee* were the two mates and the chief engineer, the second being a Malay of peculiarly villainous aspect.

Of course, my story being thus made light of by the captain, I could not very well, even if I had wished to do so, have gone with it to his subordinates—all the more so as their personalities were in no way inviting; the two deck officers being merely Straits Settlement beach-combers, hunted by the police into so much activity as would earn them a few dollars for a spree before the next bout of loafing. This much a friend in Singapore had told me; adding, however, for my comfort, that they would serve as well as the best for a short passage. The engineer was of a different stamp—a big Aberdonian, and a decent man enough; but one who I felt would be little inclined to trouble himself with anything out of his own beaten routine.

I, however, determined to have another talk with Jimmy, and see whether I couldn't get something a little more definite from him. But he fought very shy of me; and it was late that night before I succeeded in cornering him alone in the bit of a sentry-box they called the pantry.

'Now, Jimmy,' I said without preamble, 'let's hear all about this business. You know!' and I took up a knife that lay handy and put it to my throat. 'Come on; fire away. I'll see that nobody does you any harm. What are your Amoy friends up to—a bit of piracy, eh?'

'No savee; no savee,' replied Jimmy, turning actually green with fear, whilst showing the whites of his eyes in a horrible manner as he stared over my shoulder. 'What you wantee? Me cook's mate. No savee,' he continued as, turning, I found myself face to face with the steward, a tall Chinaman with a long, broad, red scar running down the side of his left cheek from ear to chin, giving him a very truculent look.

'*Me* steward, sah,' said he, darting a most malignant glance at Jimmy. 'Sheef steward. You wantee watah: me blingee you. Sodah-wattah, blandee, leemon quash, whissakkee; all bling s'pose you wantee.'

Just at this moment up came the second engineer with a badly-torn finger; and, realising that I had somehow got Jimmy into trouble with my evidently-overheard question, I took the evil-faced Malay into my berth and dressed the wound.

'Are there many Amoy men on board the *Ly-chee?*' I asked presently.

'None at all, that I know of,' he replied. 'Why do you wish to find out?'

'Curiosity only,' I said carelessly; 'I'm studying the different types of Chinese. That's all.'

He grinned and said: 'Well, you'll probably have a good chance if you're going in for that sort of thing. Can't say I'm fond of them myself. I'm Batavia-born, and that's a cut above a Chinaman, isn't it?'

'Very much so indeed,' I replied politely, although the man was uglier even than poor Cabbagee Jimmy. 'Then you can't give me any information about the men we have with us now?'

'None,' said he; 'and perhaps it would be as well,' he added, with a nasty look in his snake-like eyes, 'if you were not too inquisitive. There's a hint worth all you've done for my finger,' and off he went to his engine-room again, leaving me with a firmer opinion than ever that there was mischief brewing on board.

That same night, sitting on the deck enjoying the cool breeze blowing off the land, I was startled by seeing what appeared to be a big fire right

ahead, which burnt for a minute or two and then went out.

'It's a junk showing a flare,' I heard the second mate say to the captain on the bridge immediately above me.

'Blast 'em,' growled the skipper; 'the brutes are always getting in the road! I've run a few down in my time, an 'll serve this fellow the same if he doesn't clear out,' and seizing the siren-wire, he loosed a blast that made me start.

It was dark, but away in the east astern a lightening of the sky showed where the moon would soon rise. 'Port your helm!' shouted the skipper presently to the Chinese quartermaster.

'Portee!' replied the man from where he stood at the wheel, right aft; for the *Ly-chee* was an old-fashioned tank, built before the days of 'midship' steerage.

All at once, looking up, I saw that the bridge was crowded with men, their dark forms outlined against the sky. There was a scuffle; the report of a pistol; then another; then the sound of bodies crashing on to the cargo fifteen feet below.

As I jumped to my feet the *Ly-chee* slowed, and I heard a shot in the engine-room. Before I could decide on anything, there was a rush of men against me, and I was forced back in my chair, and tied so thoroughly, hand and foot, that I lay like a log. Then the steamer stopped altogether, and lay gently heaving to the swell. I called to the captain, but there was no reply. Also, I saw the bridge was empty. Astern, the moon had risen like a globe of palest, purest silver. A little way from me the Chinese passengers were screaming. I had never heard men scream before, and it made me shiver. It was exactly the long-drawn screaming of a pig when he first feels the knife. And, as yet, nobody had touched them. But the crew, headed by the Malay and the steward, were breaking out the boxes of dollars and piling them on deck. Upon these their owners now flung themselves, heedless of the kicks and knocks which presently left two of them senseless alongside their treasure.

Meanwhile, the steward, as I shouted again for the captain, came to me, and remarking blandly, 'You makee too muchee low,' he coolly bent my head back over the chair, and already had the edge of his long, sharp knife against the skin of my throat when the Malay, noticing him, crossed over and pulled him away from me, saying something to which the other assented, but with evident reluctance.

'He wants to study,' said the brute with a grin, 'wants to pry into the formation of your trachea and jugular (he had, I was told afterwards, been a pet pupil of the Raffles Institute in Singapore), but there's lots of time. And you'd better keep your tongue between your teeth.'

The decks aft were now nearly as light as day; and as the steward walked towards the group busy about the boxes, I saw the one Chinese passenger who was still conscious, though badly bruised and bleeding from several wounds, rush forward and clasp him round the legs with both arms. As he squatted there, quite silent at last, and with a laughable look of pleading misery on his upturned features, the steward, after gazing at him for a moment, suddenly forced his head back and plunged the knife into his throat. Rolling over and over in his death agony, the unfortunate wretch brought up against my chair, where he lay with a horrible gurgling and bubbling that made my very heart sick to listen to. The other two, his companions, still lay senseless. As I gazed, fascinated, at the horrid spectacle at my feet, with a great creaking of mat-sails and bamboo spars a junk drew alongside and made fast to the *Ly-chee*. Evidently this was the one whose signal-light we had seen. Hurried greetings seemed to be exchanged, and all hands began to transfer the silver on board the new-comer to the sound of a grunting hi-ya song. The thing beside me had ceased gurgling and gasping, and the moonlight fell on a corpse lying in a thick, black pool that slowly spread about my feet. Although unable to stir, I could view all that passed, and looked anxiously for 'Cabbagee,' but he was nowhere to be seen.

The Malay engineer and the long steward were undoubtedly the leaders in this bloody tragedy; and a feeling akin to despair took hold on me when I reflected that, from what I had seen of their tender mercies, probably my own time was near at hand. And, but for the mulish obstinacy of the captain, all might have been prevented! I had no less than three Colt's revolvers with ammunition in my cabin trunk, two of them presents from friends in Singapore to others in Swatow. What might we not have done by a timely display! And now; oh, the pity of it! I wondered whether they intended to kill me where I sat. I wondered, too, I remember, whether it would be of any use telling them that as a doctor I could make myself useful to them if they would spare my life. Not very heroic this, perhaps; but then, again, there's nothing heroic either in having your throat cut like a ration sheep's. I was prepared to go great lengths in the way of eating humble-pie to avoid any such a fate at such hands. Having finished transhipping the silver, together with some of the casks and cases off the maindeck, the pirates, rather to my surprise, dragged along the two as yet unconscious passengers, and threw them heavily on to the junk. Then at last, from somewhere or other, suddenly appeared Jimmy. Fumbling about, apparently to see that my bonds were secure, I heard a zip as one of the strained coir strands flew asunder to the touch of a keen knife. Then came an imperative call, and he fled swiftly into the shadows cast by the junk's great sails just as the steward and the Malay walked up to me. The moon was under a cloud; but they carried a lantern, by whose light

they viewed me all over, soon discovering the knife and the cut rope. I saw the steward examine the knife closely whilst the Malay knotted me up afresh, and more tightly than ever. Then the steward, taking a thick silk kerchief from around my throat, proceeded to effectually gag me. And, seeing that I was not to be done to instant death, I said never a word.

'Good-night, doctor,' remarked the Malay. 'Personally I don't wish you any harm; but you've seen too much. According to my calculations, the *Ly-chee* will blow up in about a couple of hours. And, anyhow, you'll make a better ending than if Kwa Fung here had his way with you. Good-bye,' and the pair turned and went. A few minutes later I saw the dark sails of the junk swaying to the wind like the wings of some great night-bird, as she glided past the *Ly-chee's* stern, leaving me alone and helpless with the dead. Save for the ripple of the little waves against the bows, and the grind of chains as the sea twisted rudder and wheel alternately to port and starboard, the ship was silent. In vain I strained my gaze down on to the maindeck, where, amongst the dark hollows and crannies of the cargo, I knew the captain and second mate must be lying, dead or desperately wounded. I could see nothing. For a while I sat there, swathed in ropes, helpless as any mummy, staring over the moonlit sea. Then all at once, as I caught sight of a dark speck far astern, knowing it for the junk, I remembered the Malay's last words, and my thoughts fled to the engine-room; and in fancy I saw the big Scotsman lying there dead, and the fires roaring fiercely under the newly-filled boilers, fast generating steam for whose force there was no outlet but a general burst-up. About another hour and the explosion would take place! And, whilst the cold sweat burst from every pore, I strained and heaved at my bonds until they cut deep into my flesh and I was near choking. Alas! they never slackened an inch. Even the chair was immovable—lashed to the vessel's rail. Before leaving, the pirates had run up the trysail and jib; and these filling on the starboard tack, the steamer was drifting rapidly away seaward from that low, dark line under the moon that I knew must be the coast between Hong-kong and Swatow.

How long had the junk been gone, I wondered. Was my time nearly up for saying good-bye to this world? I must try and pray. But, do what I might, I could not keep my attention fixed. All my soul seemed in my ears; and to the sound of a louder creak amongst the cargo, or a shriller note of the wind in the rigging, my nerves leapt and thrilled expectant of the last dread moment. Truly the sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell came about me, and yet I could not, as I felt I ought to do, make my peace with this world and prepare my soul for the next one. From where I sat, the glass skylight of the engine-room was all aglitter in the pale sheen, and on this my eyes became fixed with a dreadful intensity, until at last the gleam of the glass seemed to burn them like an incandescent fire. The breeze was cold, but my clothes were wet through with sweat, and I could see it dripping from my finger-tips like water on to the deck. Brave men are said to have waited for death with indifference, fearing nothing. But I think that, in most cases, they had company. And, believe me, it is a very terrible thing to sit bound, helpless, dumb, alone, expecting eternity with each passing moment, and with the agony of a great fear in full possession of both soul and body. I think that if I could have cried aloud, have cursed, or wept, or prayed with an audible voice the strain had lightened. But the gag, although soft and not hurting much, allowed me only the making of inarticulate groans, as I panted for breath and stared with eyes that felt like hot coals, ever fixed fascinated on the moonlit glass of the engine-room. Presently I somehow fell to thinking of a favourite collie-dog I had once owned at Merryong, who, every time he wished to attract my attention, used to beat my legs with his long tail. I fancied that he was doing it now. With an absolutely physical wrench I tore my hot eyes away from the skylight and looked down.

The breeze had freshened considerably, making the *Ly-chee* tumble about a bit. And with the increased motion the dead Chinaman was rolling slowly to and fro, and bumping his head against my bound ankles. And the shock of meeting those upturned, staring eyes, and the terrible face with its lips curled, grinning back from the stained teeth, and the great gash in the throat opening and closing in ghastly protesting fashion, saved me, I verily believe, by the consideration of a fresh horror, from becoming a raving lunatic.

I do not know what period of time went by while, the awful anguish of expectancy broken, I dreamily and with senses in some sort numbed, stared back at the staring dead man. But I remember wishing I could speak to him, and ask him to lie quietly and leave me alone, wishing too that I could move my feet out of his way and out of the black pool that was gathering around and over the toes of my canvas shoes and spoiling them. But, all at once, there fell on my ears a sound that made me raise my head, and sent a wave of life and hope pulsing through every artery in my body in response to the regular thump, thump of a steamer's screw. Twisting my head round, I saw both her lights coming right down upon the *Ly-chee*, and distant a bare mile. As she approached I could distinctly make her out to be a long, low, double-funnelled boat going through the water at a great rate. Suddenly I lost the green light. She was keeping away! Then the red one disappeared. She was passing. Thump! thump! thump! hammers beating on my heart; and the stream of sparks from her funnels flying into my brain. Impotently, as I realised the full misery

of the thing, I groaned and panted forth hoarse noises, audible, perhaps, a yard away. Impotently I writhed and struggled till the taughtened ropes reached the bone on legs and wrists. But ever fainter and fainter came the thump of the screw. And as despair, utter and complete, settled once more into my soul, my head fell on my breast, and once more I entered the dark valley of the shadow, from which I had emerged only to partake of the bitterness of a new death.

Sitting there, scarcely conscious, and with my eyes shut, I suddenly felt that some strong, strange light was beating on their lids. Looking up, I saw that the whole ship and the sea round about it were enveloped in a bright white glare that seemed to dart into and rest on every part of the *Ly-chee*. In my first surprise I imagined that this perhaps was but a blaze preparatory to the explosion I had been so long expecting, a notion as instantly dismissed, as I heard, almost alongside now, the loud thumping of a screw, and saw the steamer, not two hundred yards away, playing on the *Ly-chee* with her search-light. Then, as if thoroughly to bear into me the blessed truth, a voice hailed, 'Steamer ahoy!' But I could give them no signal. And during a few minutes of such agonised suspense as I know I shall never be permitted to pass through again —God being too merciful for that—I heard the sweetest music the world then held for me, the swift cheep through their blocks of a boat's davit-falls. Then it seemed but a second or two until hearty, wholesome English faces were looking into mine, and ready hands cutting away at my bonds and removing the gag, whilst there came to my ears, as if from a very far distance across the sea, expressions of wonder, execration, and pity. They told me afterwards that before I swooned, as I did directly they assisted me to my feet, I muttered the one word, 'Boilers!'

When I came to myself again it was sunrise, and I was lying on a mattress spread on the after skylight of H.M. gunboat *Psyche*, my wrists and ankles swathed in bandages, and the taste of strong brandy in my mouth.

'The infernal villains!' exclaimed the captain, as to him and his officers I told my story, brokenly, and with long pauses, for I was weak and feverish. 'But, if we have any luck, we may punish them yet; the wind's been against them all night. Where'll they be, Mr Courtenay?'

'Off Tin-ko Point, sir,' replied the first lieutenant, 'by my reckoning.'

'Exactly the place I had in my mind,' said the captain. 'We can fix them up yet, I do hope and believe. Now,' he went on, addressing me, 'don't exert yourself. The doctor, here, says you'll be all right in a day or two. There's the *Ly-chee* just astern of us. Her captain and one of his mates we found dead, stabbed and shot, thrown off the bridge, as you told us, amongst the deck cargo. Another white man lay in his bunk with his head smashed to pieces. The engineer was lying across one of his cylinders, shot through the heart. As for the boilers, well, my chief tells me that as they were worn to the thinness of brown paper, and liable to go at any minute, it was simply a miracle how they stood the extra pressure, and with the valves wired down into the bargain. We buried all the dead at daylight. And I hope,' continued he—looking very grim as he gave the order 'Full speed ahead!'—'that we'll be able to do more burying, but of another sort, before night.'

By breakfast time it fell dead calm, and our hopes rose as, keeping so close inshore that we at times could almost have thrown a biscuit on the rocks, we flew along the coast, leaving the *Ly-chee* with her salvage crew to come on at her leisure.

The *Psyche* was one of the new torpedo gunboats, with engines of nearly 5000 horse-power, drawing only ten feet of water, armed with quick-firing guns and five-barrelled Nordenfelts. And as I looked ahead and saw the mounds of white water rising from her bow, and felt the decks quivering underneath me, and knew she must be doing a good eighteen knots, there filled my soul, for the first time, a savage longing for vengeance on the bloody and murderous authors of all my sufferings throughout that past but never-to-be-forgotten night.

Late that afternoon a large junk with all her sweeps out was sighted just winding a thickly-timbered cape which they told me was Tin-ko. If, indeed, this was the craft we were after, then our luck was undoubtedly in. But, of course, I could not recognise her again. All hesitation, however, on that point was soon set at rest, for, when we rounded Tin-ko, we found the chase had anchored, and that a big boat full of men was hurriedly pulling for the shore. Getting his glass to bear, the captain sang out to me, 'Is there a half-caste or Malay amongst the crowd?'

'Yes,' I replied, 'he was the assistant-engineer.'

'And a Chinaman with a scar like a broad burn across his face?'

'The steward,' I said, 'and, with the other, the ringleaders of the whole affair. Can you see the two prisoners?'

'No,' said the captain. 'But they may be in the bottom of the boat. Ready with the port Nordenfelt, for'ard there, and fire when you're loaded. I think they're in range.'

Rising on my elbow as the gun crashed, I saw the bullets splashing white water all around the boat, between which and ourselves every moment decreased the distance, at the tremendous rate we were going, shoaling our depth, too, as I could hear every minute by the cries of 'And a half-eight! — quarter-less-seven — six fathoms!' that reached me from the chains.

All at once I saw the captain touch the telegraph and motion to the helmsman. The *Psyche*

slowed, then came round on her heel, broadside on almost to the boat, which, by now, was close in to the rocks. Crash ! crash ! crash ! pealed the whole port battery ; and when the smoke cleared away only a couple of black heads were visible, bobbing up and down amongst the wreck of the boat, smashed literally into matchwood, while from the leadsman came a short, quick cry of 'By the mark, twain !' It was a splendid piece of work, and we had just two feet to spare between our bottom and the rocks of Cape Tin-ko.

'Only just in the nick of time,' said the captain, walking along from his bridge to where I lay. 'Now, doctor, I think you can cry quits. As for the silver, probably that 's gone, although there may be just a chance that when they saw our smoke they left it on board the junk. We 'll see, presently, when the boat returns. Yes, of course, I 'm sorry for your man and the two passengers. But we couldn't stop to discriminate, you know. Another three minutes and they would have been in the bush yonder. Let us hope that fortune has been kind, and that "Jimmy" at least may be one of the survivors.'

But, strangely enough, the pair turned out to be the Malay and the steward, and both so badly wounded that they only lived a very short time after being put on board the *Psyche.*

Meanwhile, the gunboat had steamed alongside the junk, only to find her, with the exception of a few odds and ends of the stolen cargo, quite empty. Already, the cutter was under the davit-falls, and being hooked on, when a shout of surprise from the men in her caused me to follow their pointing fingers towards the bows of the junk, where, apparently just come to the surface, floated a dead body.

'By Jove, sir,' suddenly exclaimed the first lieutenant to the captain, 'both her anchors are on deck. What can she be riding to? There's something curious about that.'

'Get on board,' ordered the captain to the young sub. in charge of the boat, 'and haul up her cable. Pick that body up as you go, and bring it back with you.'

After some trouble, the men hove up the stout coir hawser, at the end of which they found securely lashed not only the boxes of dollars but two more bodies—those of poor Cabbagee Jimmy and one of the Chinese passengers. Of the latter also was the corpse that had slipped its moorings and risen to tell us, it almost seemed, what had become of the money. On none of the bodies was any mark of mortal wound ; and, without a doubt, the three unfortunates had been bound alive to the rope and thrown overboard, thus not only making more room in the boat, but enabling the steward to punish Jimmy for his attempts to befriend me.

Some years have gone by since I found myself the sole survivor of the looting of the *Ly-chee.* But, even now, at long intervals, I wake from my sleep o' nights with a start and a shudder, as, in my dreams, bloody memories flit across my brain. Nor, somehow, can I ever bring myself to sit in a lounge chair, or tolerate the sight of white canvas shoes. I have heard people, noting these peculiarities, remark that I am affected. Perhaps you, who know, may agree with me that there is some little reason for such affectation.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

FOR some years there have been rumours that the Crystal Palace —which was reared in great part from the materials of the great Exhibition of 1851, and opened by Her Majesty the Queen four years later—was doomed, and that its lovely gardens were to be handed over to the jerry builder. We are glad to say that no fear on this head need now be felt. The beautiful Palace—the largest place of public entertainment in the world—is to be renovated and started on a fresh lease of life ; not the least important part of the reconstruction scheme being improvements in the railway facilities and in the commissariat department. This is good news for the general public, for the Palace, besides being a beautiful place of resort, has done much in the cause of education, and for many years has been closely identified with musical progress in this country, its classical concerts and its periodic Handel Festivals being of world-wide fame. It is strange to note that when the Palace was first founded music had no place in the scheme. Indeed, when the late Dr Gauntlett suggested the simultaneous playing of several organs placed about the building and electrically connected with one keyboard, he was told by one of the directors that he had strangely misunderstood the high aims of the Crystal Palace ; nothing so trivial as music would ever be heard within its walls.

PHOTOGRAPHY WITHOUT CAMERA OR LENS.

This would seem to be an impossibility, and perhaps we might have so regarded it had we not seen the excellent specimens recently exhibited by the author of the process, Mr J. H. Player. The method is applicable only to the reproduction of drawings, book-illustrations, and the like, and is conducted with the simplest

apparatus imaginable. Suppose, for example, we want to copy an engraving from a book. First of all the book is placed open in a horizontal position, and beneath the page to be copied rests a sheet of plate-glass. Face downwards on the print, and in contact with it, is laid a piece of bromide paper such as photographers use for enlarging purposes. This is kept in position by two sheets of plate-glass, and above all is laid a sheet of *pot-metal* or photographic green glass. Fifteen inches above, a gas burner—preferably of the triple kind used for billiard tables—is lighted for about ten minutes; after which the bromide paper is developed into a negative, from which any reasonable number of copies can be printed photographically by the usual methods. It is necessary that the sensitive bromide paper be handled in yellow or red light only; and it will be observed that although no lens or camera is employed, some knowledge of photographic manipulations is needful.

THE ROMANCE OF FISH-LIFE.

An interesting lecture with the above title was recently given in London by Dr C. S. Paterson. After tracing the life-history of several of our more important food-fishes, the lecturer dealt with several hard facts connected with our fisheries which call for immediate legislation. Owing to the action of steam-trawlers, in which one-half the capital of the trade is now invested, the rich grounds of the North Sea have been fished out; and now the vessels have to go as far as the Bay of Biscay and the west coast of Ireland, and even to Iceland, in order to get paying hauls. All flat fish have decreased in size—for they are not allowed time to reach full maturity—and have increased in price at least twenty-five per cent. The sole has trebled in value during the past twenty years; and this, with the turbot and the brill, will most surely become extinct unless remedial measures are adopted. It is not only the steam-trawlers that are responsible for this disaster; the constant churning of the waters by screw-propellers and paddle-wheels must kill myriads of young, and destroy the floating eggs; 'so that many a vessel carrying cargo from port to port must leave in her wake a very slaughter of the innocents.' A consideration which will perhaps appeal most forcibly to our legislators is that the steady reduction in the number of our fishermen, now forty per cent. less than in 1870, means that we can no longer rely upon that source for recruits for our navy. The mercantile marine, it is well known, is now principally represented by Lascars, Swedes, Portuguese, and shore-loafers.

CHILDREN'S SIGHT.

According to Mr Brudenell Carter, one of our leading oculists, nearly sixty per cent. of the children attending the London Board Schools do not see as acutely—that is, as well and sharply—as they ought to do. This defective state of the vision is often noticeable with healthy and approximately well-formed eyes, and he attributes the fault to town surroundings. Very few persons know what their children ought to be capable of seeing, although they will know very well how far a child of, say, ten would be able to walk or run, and what weight it might be expected to carry. The eyes of every child should be tested on entering upon school-life, and if shown to be subnormal, advice should at once be sought. The training of the eyes was, in his opinion, quite as important as physical drill, to which so much time was already devoted; and he would be inclined to place excellence of vision among the various physical qualifications which were habitually tested by competition. A seeing contest might at first seem strange; but it could not fail to be of benefit in diffusing a knowledge of what sight ought to be, and it would bring a number of eyes under systematic training, to the advantage of their owners and to posterity.

INLAID WOODWORK FOR AMATEURS.

Amateurs are always eager to welcome any new field of work in which their artistic powers can be exercised, especially if it aid them in beautifying their home and belongings. 'Tarsia,' a new method of inlaying wood which has been introduced by the editor of *The House*, would seem to answer this end, for the results obtained by it are really artistic, and there is nothing more technical in its practice than can be easily mastered by any intelligent person. 'Tarsia' is a kind of spurious marquetry, and the method of working it is to cut out from various veneers the different portions of a design, to affix them to a base-board, fill in the unavoidable cracks in the mosaic, and finally to rub down and polish the surface. The specimens of the work which we have had an opportunity of examining are admirable in their effect, and it is not easy to realise that they have been produced by such very simple means.

SMOKELESS FIRES.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* has given some particulars of a new invention by one Carl Wegener, which has for its object the elimination of smoke from a furnace, accompanied by a notable saving in the consumption of coal. This invention, we are told, is shortly to be brought before the British public in the form of the usual limited company. The success of the system depends upon feeding the furnace with powdered coal, instead of the 'well-screened' lumps which have hitherto been regarded as the most advantageous form of such fuel. The coal-dust is fed into the fire from a container in front by means

of a tube which terminates in a revolving sieve. This sieve is kept in motion by the draught, and has the effect of scattering the fuel over the furnace in such a way that it is at once inflamed without smoke and with very little ash. Coal of comparatively low quality can be economically used in this powdered form, and the only drawback to the process seems to be the necessity for using a separate machine for the grinding of the coal to powder. On the other hand, the slack or dust which forms a necessary by-product of the coal industry will find here a field for employment which will be much appreciated by owners of mines and merchants generally.

TOBOGGANING IN PIEDMONT IN 1765.

The art and mystery of tobogganing—gliding swiftly down a steep descent squatting on a sled consisting of one or two flat boards without runners—is so often assumed to be of Canadian invention, thence introduced into the United States and Britain, that when we read of the pastime being practised at Davos or other alpine health-resort (as in Miss Harraden's *Ships that Pass in the Night*), we are apt to take it for granted that this is one of the many innovations brought hither by English-speaking tourists or residents to enliven the monotony of winter in these high and remote regions. Hence it is interesting to note in Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy* that when the novelist was making an excursion in March 1765, from Nice across the Maritime Alps to Turin, he descended the Piedmontese slope of the Col di Tenda towards Cuneo on a toboggan. 'Having reached the top of the mountain,' he tells us in Letter xxxviii., 'we prepared for descending on the other side by the *leze*, which is an occasional sledge made of two pieces of wood, carried up by the *coulants* (local guides) for the purpose. I did not much relish this kind of carriage, especially as the mountain was very steep, and covered with such a thick fog that we could hardly see two or three yards before us. Nevertheless, our guides were so confident, and my companion, who had passed the same way on other occasions, so secure, that I ventured to place myself on this machine, one of the *coulants* standing behind me, and the other sitting before as the conductor, with his feet paddling among the snow, in order to moderate the velocity of its descent. Thus accommodated, we descended the mountain with such rapidity that in an hour we reached Limon. . . . Here we waited two full hours for the mules which travelled with the servants by the common road.' This is simply tobogganing used as a practical means of transit for travellers in the Alps.

A DOMESTIC REFUSE-DESTRUCTOR.

Under the above title Mr J. B. Petter of Yeovil has patented a method of dealing with household waste which will, on sanitary grounds, commend itself to many. In those highly-favoured parishes where the dust-cart pays each house a daily visit for the collection of refuse such an arrangement is unnecessary; but we all know that the more general rule is to allow the contents of the dustbins to accumulate to a dangerous degree. Mr Petter's 'destructor' is part of the ordinary kitchen-range, the ash-pit of which is closed with a door, thus making a chamber into which all vegetable refuse, fish bones, &c., can be cast. The heat from the fire above speedily robs this waste matter of all its moisture, and in a few hours' time it can be placed upon the fire and consumed. All greasy matter is absorbed by the ashes, and a constant draught is ensured through the mass of refuse by air-holes in the door of the destructor. We understand that any ordinary kitchen-range can be fitted with the invention at moderate cost.

ASBESTIC.

This new fire-resisting cement has lately been subjected to a careful test in Germany, and an official protocol has been issued concerning its behaviour, which bears the signatures of several architects, engineers, and other experts. The trial was conducted in a wooden house built for the purpose, the walls and roof of which, and an iron girder supporting the roof, were coated with an inch-thick layer of asbestic. The structure was partly filled and surrounded outside with a mass of shavings and wood chips soaked in petroleum, and the whole was set alight and allowed to burn for about three-quarters of an hour. The fierce conflagration was then extinguished by means of hose, when it was observed that the asbestic showed no sign of either cracking or peeling. When it was at length chipped off in various places, both the iron and wood of which the structure was composed were found perfectly intact. It may be mentioned here that the huge fireproof curtain which separated the stage from the auditorium at the late 'greatest show on earth' at Olympia, London, was coated with asbestic. The source of this new fireproof compound has already been explained in our columns.

RAILWAY PUNCTUALITY.

There recently appeared in the *Times* a most interesting account of railway travelling in the United States, wherein the writer compared the distances run and the time occupied with similar distances in Britain. The comparison was a fair one, and, truth to tell, it was not to the advantage of the old country. The Americans have, indeed, during the past few years, improved far more rapidly in railway matters than we have on this side of the Atlantic. Not only is the rolling stock better and the locomotives more powerful, but the American lines are served with absolute

punctuality. This is the weak point of our own railway system, and all travellers can point to certain of our trains which are always late, and always have been late. The American roads are quite as crowded as our own, and the rails are generally single, so that really the attainment of punctuality is more difficult in the States than it is here. Some of our lines are notorious for their want of punctuality, and neither protests nor ridicule seem to make the slightest impression upon those responsible for what amounts to a grave public scandal.

A LIFE-SAVING GARMENT.

Mr Donald MacIntyre of Rosehaugh, Ross-shire, has invented a life-saving contrivance which, according to the description with which he has favoured us, seems better calculated to make a person amphibious than any apparatus yet brought out. It takes the form of a sleeveless guernsey, rendered air- and water-tight by indiarubber casing, which is furnished with a tube and nozzle by which the garment can be inflated with air in ten seconds. In its uninflated condition it can be worn for hours without any inconvenience, or can be easily carried in the pocket. One of these garments has been shown to be capable of supporting three men, so that its buoyancy would be of great assistance to any unfortunate who happened to fall into the water and knew not how to swim.

LIQUID AIR.

A new machine for the production of this extraordinary product has been devised by Dr Linde, which in principle is similar to the machines used on shipboard for refrigerating purposes —that is to say, air under pressure is allowed suddenly to expand through a small orifice, and the cold thus produced is made to act upon the unheated compressed air, so that the effect is cumulative. A new use has been found for liquid air, containing a large proportion of oxygen, for it is found that such air when mixed with powdered charcoal possesses explosive qualities comparable with those of dynamite. The rapid evaporation of the liquid would necessarily prevent such an explosive being stored; but when a large amount of blasting has to be done at one place, such as a quarry, for example, this method would have the merit of cheapness.

THE SOUTH AMERICAN CATTLE-TRADE.

The Editor regrets to find that exception has been taken to some statements made in the article 'Revelations of the South American Cattle-Trade,' which appeared in the February part of this *Journal*, by the owners of two shipping lines engaged in this trade. It may be explained that the article was supplied in the usual way by an old contributor whose good faith there was no reason to doubt. On receiving objections the Editor immediately communicated with the contributor, who informed him that the statements in question were based on figures received as authoritative from official sources, but which had turned out on examination to be incorrect. The Editor desires to correct the statements referring to the *Highland Chief*, of which Messrs H. & W. Nelson are managing owners, and to those referring to the *Hydarnes* and *Hippomenes* of the Houston line. It was stated that 43 cattle out of 150 placed on board the *Highland Chief* during 1897 were lost, whereas in the three voyages made last year, out of a total of 329 cattle conveyed, the loss was only 7. In the case of the *Hydarnes* and *Hippomenes* of the Houston line, he is assured that the highest mortality in the first-named on any voyage was 36 and not 66, and of the second 41 not 43, in both cases the loss being due not to defective fittings or heavy weather, but to the great heat prevailing at the time of shipment. The Editor regrets that these incorrect figures appeared in *Chambers's Journal*, and is glad in justice to the owners of these steamers to take this opportunity of correcting them.

THE UNEXPECTED.

'Twas said by one who now has gone,
Whose word we all respected,
That nothing can be reckoned on
Except the unexpected.
That saying on a truth lays stress,
Which else were undetected,
Why contributions to the Press
(In my case) are rejected.

I've written trifles light as air,
Or e'en a trifle lighter;
My trifles unconsidered were
And yet my hopes grew brighter.
Hope sprang eternal in my breast,
And made me hold the tighter
The promise that I should be blest,
And some day wake—a writer.

Success within my reach I thought,
I lavished ink unstinted
(One's visions of the future ought
To be less rosy-tinted).
But *now*, if I success effect
(As I've already hinted),
'Twill be because I *don't* expect
To have these verses printed.

C. J. Boden.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

A MYSTERY OF THE SWORD.

BY E. AND H. HERON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THE Englishman who remains for any time abroad generally takes fencing-lessons, and, as the *maître-d'armes* will tell you, fences in his own manner. The *maître* will say this with studied courtesy; but if you press him further he will spread out his hands with a gesture full of significance. 'Ah, these gentlemen, they are strong, they are audacious; but for science—pouf!' and again he will take refuge in that comprehensive shrug.

Fencing happened to be a favourite amusement of mine from my boyhood; so that when I followed the example of my countrymen I flattered myself that my knowledge of the art won me a special place in the good graces of M. Desterre, at that time perhaps the first, though not the most fashionable, fencing-master in Paris.

Some years later, while idling through an enforced holiday in Normandy and Brittany, I came across my old friend at Pontorson. I recognised the slight, alert figure at once, and hailed him with delight. He dined with me, and afterwards, as we rose from table, he said to me: 'It is my custom, monsieur, to take a half-bottle of wine at a small inn on the outskirts of the town; I shall feel honoured if monsieur will do me the pleasure of joining me.'

So we walked through the darkening street, where the lamps still hung unlit on their ropes because the moon would rise presently. We found the inn, standing square to the road, its windows mere black apertures in the flat whitewashed walls, for the long gray slatted shutters were all agape to let in the warm summer air, and the customary bunch of mistletoe hung over the door.

Desterre introduced me to the stout and comely hostess, who led us through a gate by the house-wall into a portion of the garden set with small round tables, where a modified seclusion awaited the wealthier customers of Madame Bolande, while the low wooden paling separating it from the road offered no hindrance to conversation being carried on with the more numerous groups outside.

I noticed that one of these tables was regarded as Desterre's special property; it was empty, and Desterre walked to it, bowed ceremoniously to the occupants of the other tables, and sat down in an absent, methodical manner which suggested habit.

Declining a 'café-cognac,' I joined my friend in his half-bottle.

'It is good,' he remarked, smiling, and balancing his glass between thumb and forefinger. 'From the South. It is of a vintage that never reaches England.' This I had every reason to believe.

So the evening passed in conversation with our neighbours, who presently said good-night and withdrew; but we ordered more wine, and lingered till the moonbeams shone on the brightly-polished table between us that held our wine and cigarettes, and Desterre began to talk of things that had been. This was the real Desterre, quite unlike the bristle of a man I remembered at the fencing-school at Paris. No one could have looked less like that personage with a terrible reputation than M. Desterre of Pontorson. He had a slight, round-chested figure, thin gray hair, thick white moustache, clean-shaven, narrow cheeks, and an expression of pathetic humour.

As for Pontorson, it delighted in his reputation. He was the pride of the town, I learnt afterwards—this retired fencing-master, who walked with a pre-occupied air of dignity to mass on Sundays, and otherwise spent most of his leisure in cultivating roses and lettuces with conspicuous success. Only once had the people of his native town seen their 'grand Desterre' with a foil in his hand; and that was on the occasion of a crack regiment passing through Pontorson, which regiment contained, it was said, the best fencer in the French army. The men treated Desterre with respect and admiration, and the officers invited him for the evening. During the afternoon he was persuaded to cross swords with

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his young rival. It was at the Café Vouffel, and Desterre produced the weapons with which he had defeated Verlini in that famous trial of skill of which you will hear to this day in the fencing-schools of Paris; and after seeing that the buttons were fast, he offered the choice of blades to his opponent. There was the ring of meeting steel, a pass, and the officer's sword in the bed of marigolds under the window!

'Yes, monsieur,' he began, 'there is a gap since I left this place forty years ago. In the interval I never returned. I left this Pontorson a young man with dreams, I return old—with memories.'

Unadvisedly I spoke. 'Memories? You must have many of interest.'

He pulled himself together, threw away his half-smoked cigarette with a movement of impatience, and busied himself in lighting another before he replied in a different tone:

'But—yes. I have been engaged in many peculiar affairs. There was the affair of M. le Capitaine anglais.'

I saw that I lost some narration more intimate, more privileged; but I accepted with pleasure the story he proposed to give me.

'Was he as awkward a pupil as the rest of us?' I asked, laughing.

'Ah, monsieur, you are of the lucky few, who begin in early youth, as we do in France; but you cannot teach a man grown to be supple, easy, rapid. The joints and muscles have passed the moment of possible training. They are set. After that—what will you? It is useless.'

'Who was this English captain?' I asked.

'His name was Brerliam—John Brerliam of—I forget what branch of the service. I first saw him on a gloomy day in Paris. I had undertaken a little expedition to the Bois to make my first bow to the approaching summer. On re-entering I was informed that a gentleman was awaiting my return.

'Without it was rapidly darkening, and the sallow sky frowned in through the long windows of the *salle-d'armes*, which for the moment was empty, though a little later it would be full of my pupils and others, as you remember it. Leaning against one of the pillars at the lower end I perceived my new client, towards whom I advanced with a bow.

'"At your service, monsieur."

'"That's all right," he replied, "for the fact is I am about to fight a duel."

'He was a red-faced, black-haired young man, with a ruffled air and a manner at once hurried, puzzled, and commanding. One liked him at first sight—this big handsome fellow.

'"I understand," I said. "Monsieur wishes a *leçon de duel* to perfect himself; is it not so?"

'"Exactly. And the fight comes off the third day from now," he replied. After some further talk we arranged an hour for the morrow, and M. le Capitaine flung into the street in his impetuous manner.

'On his leaving me I tried to recall the details of any quarrels which had reached my ears of late; but in vain; I could recall nothing to fit the case. This Captain Brerliam was plainly an Englishman, about seven-and-twenty years of age, hot-blooded and determined.

'While I was so engaged, my client reappeared.

'"Are we alone?" he inquired, glancing round.

'"Quite alone, monsieur."

'"I have been told that you are remarkable in Paris for two things," he said abruptly, "sword-play and silence."

'"Both or either are at your service as you desire, monsieur," I answered.

'"The fact is, I am out of my depth in this affair altogether."

'"May I ask the name of your opponent?"

'"Von Stulbach—Heinrich von Stulbach, a gentleman of Bavaria—or so he says."

'"But monsieur suspects——?" I asked, as he paused.

'"I'm not here to suspect, but to fight," he answered irritably. "I only wish to know something more about this Bavarian. I met him by chance to-day in a café on the Boulevards. The odd part of it is that he is the third German who has called me out within the last fortnight. I have been some months—during the winter, in fact—in Berlin. The first challenge is beside the question, and need not be considered now. On both the other occasions the quarrel was none of my seeking—forced upon me, in fact, by strangers. The insults of Von Stulbach, for instance, were entirely gratuitous."

'"And your second duel—how did that end?'

'He laughed out suddenly and loudly.

'"It never came off! The other fellow bolted at the last moment. Good-night. Find out something if you can. I am told that in Paris one can learn anything—for a consideration."

'And again he was gone. He reminded me of a clap of thunder. He absorbed one's attention while he was there, and when he went one dwelt on his words. The personality of the man was engrossing.

'Moreover, the facts he had just imparted to me in connection with his affair of honour were in themselves curious enough to suggest something still more singular in the background. A quarrel was wantonly provoked in Berlin by a stranger, who, nevertheless, failed to appear on the field. Subsequently, a second insult was thrust upon my pupil in Paris. Evidently, a plot existed against him, the second attempt to force him into a duel being made because the first had fallen through.

'Therefore, it was with a good deal of curiosity that I set out to make inquiries. I had, naturally, many acquaintances amongst the police and officials connected with our Bureau of Foreign Affairs, as in my profession I had occasional need of the information with which they alone could supply me.

'The details of Captain Brerliam's recent experiences were quickly in my possession. They were briefly as follows:

'Monsieur le Capitaine had gone to Germany for the purpose of studying the language. He had the *entrée* to the best circles, and, in due course, met the beautiful young Countess von Erdenheim, with the result which might have been expected where there is beauty on the one side and so forceful and attractive a personality upon the other. The Countess was the ward of her brother, who bore a somewhat sinister reputation, and was known to entertain other views for her future. The Count challenged the young man, but the Captain refused to meet him on the ground that he did not intend to kill the Count or to be killed by him, as in either case his marriage with the lady would be rendered impossible. Ah, but how characteristic of his nation! You English make a definite future, to which you will sacrifice the present without flinching.

'Disappointed in his first attempt to rid himself of the unwelcome suitor, had the Count von Erdenheim engaged the services of a friend to dispose of the business? It was certainly singular that Captain Brerliam should have been called out again within a few days, the pretext being that Monsieur le Capitaine had trodden upon the toes of his adversary, a gentleman who had no apparent connection or even acquaintance with the Count. But on that point all who knew of the matter drew their own conclusions.

'Captain Brerliam, being unskilled with the rapier, and having choice of weapons, decided to fight with heavy American revolvers at ten paces. When he arrived at the spot appointed for the meeting he found no antagonist, who had, as it afterwards transpired, disappeared altogether from Berlin.

'I may inform you that it was at this point of the story that I formed an opinion which later proved of some value.

'Such an occurrence caused, as you may suppose, a very pretty scandal in Berlin, so that it was impossible for some days to enter any place of public resort without hearing from one direction or another a new and extraordinary version of this strange affair. As for Monsieur le Capitaine, he found his position in society intolerable, and consequently removed to Paris, where, a few days after his arrival, he was publicly insulted by Monsieur von Stulbach, so that he had no option but to challenge the fellow. Von Stulbach accepted a meeting, the weapons to be swords.

'On carefully reconsidering all these facts, I found myself more than ever persuaded that my first almost instinctive supposition must be the correct one.

'On the following morning Monsieur le Capitaine appeared for his lesson. Alas, monsieur! I found him impossible, absolutely impossible!

'I tried him with a little loose play. Ma foi! he was full of crude strength; but of what use is that, monsieur? You are aware that it not infrequently forms a serious hindrance to the improvement of a pupil. Finesse is of all things the most requisite, and that Captain Brerliam possessed not at all. He confined himself to the simple attack, lunging furiously and eagerly, with the head carried well forward. Figure to yourself my despair!

'"Well," said he, when we ceased for an interval, "what do you think of my chance?"

'What could I say? It seemed to me hopeless. You know that a hot-tempered person rarely is a good fencer. I had had to do with many a fiery blood in my time, but never any to equal this black-haired Englishman.

'"Monsieur must guard himself more assiduously," I said.

'"I don't mind about guarding," he replied. "It's for the other man to do that."

'Imagine this type of a man!

'"But," I interposed, "it may be Monsieur von Stulbach who will achieve the attack."

'"Eh, what's that? I don't know, of course; but I won't give him the chance if I can help it. For my part, I am better with the gloves than with these bodkins, as you have seen for yourself."

'All this troubled me more and more, for not only had I formed a sentiment of liking for my client, but also I had a reputation to maintain.

'I gave him some instructions, and we set-to a second time. I pitied him, monsieur. I pitied this fine young man. He attacked wildly, roughly, lunge upon lunge, three parts of his body uncovered and at the mercy of his enemy's blade. One could have pierced him in twenty places. He said that he had learnt somewhat of the art at your St Cyr, your military college—but how much? Just sufficient to be dangerous to himself!

'I reiterated my cautions, and urged him to engage with his intelligence as well as his rapier; but he persistently repeated:

'"My only chance is to rush him. I have no science, I know, therefore show me how to rush him."

'Then he asked me if I had any information about Von Stulbach to give him.

'I replied that so far I had been unable to learn more than he already knew.

'"Perhaps I should give you one other hint," said he. "Von Stulbach reminded me oddly of the man whose courage failed him at Berlin."

'This communication did not surprise me; I was, indeed, prepared for it. However, as soon as my duties permitted me, I sought out a friend of mine, who is *au fait* with all the gossip of all the cities of Europe. It was a cold, wet evening, and I congratulated myself on meeting Hallard as I approached the café which I knew he frequented. We entered amid the tinkle of glasses and that vivacious sound of conversation which is so conspicuously absent from the melancholy meals one partakes of in the restaurants of monsieur's native land.

'We chatted on casually for a time, though all the while I was leading up to my subject carefully. I was truly lucky on that occasion, for Hallard proved to have been an eye-witness of the quarrel between my Captain and M. von Stulbach. I begged him to describe what had taken place.

'"That is easy," he replied, "since the affair

occurred precisely within these walls. The Englishman was seated alone when Von Stulbach arrived and placed himself at the adjacent table in that corner. Of a sudden there is a scramble, some loud words, a table is overthrown, and Von Stulbach has the Englishman's wine trickling down his face."

'I questioned Hallard, who, it seemed to me, was piquing my curiosity with a purpose—openly concealing, as it were, something more interesting, until he should have worked me up into that condition of eagerness to hear which renders it a peculiar pleasure to narrate.

'"M. von Stulbach still comes here every evening?" I said. "Pray point him out."

'"Ah, patience, my friend; he arrives a trifle later. He interests you?"

'"Naturally. Persons concerned in affairs of honour are always objects of interest to one of my profession."

'"Yes, yes; like the sharks one reads of in the books of travel, you scent blood!"

'Hallard was still exulting over this piece of wit when a new arrival took his place at a short distance from us. He was a vigorous-looking man with a strong black beard.

'"It is he," said Hallard softly. "As to the Englishman, he has no longer to live than the date of the meeting. It is said this Von Stulbach could give points to our first fencers here in Paris," and he threw at me a glance of raillery.

'Upon this I turned and stared at Von Stulbach. He was seated sternly alone, his black beard within three inches of his long black glass of coffee. He glared at every one who approached the table with a forbidding aspect, and smoked slowly as a man who thinks. Presently he lifted his eyes and met mine fixed upon him. I did not remove my gaze. As for my conduct, monsieur must remember how much there was at stake. M. von Stulbach returned my glance rudely.

'"You interest yourself peculiarly in me, monsieur," he said in his thick German-French.

'"It is true," I replied politely.

'He rose and stood over me. "I permit to no one an impertinent curiosity in my affairs," he growled.

'I rose also. "Monsieur mistakes," I said.

'There had fallen a silence upon the assemblage, now there arose a laugh and an excited whispering. In those days, monsieur, I was not without a reputation.

'"I make no mistakes," returned Von Stulbach slowly, overbearingly. "But perhaps monsieur has his own reasons for avoiding a meeting."

'The insolence of the sneer was intolerable.

'"M. von Stulbach is the first who has insinuated as much," I answered, and I handed him my card.

'Another gentleman now joined our group with a bow, and said to the German:

'"This," and he indicated me, "is M. Desterre, one of our most celebrated fencing-masters."

'"What of that?" cried the other. "We of Stuttgart can hold our own"—— then he checked himself.

'"Ah, so," returned the gentleman re-seating himself.

'From my elevation as I stood I looked round. Every eye was upon us. Some of those present sat with their hands arrested in the act to drink, and some smoked hurriedly.

'In the meantime Von Stulbach was engaged in studying my card. At last he turned to me haughtily:

'"I need scarcely say that this matter can go no further between us."

'"It is entirely owing to monsieur that it has gone so far," I answered.

'Von Stulbach, without taking any further notice of me, delivered a challenging look round the room, and stalked out.

'Upon his departure the tables fell on the instant into a babel of discussion. For my own part I was anxious to give myself up to consideration of this strange incident; therefore, eluding the desire of Hallard to detain me, I hurried to my house, and, after some deliberation, sent a telegram to an old pupil of my own who was at that time residing in Stuttgart.

THE AFRICAN GUANO ISLANDS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the advanced state of development attained by the modern art of globe-trotting, and the comprehensive accomplishments of its numerous votaries, there still remain some spots on our planet not the least charm of which lies in the fact of their being outside the ordinary highways of travel. Away in the South Atlantic, lying between latitude 28° S. and 24° S., quite out of the track of steamers and sailing vessels ploughing the ocean between England and the Cape of Good Hope, and fringing the shores of Great Namaqualand and German Damaraland, are a dozen islands, bleak, barren, and unpromising in themselves beyond description, and yet the natural depôt of one of the most fertilising agents known to commerce. Their names are Plum-pudding, Albatross, Sinclairs, Pomona, Long, Possession, Halifax, Seal, Penguin, Ichaboe, Mercury, and Hollamsbird Islands, the largest some three miles long by half-a-mile in breadth, and the smallest a mere islet of rock.

By an act of parliament passed in 1874, these islands, generally known as the Ichaboe group, were annexed to the Cape Colony, and for many years

were leased out to private individuals, who reaped a rich harvest as the reward of their enterprise. As the leases fell in, however, the colonial government undertook the business, the immediate management being delegated to an agent, who has hitherto been remunerated by a commission on the net yearly profits, amounting to 15 per cent. on the first £8000, 5 per cent. between £8000 and £15,000, and 3 per cent. between £15,000 and £20,000. For the last seven years the annual production has been about 2770 tons, and the cost of working is put down at £3, 5s. 7d. per ton, while the price at which guano is sold to the colonial farmers is at present £6, 10s. per ton. In England it fetches from £8 to £9; but prior to the manufacture of artificial fertilisers the market-price has been as high as £17 or £18 for first-class stuff. Each island, it should be observed, produces a different kind, or rather quality, depending more or less on the amount of sand and grit with which the guano becomes mixed; Mercury, for instance, which is nothing but a barren rock, furnishing the commodity in the most unsophisticated form, ammonia being a constituent part to the extent of no less than 19 per cent.

In consequence of certain alleged irregularities brought to light in the public prints, the government in July last resolved to appoint a commission to inquire exhaustively into the working and general administration of the islands; and, among other things, a surprise-visit was arranged, with a view to ascertaining on the spot the actual state of affairs. To this end a small steamer was chartered, and, with several officials on board, among whom was your correspondent, in the capacity of secretary, proceeded on a cruise of inspection, an opportunity being thus afforded of visiting what, to most people at all events, is a *terra incognita*.

The coastline of south-western Africa for a very considerable distance north of the Cape of Good Hope presents but few features of interest; indeed it may be described as a wearisome and monotonous picture of barren-looking rocks, alternating with long, arid stretches of sand-dunes, the desolation of the scene being completed by the angry surf which with ceaseless and depressing rhythm beats upon the shore. At the same time, the atmosphere in these comparatively rainless latitudes is singularly pure and invigorating; one feels as if it were almost a luxury to breathe; and when night closes in, the starry heavens present a glorious spectacle to the eye, while all around the vessel the sea flashes and sparkles with the phosphorescent rays emitted by countless forms of marine life.

Possession Island, the largest of the group, is about five hundred miles from Capetown, and viewed from a short distance off looks uncommonly like a huge drab-coloured clinker set down in mid-ocean. It is crescent-shaped, and shelters Elizabeth Bay from the westward, the mainland being well defined in the distance. On nearer approach one experiences a sensation much akin to that induced by a theatrical transformation-scene, the forbidding and apparently untenanted waste being alive with birds enjoying to the full the immunity secured from predatory foes, and showing but little sign of timidity from outside intrusion. Thousands upon thousands of penguins line the shore, strutting about with great self-importance, and jealous, one might almost imagine, that Nature has not endowed them with the power of flight like their comrades, the malagas, a very handsome bird about the size of an ordinary goose, and with much the same plumage except that the head and neck are tinted with yellowish feathers. Enormous flocks of these malagas are to be seen in every direction, either standing in solid groups, covering a large extent of ground, or wheeling about in the air, now and then darting out seawards in quest of fish, upon which they pounce with unerring accuracy. Then there are various kinds of gulls, guillemots, and other sea-birds. In July and August is the breeding season, and it is not till later in the year that the islands are what is technically called 'in full bloom,' when the birds are more numerous than ever. Some of the habits of the penguin are very peculiar. Their nests consist of a hole scratched in the sand, or just a crevice in the rock, into which they drag a few stones, pieces of seaweed, or any rubbish available; and here they deposit two, or at the most three, eggs, the period of incubation lasting six weeks. When the young birds are hatched they very quickly take to the water. Shortly after the breeding season is concluded, the work of collecting the guano or excrement begins; and this on the larger islands furnishes employment for thirty or forty hands, the ranks being recruited from all sorts and conditions of men, even a broken-down barrister having been known to cast in his lot amidst these untoward surroundings. At the time of the visit of the commission there were over 2000 tons of guano stacked on this island in a large heap, representing a money-value of close upon £15,000. At one time Possession Island must have been the haunt of innumerable quantities of seals, for the remains of these creatures are to be seen in all directions, abundantly confirming the statement of Captain Morrell, who, when describing his visit here many years since, said, 'I saw the effects of a pestilence or plague which had visited these inhabitants of the ocean with as much malignancy as the Asiatic cholera does the bipeds of the land. The whole island was literally covered with the carcasses of fur-seals, with their skins still on them. They appeared to have been dead about five years, and it was evident they had all met their fate about the same period. From the immense multitude of bones and carcasses, not less than half-a-million must have perished, either through some mysteri-

ous plague or disease, or from the effects of a sand-storm.'

The accommodation on Possession Island for the men employed far surpasses that on any of the others, and consists of a substantial wood and iron building and store in close proximity to the beach, where a rough kind of jetty has been constructed to facilitate the shipment of guano. There is also a small cooperage where the water-casks are repaired. Not a drop of fresh water is to be found on any of the islands, and the conveyance of water from Capetown is consequently an important business. An attempt has been made to condense sea-water by solar heat, an apparatus something like a cucumber-frame being used for the purpose; but the birds frequently interfere with its successful manipulation.

On Possession, Halifax, and Ichaboe Islands headmen are stationed, whose duty it is to control the collection and shipment of the guano and generally supervise the working on these and the smaller neighbouring islands. None of them are men of any very great intelligence, but they manage to keep a log-book or diary, in which daily occurrences as well as the amount of labour performed are noted down. The stores and medicines are also under their charge. Under no circumstances is any liquor allowed on the islands, a severe privation to many of the men, who have sometimes been known to drink, with great gusto, paregoric, Friar's balsam, and other medicinal remedies containing alcohol.

Halifax Island is about thirty miles farther north, and within a very short distance of the German settlement at Angra Pequeña. There were five men here—the headman an Italian, and the others hailing from France, Sweden, St Helena, and Capetown respectively. The quarters are very poor; but the storeroom contained an ample supply of salt-beef, biscuits, meal, and other necessaries. The absence of fresh meat and vegetables is sorely felt, and at times leads to attacks of scurvy among the men. To a flagstaff, from which floats the Union Jack, an old, weather-beaten board is affixed, bearing the inscription: 'Halifax Island: taken possession of by Capt. C. C. Forsyth, of H.M.S. *Valorous*, May 7, 1866, in the name of Her Britannic Majesty Queen Victoria. God save the Queen.'

On Diaz Point, close by, is a rough wooden beacon; formerly there was a marble cross erected by the famous navigator, Bartholomew Diaz. The pedestal was in its place in 1825, but the whole of this interesting landmark has now disappeared.

Seal and Penguin Islands, both small in extent, lie just at the entrance to Angra Pequeña Bay, the latter being almost entirely the abode of the guillemot, a black bird with a patch of white feathers on the back, and about the size of a wild duck. At the time of my visit there was nobody on this island, but a small stock of provisions is kept in a wooden shanty for the benefit of the men who come at intervals to collect the guano. Still farther to the north lies Ichaboe, an island composed of granite, slate, and quartz, a little less than a mile in circumference, and distant something over half-a-mile from the mainland. In former days large numbers of vessels anchored here to load the fertilising ordure, which once rose, it is said, to a height of seventy-five feet, the deposit probably of centuries. The island itself lies low, and is not at any point more than thirty feet high. It would be difficult to find in hazy weather were it not for a conspicuous spar placed at the southern end, and bearing an inscription rendered well-nigh illegible through time and atmospherical conditions: 'Notice.—This island of Ichaboe is this day taken possession of for and in the name of Her Britannic Majesty Queen Victoria; and is hereby declared a dependency of . . . (Signed) . . . Captain, H.M.S. *Furious*. June 21, 1861. All claims as to soil or territory in Ichaboe are to be made to His Excellency the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. God save the Queen.' Many graves are to be seen here, one of them containing the remains of a Scotsman who for no less than thirty-nine years made the island his home. At another spot part of a skeleton is to be seen, the rocky nature of the ground not allowing of very effectual interment. In striking contrast with the silent home of the dead is the animation displayed by the feathered inhabitants, whose graceful movements and busy activity one might watch for hours without tiring.

After quitting Ichaboe, the coastline for some little distance assumes a bolder aspect, and Dolphin Head, the southern extremity of Spencer Bay, is a very prominent headland, a massive wall of rock rising abruptly and almost perpendicularly from the water's edge to 600 or 700 feet in height, against which the sea beats with great violence.

About a mile and a half from the mainland lies Mercury Island, a gigantic rock, conical in form, with a length north and south of about half-a-mile. The highest point is 160 feet above the sea-level, and from this eminence an extensive view is obtained, the general physical aspect not only of the island but of the contiguous continent being indicative of an extensive volcanic convulsion of nature at some remote period of the world's history. Here, again, life and death are significantly contrasted, one of the first objects that strike the eye on landing being the laconic epitaph painted on the smooth face of the rock: 'C. Abrahams, died 2d July 1890.' This island is of surpassing interest to lovers of Nature in her sterner mood; and many hours might be enjoyably spent in exploring its recesses, one of the principal points being an immense fissure or tunnel which bisects the rock, opening out at one place into a huge arched chamber, a hundred feet high or more, the sides of which have been carved and fashioned into

weird and fantastic shapes, while beneath sea-anemones of lovely hues, and other singular marine specimens, fascinate the eye. The guano on Mercury lies in thick profusion in many parts, as it has not been collected for more than a twelvemonth; indeed, a considerable quantity is being washed away by the sea, which in heavy weather submerges the low-lying portions. The accommodation is of the poorest and most meagre description, and fast going to decay; the marvel is how human beings can ever manage to exist in such a miserable hovel. Hollamsbird Island is seventy-five miles farther up the coast, and is the most isolated of the group, as it lies nine miles from the mainland. This also is the home of innumerable flocks of sea-birds; and as many as fourteen hundred fur-seals have been captured at one time, the custom being to club them on the head. They are very easily frightened away from their haunts, and can even detect a steamer's smoke a long distance off. Sealing operations in these parts have been suspended for some time past.

In addition to the islands comprised in the Ichaboe group, there are some others nearer the Cape peninsula which go by the name of the Colonial Islands. Not only do they contribute largely to the guano supply, but a considerable revenue accrues also from the sale of penguin eggs, which are much appreciated, the privilege of collecting them being put up to tender annually by the government.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XXIX.—I WITNESS A VALIANT ENDING.

THEY had scarce been five minutes gone when the full folly of my action dawned upon me. To be sure, I had saved the miller from death, but I had now put my own neck in the noose. I had given them a clue to my whereabouts: more, I had brought the hunt down on lower Tweeddale which before had been left all but unmolested. It was war to the knife. I could look for no quarter, and my only chance lay in outstripping my pursuers. The dragoons dared not return immediately, for four unarmed soldiers would scarcely face two resolute men fully armed and strongly posted. They could only ride to Abington, and bring the whole hornets' nest down on my head.

Another reflection had been given to me by the sight of these men. In all likelihood Gilbert had now returned and resumed the chief command of the troop, for otherwise there would have been no meaning in the journey to Dawyck and lower Tweeddale which these fellows had taken. And now that my dear cousin had come back, I might look for action. There was now no more any question of foolish and sluggish soldiery to elude, but a man of experience and, as I knew well, of unmatched subtlety.

The miller was for thanking me on knees for my timely succour, but I cut him short. 'There is no time,' said I, 'for long thanks. You must take to the hills; and if you follow my advice you will hold over to the Westlands, where your friends are, and so keep the pursuit from Tweeddale, which little deserves it. As for myself, I will go up the Wormel, and hide among the scrogs of birk till evening. For the hills are too bare and the light too clear to travel by day. To be kenspeckle in these times is a doubtful advantage.'

So, without more ado, I took myself off, crossed the fields with great caution, and going up a little glen in the side of the big hill, found a very secure hiding-place in the lee of a craig among a tangle of hazel-bushes. I had taken some food with me from the mill to provision me during my night journey, and now I used a little of it for my afternoon meal. In this place I lay all the pleasant hours after midday till I saw the shadows lengthen and the sun flaming to its setting over the back of Caerdon. Then the cool spring darkness came down on the earth, and I rose and shook myself and set out on my way.

I shall ever remember that long night walk over hill and dale to the Cor Water. The way was over the Wormel and the Logan Burn hills as far as Kingledoors. There I forded Tweed and struck over the low ridge to Talla Water. Thence the way was straight, and much the same as that which I had come with Marjory. But now I had no such dear escort, and I give my word that my limbs ached and my head swam oftentimes ere I reached my journey's end.

It was early dawning when I crossed the last ridge and entered the Cor Water valley. I found that, short as had been my absence, I had almost forgotten the entrance to the cave, and it was not without difficulty that I made out the narrow aperture in the slate-gray rock, and entered.

In the first chamber all was dark, which struck me with astonishment, since at five o'clock on a good spring day folk should be stirring. But all was still, and it was not till I had come into the second chamber, which, as I have told, was the largest in the place, that there were any signs of

life. The faint struggling light was yet sufficient to see with, and by its aid I made out the old man who had spoken with me on that first night of my journey.

He was sitting alone, staring before him as is the way with the blind; but at the sound of my steps he rose slowly to his feet. One could see that the natural acuteness of his hearing was little impaired by years. I paused at the threshold, and he stood listening; then he sank back in his seat as if convinced it was no enemy.

'Come in, John Burnet,' he said. 'I ken you weel. How have you fared since you left us? I trust you have placed the maid in safe keeping.'

I had heard before of that marvellous quickness of perception which they possess who have lost some other faculty; but I had never yet had illustration of it. So I was somewhat surprised, as I told him that all as yet was well, and that my lady was in good hands.

'It is well,' said he; 'and, Master Burnet, I fear you have come back to a desolate lodging. As ye see, all are gone and only I am left. Yestreen word came that that had happened which we had long expected. There was once a man among us whom we cast out for evil living. He has proved the traitor, and there is no more safety here. They scattered last night, the puir, feckless folk, to do for themselves among the moors and mosses, and I am left here to wait for the coming of the enemy.'

'Do you hold your life so cheap,' I cried, 'that you would cast it away thus? I dare not suffer you to bide here. I would be a coward indeed if I did not take care of you.'

A gleam of something like pleasure passed over his worn face. But he spoke gravely. 'No, you are too young and proud and hot in blood. You think that a strong arm and a stout heart can do all. But I have a work to do in which none can hinder me. My life is dear to me, and I would use it for the best. But you, too, are in danger here; the soldiers may come at any moment. If you go far to the back you'll find a narrow way up which you can crawl. It'll bring ye out on the backside of the hill. Keep it well in mind, lad, when the time comes. But now, sit ye down, and give us your crack. There's a heap o' things I want to speir at ye. And first, how is auld Veitch at Smitwood? I once kenned him weel, when he was a young 'prising lad; but now I hear he's sair fallen in years and gien ower to the pleasures of eating and drinking.'

I told him all of the laird of Smitwood that I could remember.

'It would be bonny on the muirs o' Clyde in this weather. I havena been out o' doors for mony a day, but I would like fine to feel the hill-wind and the sun on my cheek. I was aye used wi' the open air,' and his voice had a note of sorrow.

To me it seemed a strange thing that in the presence of the most deadly danger this man should be so easy and undisturbed. I confess that I myself had many misgivings and something almost approaching fear. There was no possibility of escape now, for though one made his way out of the cave when the soldiers came, there was little hiding on the bare hillside. This of course was what the old man meant when he bade me stay and refused to go out of doors. It was more than I could do to leave him, but yet I ever feared the very thought of dying like a rat in a hole. My forebodings of my death had always been of an open, windy place, with a drawn sword, and more than one man dead before me. It was with downcast eyes that I waited for the inevitable end, striving to commend my soul to God and repent of my past follies.

Suddenly some noise came to the quick ear of the old man, and he stood up quivering.

'John,' he cried, 'John, my lad, gang to the place I told ye. Ye'll find the hole where I said it was; and once there, ye needna fear.'

'Twas true I was afraid, but I had given no signs of fear, and he had little cause to speak of it. 'Nay,' I said haughtily, 'I will not move from your side. It were a dastardly thing to leave you, and the two of us together may account for some of the fiends. Besides, there is as much chance of life here as out on the brae-side, where a man can be seen for miles.'

He gripped me fiercely by the arm so that I almost cried out for pain, and his voice came shrill and strange. 'Gang where I tell ye, ye puir fool. Is this a time for sinfu' pride o' honour or mettle? Ye know not what evil is coming upon these men. Gang quick, lest ye share it also.'

Something in his voice, in his eye, overcame me and I turned to obey him.

As I went he laid his hand on my head. 'The blessing o' man availeth little; but I pray God that He be ever near you and your house, and that ye may soon hae a happy deliverance from all your afflictions. God bless and keep ye ever, and bring ye at the end to His ain place.'

With a heart beating wildly between excitement and sorrow, I found the narrow crevice, and crept upward till I came to the turning which led to the air. Here I might have safely hid for long, and I was just on the point of going back to the old man and forcing him to come with me to the same place of refuge, when I heard the sound of men.

From my vantage-ground I could see the whole cave clearly and well. I could hear the noise of soldiers fumbling about the entrance, and the voice of the informer telling the way. I could hear the feet stumbling along the passage, the clink of weapons, and muttered words of annoyance; and then, as I peered warily forth, I saw the band file into the cave where sat the old man

alone. It was as I expected: they were some twenty men of my cousin's company, strangers to me for the most. But what troubled my thoughts was that Gilbert was not with them.

'By God, they're off,' said the foremost, 'and nothing left but this auld dotterel. This is a puir haul. Look you here, you fellow,' turning to the guide, 'you are a liar and a scoundrel, and if your thick hide doesna taste the flat o' my sword ere ye're five hours aulder my name's no' Peter Moriston.—You (this to the old man), what's your name, brother well-beloved in the Lord?'

At their first coming he had risen to his feet and taken his stand in the middle of the cave, by the two great stone shafts which kept up the roof, for all the world like the pillars in some mighty temple. There he stood looking over their heads at something beyond, with a strange, almost pitying smile, which grew by degrees into a frown of anger.

'Ye've come here to taunt me,' said he; 'but the Lord has prepared for you a speedy visitation. Puir fools, ye shall go down quick to the bottomless pit like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and none shall be left to tell the tale of you. Ye have led braw lives. Ye have robbed the widow and the fatherless, ye have slain by your numbers men ye darena have come near singly, ye have been the devil's own braw servants, and, lads, ye'll very soon get your wages. Ye have made thae bonny lands o' Tweedside fit to spew ye forth for your wickedness. And ye think that there is nae jealous God in heaven watching ower you and your doings, and biding His time to repay. But, lads, ye're wrang for once. The men ye thocht to take are by this time far from ye, and there is only one left, an auld feckless man that will no' bring muckle credit to ye. But God has ordained that ye shall never leave here, but mix your banes to a' time wi' the hillside stanes. God hae pity on your souls, ye that had nae pity on others in your lives.'

And, even as I watched, the end came sudden and awful. Stretching out his great arms, he caught the two stone shafts, and with one mighty effort pushed them asunder. I held my breath with horror. With a roar like a world falling, the roof came down, and the great hillside sank among a ruin of rock. I was blinded by dust even in my secure seat, and driven half-mad with terror and grief. I know not how I got to the air; but by God's good providence the passage where I lay was distinct from the cave, and a rift in the solid rock. As it was, I had to fight with falling splinters and choking dust all the way. At last—and it seemed ages—I felt free air and a glimmer of light; and with one fresh effort crawled out beneath a tuft of bracken.

And this is why at this day there is no cave at the Cor Water, nothing but the bare side of a hill strewn with stones.

When I gained breath to raise myself and look around, the sight was strange indeed. The vast cloud of dust was beginning to settle, and the whole desolation lay clear. I know not how to tell of it. It was like some battlefield of giants of old time. Great rocks lay scattered amid the beds of earth and shingle, and high up toward the brow of the hill one single bald scarp showed where the fall had ended.

A hundred yards away, by his horse's side, gazing with wild eyes at the scene, stood a dragoon, doubtless the one whom the ill-fated company had set for guard. I hastened toward him as fast as my weak knees would carry me, and I saw without surprise that he was the Dutchman, Jan Hamman, whom I had already met thrice before. He scarce was aware of my presence, but stood weeping with weakness and terror. I took him by the shoulder and shook him, until at last I had brought him back to his senses, and he knew me.

'Where are they gone?' and he pointed feebly with his finger to the downfall.

'To their own place,' I said shortly. 'But tell me one word: where is your captain, Gilbert Burnet, that he is not with you to-day?'

The man looked at me curiously.

'He is gone on another errand, down Tweed toward Peebles.'

Then I knew he was seeking for Marjory high and low, and would never rest till he found her.

'I will let you go,' said I to the man, 'that you may carry the tidings to the rest. Begone with you, quick. I am in no mood to look on such as you this day.'

The man turned and was riding off, when he stopped for one word. 'You think,' he said, 'that I am your enemy and your cousin's friend, and that I serve under the captain for his own sweet sake. I will tell you my tale. Three years ago this Captain Gilbert Burnet was in Leyden, and there also was I, a happy reputable man, prosperous and contented, with the prettiest sweetheart in all the town. Then came this man. I need not tell what he did. In a year he had won over the silly girl to his own desires, and I was a ruined man for evermore. I am a servant in his company who worked my fall. Remember then that the nearer I am to Gilbert Burnet the worse it will fare with him.' And he rode off still pale and shivering with terror.

I mused for some time with myself. Truly, thought I, Gilbert has his own troubles, and it will go hard with him if his own men turn against him. And I set it down in my mind that I would do my best to warn him of the schemes of the foreigner. For, though it was my cousin's own ill-doing that had brought him to this, and my heart burned against him for his villainy, it was yet right that a kinsman should protect one of the house against the plots of a common soldier.

RABBITS AND RABBIT-WARRENS.

AT what period rabbits were first introduced into the British Isles is a matter of speculation; but it appears almost certain that they were first brought over from Africa to Spain, from whence they gradually spread throughout the whole of Southern and Western Europe, which, being temperate in climate, forms a fitting habitat for the *Lepus cuniculus*. In Northern Europe the rabbit appears to be almost, if not totally, unknown; probably not so much on account of the lowness of temperature as from dearth of food and the deep snows which for long periods cover what little there is to sustain life. Coney is another name for the rabbit; but the coney of Scripture, the eating of whose flesh the Mosaic law prohibited, was the Daman or Hyrax—a totally different animal.

But for the flesh of the rabbit, many of the poorer classes of people who live near the rabbit-warrens of East Anglia would come poorly off for animal food, the wages of the farm-labourers not being sufficient to provide butcher-meat for themselves and families except on rare occasions. To these poor agriculturists the rabbit, either floating in a sea of stew or more rarely baked with a mountain of potatoes, is a positive necessity, and is enjoyed by every member of the family; while the taste of a hare—the rabbit's big brother—is in most cases absolutely unknown. Indeed, the very fact of a hare being seen in a poor man's cottage would go far to stamp him as dishonest; for while the rabbit is regarded as peculiarly the poor man's food, until recently being classed among vermin, the hare is considered as game, and therefore fitting only for the table of the landlord or landowner.

Yet, from a naturalist's point of view, the hare and rabbit are of the same family, although there are striking points of difference between the two. A hare will weigh as much as three ordinary wild rabbits, and in the market is just about three times its value. A hare is contented with a shallow depression in a field (its 'form') for its residence; but the rabbit, with its energetic little feet, burrows out for itself a comfortable home, where it is safe from the inclemency of the weather, wind, and rain.

In the number of its progeny the rabbit is far ahead of the hare. Hares commence to breed when they are about twelve months old, and bring forth from two to five at a birth about four times a year; whilst the rabbit, commencing to breed at six months old, has from five to eight young ones five or six times during the season.

Young hares, however, have a distinct advantage over young rabbits, as they are born covered with hair and with their eyes wide open to all around them. The poor little 'bunnies,' on the other hand, come into the world both blind and naked. Hair soon begins to show itself on their smooth little bodies; but they do not receive their sight until ten or twelve days after birth.

As food, the flesh of the rabbit compares very favourably with that of the hare, being whiter, less dense in fibre, and therefore more easy of digestion, and of delicate flavour—qualities which render it almost equal to the flesh of poultry both for young children and invalid adults.

Rabbits are usually classed under four heads—namely, 'warreners,' 'parkers,' 'hedgehogs,' and 'sweethearts.'

The first kind, as the name implies, are in the habit of making their homes in burrows in open grounds or warrens; the 'hedgehogs' are found in banks surrounding fields, in woods, and places where the soil is not sufficiently light or sandy for them to form subterranean dwellings, and are distinguished from the 'warreners' by having less fur on their backs. The 'parker' lives and breeds on park-land or flat pasturage, and is indistinguishable from the last kind except to the expert eye of professional warreners. 'Sweethearts' is the generic name for the whole class of tame rabbits now multiplied into endless varieties in colour, form, and size. Some of this variety will weigh ten pounds—a weight which would be reckoned heavy even for a hare; but as there is in such cases more fat than flesh, they are not so profitable for the table as less gross animals.

The wild doe-rabbit makes an excellent mother, being most solicitous for the welfare of her progeny. The young are always produced in a separate burrow, which is lined with soft grass and made warm by the fluffy, soft fur which the mother plucks from her own body. When the young are born she regularly suckles them at night, going forth during the daylight to nibble the succulent grasses for her own sustenance. At such times she exercises great care for the safety of her young, pulling into the burrow a quantity of grass and earth, with which she makes a firm barrier to exclude all intruders and to ensure the warmth and comfort of her 'clutch.' It is said that this blocking of her especial burrow or nursery is to exclude the male rabbits, who at times are so fond of the young ones as to devour them. Probably when food is good and plentiful this would not occur; but when food is scarce and the weather cold or wet the buck turns cannibal, and sometimes eschews vegetable for animal food. It is not till the young have been under their mother's care for about a month that they are allowed to leave the burrow and nibble their way in the world, by which time the doe is getting ready to once more exercise the cares of maternity upon a second family.

What do rabbits eat? They will eat almost anything purely vegetable; but, as some foods are better for them than others, it is the warrener's care to provide them with the best diet. Grasses of various kinds come first in the rabbit's *menu*, and these must be of good quality—fine, succulent and juicy—if the flesh of the rabbit is meant for table; if for fur only, the quality of food is not of such vital importance. In bygone years, when land was too poor for arable purposes, it was allowed to run wild as feed for sheep; or, failing to sustain a paying number of sheep, and being too bad for any other purpose, it was turned into a rabbit-warren, where half-starved, diminutive rodents were allowed to breed and multiply as best they could for the farmer's benefit. In later days it has been found that rabbits are a paying 'crop,' and that the excellence of their flesh depends greatly upon the excellence of the pasture they feed upon. Rank or dry coarse grass produces coarse, stringy rabbits, small in size and tasteless in flavour; while good, sweet, nourishing, succulent herbage produces larger, healthier, and finer-flavoured rabbits, and actually more of them.

Now, suppose a modern warren to be covered with good pasturage, affording a fine run for rabbits; yet it must not be forgotten that year after year nourishment is being taken out of the soil which supplies that grass, and consequently the native nourishment of the earth will in time become exhausted, and the grass less luxuriant and nutritious. To avoid this, every care must be taken to rejuvenate and recharge the grass with the essential materials which the rabbits, by close cropping, are taking out of it. The flesh, bones, and blood of a rabbit contain over 50 per cent. of phosphate of lime, which is obtained from the grass and herbs consumed by it. The grass obtains this supply from the soil, and the soil in time becomes so poor in lime that the rabbits, although they eat the same quantity of grass as of yore, gradually diminish both in size and number. Ask a warrener why this is, and he will probably tell you the warren is 'rabbit sick;' and he is quite correct in his surmise. But go further, and ask him why this can be when there is plenty of pasture about? He will scratch his head and try vague excuses, but never realises the true answer. The fact is, he has been taking tons of phosphate of lime from the warren (unconsciously) in the form of rabbit-flesh, and has not put any back; consequently, the grass to the eye is as plentiful as ever, but it lacks that which goes to build up animal flesh, blood, and bone. The soil has become exhausted of its most requisite constituent—lime, and the owner's pocket suffers accordingly.

How can a warren be brought up to a normal state of nourishing efficiency and maintained so? In a very simple manner. On all land, except the warren, the steward or owner expects to be at some cost for tillage and labour; but in nine cases out of ten the poor warren is simply neglected by the husbandman, and looked upon as worthless, except that it raises a few rabbits, and no thought is ever given to its improvement. Let those who have warrens, either large or small, give them a little thought, and go to a little, only a little, expense over them, and they may double their stock of rabbits and increase their value, both as to skins and flesh.

Lime is cheap in almost every part of Great Britain; and after clearing the ground of all rubbish and detrimental weeds, the pasturage should be well spread with lime, broken small. This may be the ordinary lime; or if a gas-work be near, gas-lime will do just as well, although much cheaper, and may be had for about eighteenpence per ton. Rabbits have no aversion to gas-lime on account of its smell, for Mr Simpson, warrener to Lord Wharncliffe, has tried it with favourable results, and avers that rabbits will even make their burrows in it if placed in large heaps. He advocates its use very strongly, and recommends that it should be applied about October or November, after the rabbits have been marketed.

From two to four tons per acre may be applied, with the result that the soil will be replenished, the nourishing properties of the grass renewed, and the average weight of the rabbits increased several ounces all round; beside which, the improved health of the rabbits causes them to increase more rapidly, and thus add greatly in every way to the value of the warren.

Furze is a delight to rabbits, which devour the young shoots greedily, much to their benefit; for, although not generally known, furze is a most valuable rough food for both rabbits and other animals upon a farm. Contrast furze with two other foods of which animals are fond, and its value will at once be apparent. Swede turnips contain 1·94 per cent. of flesh-formers and 5·93 per cent. heat-producers; carrots, 0·60 and 10·18 per cent. respectively; while furze contains 3·21 per cent. of flesh-formers and 9·38 per cent. of heat-producers.

It will be found to pay the warren-owner to give children a trifle to gather acorns, of which rabbits are very fond, and on which they become quite fat. Probably the finest flavoured rabbits are those raised on warrens where juniper bushes are plentiful, for rodents of all kinds are very fond of the leaves of this tree; and rabbits which have a plentiful supply are highly prized by epicures because of the aroma and flavour imparted to their flesh.

A very good way of bringing grass to high condition is to plentifully sprinkle it with salt in the early spring, say at the end of March or beginning of April. Such a dressing will be found to make the grass eat short and tender to any grass-eating animals, whether cattle, deer, or rabbits, and is very beneficial for their health.

So fond are they of salt-strewn grass that they will forsake other parts of a pasture for a salted patch and will not leave it till it is bare of grass. Salt might be used with advantage to the extent of from one to three hundredweight per acre—the lesser quantity for warrens near the coast, and the larger when the warren is far inland.

Formerly rabbits were found on the roughest of rough ground; but now that the landowner begins to see that rabbits may be made to pay better than many other crops, his broad acres of pasture-land are being in many places turned into profitable warrens. In our grandfathers' days, before the invention of wire-netting, warrens were so expensive to enclose that most of them were without boundaries of any kind, and consequently were at the mercy of poachers and rapacious birds and animals. When wire-netting was unknown, an owner wishing to enclose a warren had to have a fence built all round the area to be cut off from the rest of his estate, and this was both a long and expensive task. The fence was an embankment of earth usually about four feet high and three feet wide (or thick). It was faced with turf and capped with furze, which projected eight or ten inches beyond the face. This was usually carried out on the piecework system, and its cost must have been very considerable. Wire-netting has altered all this, both as to time occupied in enclosing a warren and the cost of so doing.

A level country is unfitted for a warren, although very convenient for the plough; besides which, the rabbit does not delight in flat pastures, for he finds it very difficult to make his burrow in it, as all the sandy loam he digs out has to be dragged upward to the surface; whereas if he can set to work to form his home by excavating into the side of a hillock, bank, or sloping meadow, the acclivity affords him a ready vent for the loose soil, and his task is to send it downhill from the working, making his toil infinitely lighter and his home more weatherproof. A warren is, therefore, best made in broken, hillocky land, where some shelter is afforded it by trees or banks from any prevalent cold winds. Another reason why a warren should never be formed on flat land is the danger from rain: a sudden downpour results in the destruction of scores of young rabbits in such places, as the rain, finding a ready entrance to the burrows, rushes in and drowns them in their fur-lined nests.

The ground being selected, a row of rough posts about 3 or 4 inches in diameter and a little more than 5 feet long, are driven into the ground, from 3 to 4 feet apart, so as to form an unbroken line right round the ground. Next, wire-netting 18 inches wide and of 1½ inch mesh is fastened to the bottom of these posts in such a manner that 6 inches of it are turned down flat on the ground inwards. This leaves an upstanding barrier of netting a foot high. Then another roll of netting 30 inches wide and of 1½ inch mesh is fastened above this, so as to heighten the wall to an elevation of 3 feet, the remaining portion (6 inches) being turned down so as to form a flap hanging inwards also. This flap is strutted out from the posts by galvanised eyed-bolts about 7 inches long, through which an annealed wire is run all round the fence. This flap prevents rabbits from leaping out or foxes from leaping in. For the benefit of warren-owners, a wire-netting is now made, the bottom part of which is of small mesh and the upper of larger mesh; this saves much time in fixing. When necessary, the two edges of wire-net are laced together with tying wire. About 6 inches above the netting a thickly-studded barbed-wire should be fastened to the posts, so as to form a continuous guard all round the warren. Provision must be made for gateways where requisite.

On the stocking of a warren great differences of opinion exist, as much depends upon circumstances, such as the distance to market, the soil, the geographical position of the warren in the British Isles, whether reared principally for skins or flesh, and so on.

Take a small warren for example. One might start with about a score of rabbits to the acre, two-thirds of which should be does. These in one season will so stock a warren that by October three times that number may be killed, leaving an ample breeding stock for the next season.

Much judgment is required in estimating the number of rabbits a warren will sustain; but the state of the grass is usually a good criterion as to whether a warren is overstocked or understocked. In the latter case, the grass at a distance from the burrows will remain untouched, proving that many more might be reared on the same area of ground. In such a case, artificial burrows might be made so as to induce the rabbits to eat the untouched grass; fewer rabbits should be removed for market, so as to increase the breeding stock, or more rabbits introduced into the warren. With ordinary judgment it is seldom a warren is overstocked, the reverse being almost invariably the case.

The ordinary wild rabbit is very prolific, and finds a ready sale; but probably the best-paying kind is the 'silver gray,' whose skin is much sought after by the furrier.

The giant Belgian hare-rabbits have been tried on warrens, and thrive well; but although individually they are more than double the weight of the ordinary rabbit, yet it has been found that the weight of flesh taken from a warren of ordinary rabbits exceeds that from a Belgian warren when the aggregate weight per acre is taken into account.

Poor little bunny has many enemies, the principal of whom is the poacher, who plies his silent trade both in and out of season. Then

there is the fox; but fortunately Reynard requires something firm to leap upon when he enters a warren; and as the oscillating barbed-wire gives him no foothold, he usually cries 'Sour grapes,' and looks elsewhere for a meal. A fox, being an intelligent animal, looks out for gates whose tops are free from shaking barbs; so be careful to arm your gates with the dreaded wire. Among the rabbit's minor but rapacious enemies are the cat, weasel, stoat, and even rats; and to these may be added owls, hawks, kites, and some say even rooks in hard times.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

By 'TULLOCH ARD.'

THOSE two were simply inseparable. Their friendship dated from the time when they toddled side by side in short frocks. Together they commenced their schooldays under Ian Martin's care. They helped one another over the difficulties of two-syllabled words and simple addition. When they reached that bugbear of schoolboys, the fifth proposition in Euclid, they loyally held out to one another a helping hand, and together crossed the 'Bridge' in triumph. In the snowball fights between their school and the General Assembly's, they were invariably side by side in the forefront of the battle. On one of these occasions Davie Forbes challenged the champion of the opposing school to fight for the honour of his side. The challenge was eagerly accepted, and a desperate combat ensued, both schools looking breathlessly on. Davie barely reached his antagonist's chin, and his pluck was of small avail against the strength of the other. A well-directed blow on his nose stretched him bleeding in the snow. The victor's triumph was short-lived, for before he had time to receive the congratulations of his friends, Johnny Matheson was on him like a young lion to avenge his friend. Taken by surprise, the champion made a weak defence, and, before he had time to recover his guard, he was contemplating the sky with all the fight taken out of him. Amid the cheers of their friends, the two chums modestly retired into the ranks, their discomfited foe meanwhile breathing dire vengeance when he could catch either of them alone. They became the popular heroes of their school, and thenceforward no one had the temerity to meddle with one when the other was standing by.

Their schooldays ended (they both left the same day), they determined not to be parted if they could help it. 'As sure as death, Johnny,' said Davie Forbes, 'I'll stick to you if you'll stick to me. If my father sends me to Edinburgh and yours keeps you here, we'll'——

'I know, Davie; we'll run away to sea.'

And they shook hands over the compact.

But their fathers had, with a fortunate unanimity of purpose, both decided on the same career for their sons. The two boys were to go to Edinburgh to study medicine.

Herrington has yielded a crop of doctors and ministers altogether out of proportion to the size of the place.

Forbes senior and Matheson senior were not above the considerations of filthy lucre; and although neither would have objected to see his son 'wagging his head' in a pulpit, they feared the clerical market was getting overstocked, and the risk of their sons being 'P.P.s' (permanent probationers) had to be taken into account.

'It's a grand profession, is the medical,' said Forbes senior to Matheson senior. 'There's not another like it—except one, of course.'

'Except one, of course,' agreed Matheson senior. 'But I'm thinking Herrington is not the place for a doctor to make money. For the last thought in the mind of a doctor here is to make a good living out of his patients. It's philanthropists the doctors here have been, and that's a fact.'

'Well, our lads will have to try farther south. Perhaps when they have made experiments on the Sassenachs, and made money out of them, they'll come home to their own people to spend the rest of their days in the old town.'

Together the chums travelled to the Scottish seat of learning, full of the high hopes and aspirations which every Highland lad feels within him on leaving his native heath for the capital. They shared rooms as a matter of course, and passed through the varied experiences of life in city 'diggings.' They met the landlady with the useful cat, whose delinquencies furnished a text for its mistress, upon which she expatiated with all the eloquence of an ill-used martyr. But they were not so innocent, these Highland youths, to be taken in by her excuses.

'Mrs Thomson,' said Davie one day, 'your cat is too expensive a luxury for us. Its tastes are both nice and many. It has now got to do one of two things: feed like an ordinary cat or come to an untimely end. You understand?' And Mrs Thomson understood.

Another of their landladies, who had a large family, all of them fond of a good cup of tea, was in the habit of serving that beverage to her lodgers in an enormous teapot, upon the contents of which the two young men, healthy and normally thirsty although they were, could make but a comparatively small impression. Their tea bill assumed alarming proportions.

They protested against the too generous supply of the beverage for their modest requirements. But it was of no avail.

'You surely dinna expect the tea to confuse properly in a wee bit pot?' asked Mrs Tosh scornfully. 'You maun gie it room, ye ken.'

'I'll stop this, Davie,' said Johnny Matheson one morning, after they had satisfied their wants, and left the usual quantity of excellent tea; and so saying, he emptied the contents of the salt-cellar into the pot.

In the evening Johnny said significantly: 'I'm thinking, Mrs Tosh, the tea got too much "confused" this morning. The fact is, the pot is too big.' Mrs Tosh's face wore a grim look, but she said nothing. However, the huge pot never again made its appearance.

The chums kept changing until they found 'diggings' and a landlady to suit them. Mrs Macpherson was a Highland widow in reduced circumstances, whose heart warmed towards her Highland lodgers. An occasional Gaelic phrase exchanged between them acted like a charm, and served as a talisman against imposition. For Mrs Macpherson was not proof against making a little out of mere Sassenachs, but her soul rose in revolt against the bare idea of 'doing' a fellow-Celt. She took a motherly interest in the lads. She darned their socks, sewed on their buttons, and evinced a touching solicitude for their comfort in all respects.

When the summer vacation arrived, where should the youths spend their holidays but in their beloved Herrington? They travelled by the delightful West Coast route. The *Claymore* called at many quaint townships snugly nestling in quiet bays, with the giant hills towering majestically above them. Ah! those glorious Highland hills! Who with a spark of the Divine in his soul can help feeling impressed by their grandeur? The littlenesses of human nature shrink abashed before them. They reveal the secret of the Highlander's insight, his spirituality, his romance, his poetry. How could a people living under the shadow of such majesty, daily learning from these Books of Nature, be sordid, or mean, or commonplace? But the spell is broken by the realisation that a grinding poverty has, by a gradual process, been crushing the finer feelings out of these hill-dwellers; and increasing contact with the cold materialism of the world is doing the rest.

The steamer was full of southern tourists, many of whom had never been farther north than Rothesay, and they affected a fine contempt for everything and every one Highland. In their view, civilisation came to a dead stop at Oban, and beyond lay a region of semi-barbarism and partially-clothed barbarians. In their sublime ignorance they looked down on Highlanders from their lofty standpoint with a condescension which, if they had only known it, was ludicrously misapplied. Two of these superior individuals, dressed in loud checks, were speculating as to what kind of place Herrington, and what manner of people the Herringtonians, might be. Their mental horizon was bounded by the four walls of a warehouse in Buchanan Street or Cheapside, and they applied everything Highland—the hills included—to the commercial touchstone.

'It wouldn't take much to buy up this place,' they would say, contemplating one of the small townships; 'sixpence three-farthings a mile, or a hundred pounds for the whole bag of tricks, and dear at the money too.'

'Let's take a rise out of these cads,' whispered Johnny Matheson to his friend, as the steamer was crossing the Minch, and forthwith they proceeded to draw a terrible picture of their native place and its inhabitants. 'Desperate characters—unsafe to venture out at night without a revolver—a deadly enmity towards everything in trousers, especially if the trousers are of a loud pattern.' Such were a few of the pleasant fictions with which they entertained the tourists, who began to feel an uncomfortable sensation, which they attributed to the vicious waves of the Minch, as these made the *Claymore* feel lively. It may, however, have been what is generally termed 'funk.' Anyhow, it is on record that the loud-checked ones returned from Herrington unscathed, but sadder and distinctly wiser men.

David and Jonathan, by which names the two medicals became known, had 'a real good time' in Herrington. They were general favourites, and every house was open to them. Fishing, sailing, and shooting galore were the order of the day. But a cloud was about to settle on the horizon of their enjoyment.

One day, when trout fishing, Davie seemed strangely preoccupied. He cast wildly and never got as much as a rise. His companion, too, made a poor show.

'Hang it all, Davie,' he said, 'I'm not a bit of use to-day; and as for you, you'll never get a rise if you continue to cast in that fashion.'

'Johnny,' was the solemn reply, 'I am going to tell you something. Don't you think Mary Campbell is a fine girl?'

Johnny started. 'You're right there, my boy. But—but what has that got to do with what you were going to tell me?' And he laughed nervously.

'Well, it's just this. I'm clean head over ears in love with her, and you're the only one that knows it. Now she's very friendly with you (Johnny winced), and I want you to—to put in a good word for me when you get the chance. You'll do that for me, won't you?'

Johnny Matheson was silent for a moment, and then he replied very slowly:

'I'll do anything I can for you, David (he had never called him 'David' before); I promise you that.' And the two shook hands.

'You're looking very pale, Johnny,' said Davie

Forbes as they trudged homewards with their empty baskets over their shoulders.

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Mary Campbell was indeed 'a fine girl' as Davie Forbes had said. She was straight and lissome, and two bonny blue eyes looked now mischievously, now demurely, over a straight nose, a well-shaped mouth, and cheeks like rowans. She had been the cause of many sighs and heartaches, for she was provokingly impartial in her favours. 'Miss Crissie's' old housekeeper, Jessie —that shrewd observer of human nature—had on more than one occasion given her views about Miss Mary Campbell.

'She's as purty a lassie as ever walked,' she would say. 'But she's chust like the rest of them. They know how the lads run after a purty face, and they don't make themselves too cheap. But it's a good heart Miss Mary has got, as well as a bonny face, and it's me that's thinking there's a soft spot in it for some one. Oh no—it's me that's not going to say his name. But. I'll be knowing it all the same.'

Some weeks after the confession of Davie Forbes to his friend, they were out together at an evening party—the last before their return to Edinburgh.

'Parties' are a mild form of excitement in Herrington which are extremely popular among those by whom dancing is tabooed. As a rule they are characterised by decorous, depressing dullness, occasionally relieved by flashes of merriment. Cards are not permissible, but a harmless substitute is found in 'word-making' and similarly intellectual exercises. And really good singing is to be heard at these parties, for the air of Herrington appears to affect beneficially the elasticity of the vocal cords. Davie Forbes was easily first at the game of 'word-making,' and elicited an approving smile at his triumph from Mary Campbell, who was looking her best in a new dress specially made for the occasion. The other girls looked dowdy beside her; they saw with envious eyes that she was as easily first in the game of heart-breaking as was Davie Forbes in the art of 'word-making.' Curiously enough, 'Jonathan' proved a regular duffer at the latter exercise; but a careful observer could see that he overdid the cudgelling of a normally fertile brain, and that he seemed desirous of acting as a foil to the brilliancy of his friend. Both, too, were known to be possessors of fine baritone voices; but whereas 'David' sang with fine effect and thrilling expression the old ballad 'Mary' ('Kind, kind, and gentle is she'), 'Jonathan' gave a very lugubrious rendering of 'Thou art gone from my gaze, like a beautiful dream.' A hardly perceptible tremor was in his voice as he concluded.

'You're not in very good voice to-night, Mr Matheson (it used to be 'Johnny' when they were boy and girl); perhaps you are affected by the thought of leaving Herrington again so soon.' And Mary Campbell laughed nervously.

'I dare say that's it, Miss Campbell (it used to be 'Mary'). The fact is, Davie and I have had such a good time in the old town that neither of us likes the idea of going back to work. A holiday makes one so dreadfully lazy although it is supposed to have the opposite effect.'

'I suppose you will think and talk of us in this remote corner when you are together in your "diggings." Isn't that the correct name?'

'We shall often think and talk of *you*'—with a quite unnecessary emphasis on the last word—he answered gravely.

'I have never known such close friends as you two. I should imagine now, either of you would be capable of making a great sacrifice for the other, if required?' She looked at him demurely.

'Perhaps—— But there is that pompous old ass, Fearsome, going to treat us to a bad quarter of an hour from "Israel in Egypt." He thinks it is "classical" to sing oratorio music, and he is very proud of his runs.'

But he was secretly pleased at the interruption.

When the party broke up, the pairing of the younger people was the signal for feats of diplomacy which an ambassador might have envied.

'We go the same way, don't we, Mr Matheson?' and a pair of blue eyes shot fire into 'Jonathan's' heart, as he replied lamely:

'It is my misfortune to—to have to go the other way to-night, Miss Campbell. But,' he added eagerly, 'my friend Davie goes your way.'

'Friend Davie' was not far away, and anxiously offered his escort, which was accepted without enthusiasm. But here the voice of the hostess intervened with a request for 'Mr Forbes to see Miss Skimp home, and perhaps Mr Matheson wouldn't mind escorting Miss Campbell.' Miss Skimp was a spinster of fifty summers, who gushed her thanks and forthwith confided her angular frame into the safe keeping of the disgusted Davie. And so Johnny Matheson had to see Mary Campbell home after all. That young lady determined to have her revenge on her apparently unwilling escort.

'I can assure you, Mr Matheson,' she said in her most freezing tones as they trudged along the deserted and moonlit street, 'it pains me beyond expression to take you out of your way on my account. I fully appreciate the sacrifice.'

'For Heaven's sake, Ma—Miss Campbell, don't —please don't.' He pulled himself up with an effort.

'I fancy,' she continued mercilessly, 'I fancy that the escort whom you had so kindly provided for me would have found my company a little less burdensome.'

'I am quite sure he would,' he replied eagerly. 'I mean—I mean—he is a far more worthy escort than I. Miss Campbell,' he went on, 'if you only knew what a fine fellow Davie is, how clever he is, how good-hearted he is—you would—you would —well, you would admire him immensely.'

'And who told you, pray, that I don't admire him?'

He looked at her—the blue eyes were laughing mischievously.

'Yes—yes—but you would admire him tremendously. In fact, if you really knew him as I know him, you couldn't help loving him.'

'Indeed—no doubt. But I am not aware that I want to know him so well as to admire him tremendously, and as for loving him—well—but it is really too funny.' And she laughed outright.

'Why do you laugh?'

'An idea struck me. Have you ever been tickled by an idea?'

'No, my ideas never tickle, they bite.'

'Then, pray don't have any until you have seen me safely home. You might have an attack of hydrophobia, or should it be ideaphobia?' The merry laugh chilled him.

'Are you fond of poetry, Mr Matheson?' she asked as they were parting.

'No, not particularly. But why do you ask?'

'Because I want to make you a present of a Longfellow. He is delightfully simple, so I like him. I dislike equally men and books that are enigmas. But I must now bid you good-night with my best thanks for your act of self-sacrifice.' As the door closed he caught a glint of her eyes brimming with laughter.

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It was not until they were back under Mrs Macpherson's homely roof in Edinburgh that he opened her parcel and looked at the copy of Longfellow which she had sent him. He found a book-marker inside. The place which it marked was 'The Courtship of Miles Standish.'

That was all. But it was enough. The joy which filled his heart struggled with pity for his friend. 'Poor Davie' was all he said—'poor Davie.'

The story had to be told. It was a bitter pill for Davie, but he bore it manfully. 'You've won her fairly, Johnny,' he said as he wrung his friend's hand. 'Everything that a friend could do you have done. But you were meant for one another. You're a lucky fellow in winning such a girl, and I am a lucky fellow in possessing such a friend.'

They heard from Herrington that Mr Fearsome of oratorio fame was pressing his suit most persistently on Mary Campbell. He was rich, but Johnny Matheson was now assured that riches and a love of Handel combined could make no impression on the heart he had won in spite of himself.

'I have a good mind,' said Mary Campbell to him when at last they met again—'I have a good mind to make you learn "Miles Standish" off by heart as a punishment for being such a bashful lover. Only I knew all the time how matters stood—leave that to a woman's insight—and it made me love you all the more. As for me,' she added demurely, 'I have been reading Goldsmith lately. "She Stoops to Conquer" has a peculiar fascination for me. But beware of ever attempting to presume on that, sir.'

Johnny's reply need not, for the purposes of this story, be recorded.

As for the two friends, they are likely to remain David and Jonathan to the end of the chapter.

THE POET.

Who is the Poet? Who?—How dare define
The mystic art divine—
The matchless power that flings
A touch of magic o'er Life's meanest things—
The subtle Syren who so sweetly sings
To sailors on Life's main
That soul and sense alike surrender to the strain?

Not he, with noble aims and ideals born,
Who meanly dares to scorn
High thoughts and themes sublime;
Who feeds the vulgar ear with vulgar rhyme,
Fitting the fashion of the fickle time;
And Poesy's fair flower
Would make subservient to Ambition's pride of power.

Not he consumed with sensual passion's fire,
Though on his wanton lyre
A willing world hath hung,
What time with blistered lips of love he sung.
Dropping the cadence of his cancerous tongue;
His heart a hell contains,
And where a God should rule a grinning Satyr reigns.

Not these! The Poet sojourns not with such!
His sympathetic touch
Loves human smiles and tears;
He feels Creation's pulse—Earth's hopes and fears,
And all that Life endangers, Life endears,
Are his; on spirit-wings
Uplifted, he discerns the Infinite in things!

Yet, with his best endeavours, still his best
Is ever unexpressed;
He never can impart
Half the bright jewels from his brain that start;
The highest art must still conceal its art,
Or just a hint suggest
That intimates the whole, or half-implies the rest.

The moon's soft arc its silver circle tells;
Within the ovum dwells
The Laureate-Lark enshrined;
In the hard flint the prisoned fire you find;
The self-same Hand the blushing rose designed
As moves this mighty world;
And all the planet laws are in each dewdrop pearled.

All the imperial sheen of purple dyes
In the low murex lies;
The best eludes our ken,
The sweetest thoughts escape the Poet's pen.
E'en in the hour of seeming triumph, when
The air with praise is rent,
He softly sighs and feels a noble discontent.

J. Hudson.

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FORTUITOUS DISCOVERY.

THE accepted principle of necessity being the mother of invention is, like many another maxim, misleading, and would be more accurately rendered by substituting for invention the word contrivance or device. The true meaning of the Latin *invenire* is to come or stumble upon by chance, and in this sense accident alone can claim legal parentage over any fortuitous discovery. Many things of the greatest service to the world in general owe their origin entirely to chance. The rubbing of a piece of amber 'evoked,' to use Faraday's words, 'an invisible agent which has done for mankind far more wonderful things than the genie of Aladdin did or could have done for him;' the up-forcing of the lid of a cooking vessel discovered the marvellous power of steam, and the falling of an apple from its parent stem demonstrated the law of natural attraction. The simple swinging to and fro of a suspended lamp gave birth to the application of the pendulum, to which the precision of modern astronomy owes so much; while the finding of the natural magnet loadstone 'did more,' said the grave philosopher John Locke, 'for the supplying and increase of social commodities than those who built workhouses.'

The manufacture of gunpowder, according to Sainte Foix, was thus revealed. An Augustinian monk, Berthold Schwartz, having put a composition of sulphur and saltpetre in a mortar, it took fire, and the stone that covered it was blown off with great violence, which accident led the chemist to think it might be used to much advantage in attacking fortified places. He accordingly added to it a quantity of charcoal to render it more apt to take fire and increase combustion.

Leaden shot are attributed to a Bristol plumber, who, one night about the year 1783, 'had a dream which was not all a dream' that he was out in a shower of molten lead, which fell in the form of spherical drops. His curiosity being aroused, he went next day to the top of a church and poured some melted lead into a vessel of water lying below. To his great delight, he found that the lead had gathered into beautifully-formed globular balls, and he at once took out a patent.

The inference that glass was discovered by accident is strengthened by the fact that it is scarcely possible to excite a fire to sufficient heat for metallurgical operations without vitrifying parts of the bricks or stones of the furnace.

A Nuremberg glasscutter happened to let some aquafortis fall upon his spectacles, and noticed that the glass was corroded and softened where the acid had touched it. Taking the hint, he made a liquid, then drew some figures upon a piece of glass, covered them with varnish, applied his corroding fluid, and cut away the glass round his drawing. When he removed the varnish the figures appeared raised upon a dark ground; and etching upon glass was added to the ornamental arts.

According to common report, mezzotinto engraving was suggested by a soldier being observed one morning to rub off the barrel of his musket the rust it had contracted from exposure to the previous night's dew. The observer—whether Prince Rupert or not is one of the doubts of history—perceived on examination that the dew had left on the surface of the steel a number of very minute holes, giving the appearance of a dark engraving, part of which had been here and there already rubbed away by the soldier. He therefore conceived the idea that it would be practicable to find a way of covering a plate of copper with little holes, which, being inked and laid upon paper, would undoubtedly produce a black impression; while, by scraping away in different degrees such parts of the surface as might be required, the paper would be left white where there were no holes. Pursuing this thought, after various experiments, he invented a kind of steel roller covered with teeth, which, being pressed against the copper plate, indented it in the desired manner. The roughness thus occasioned had only to be scraped down where necessary in order to produce any gradation of shade.

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One day nearly three hundred years ago, a poor optician was working in his shop in the town of Middelburg, in the Netherlands, his children helping him or amusing themselves with the tools and objects lying about, when suddenly his little girl exclaimed: 'Oh papa, see how near the steeple comes!'

Anxious to learn the cause of the child's amazement, he turned towards her, and saw that she was looking through two lenses, one held close to her eye, the other at arm's-length; and calling her to his side, he noticed that the eye lens was plano-concave, while the other was plano-convex. Taking the two glasses, he repeated his daughter's experiment, and soon discovered that she had chanced to hold the lenses apart at the proper focus, thus producing the wonderful effect that she observed. His quick wit saw in this a wonderful discovery, and he at once set about making use of his new knowledge of lenses. Ere long he had fashioned a tube of pasteboard, in which he set the glasses at their proper focus, and so the telescope was invented.

The following year, 1609, Galileo, while in Venice, heard of the discovery; and, being greatly struck with the importance of such an instrument, soon discovered the principle of lenses in a shifting tube, and made a telescope for his own use. To having been the first astronomer in whose hands so valuable a gift was placed, Galileo owed both his reputation and persecution.

Among the many traditions concerning William Lee and the stocking-frame is one that he was expelled from the university for marrying, and that, being very poor, his wife was obliged to contribute towards the housekeeping by knitting. It was while watching the motion of her fingers that he conceived how to imitate those movements by a machine.

Arkwright accidentally derived the idea of spinning by rollers from seeing a red-hot bar elongated by being passed between two rollers.

The ordinary practice of taking a bath solved for Archimedes the question of how to test the purity of the gold in Hiero's crown. He observed that when he stepped into a full bath the quantity of water which overflowed was equal to the bulk of his body, and it occurred to him that the worth of the crown might be tested by such means. He thereupon made two masses of the same weight as the crown, one of gold, the other of silver, and immersed them separately in a vessel filled to the brim, measuring exactly the quantity of water that overflowed in each case. Having found by this means what measure of the fluid answered to the quantity of each metal, less in the case of the gold than of the silver—the bulk of the former being less, weight for weight—he next immersed the crown itself, and found that it caused more water to overflow than the gold, but less than the silver. Having found the difference between the two masses of pure gold and silver, in certain known proportions, he was able to compute the real quantity of each metal in the crown, and thus discovered the fraud that had been practised on the king, to whom he hurried, exclaiming, 'Eureka! Eureka!' ('I have found it! I have found it!'), an exclamation that has ever since been used to express exultation over a discovery.

Coming down now to our own time, the account of the discovery of saccharine, one of the numerous by-products of the gas-maker's refuse, whose sweetness is three hundred times more intense than that of cane-sugar, reads almost like a romance.

Dr Fahlberg had entered the Johns Hopkins University in America in order to devote himself exclusively to a study of the chemistry of coal-tar derivatives. Some months had passed, when one evening at tea-time he detected an intensely sweet flavour upon his bread and butter. He traced the sweetness to his fingers, to his hands, and to his coat-sleeves; and it dawned upon him that it must have been derived from one of the new compounds which he had that day succeeded in producing. He promptly returned to his laboratory and tasted the contents of every vessel with which he had been working. His idea was correct. One of his beakers contained the sweet material.

Those who are conversant with the fascinating philosophy of Bishop Berkeley may remember the following passage in his *Siris*, which, read by the light of present knowledge and the imposing list of valuable substances—oils, dyes, perfumes, flavourings, febrifuges, &c.—now obtained in the process of coal-tar distillation, is almost prophetic: 'The virtues of tar-water flowing, like the Nile, from a secret and occult source, brancheth into innumerable channels, conveying health and relief wherever it is applied.'

Professor Röntgen came upon his marvellous X-rays—which have opened out new fields of research in physical science, besides being of far-reaching practical utility in surgery and other departments—quite by chance. He was experimenting in the dark with a Crookes vacuum tube, which was covered with some sort of cloth. A strong electric current was passed through it, while close by was some prepared photographic paper, but no camera. Next day he noticed several lines on this paper for which he could not account. By restoring everything to exactly the same condition as on the preceding day, he was able to ascertain the real origin of these mysterious marks. It is curious that Shakespeare should have written in *Hamlet*:

> Sit you down; you shall not budge;
> You go not, till I set you up a glass
> Where you may see the inmost part of you.
>
> *Act* III. *Sc.* 4.

There is a pathetic story, perhaps not generally known, concerning one who anticipated Daguerre,

Fox Talbot, and all other experimenters in solving the problem of fixing the fleeting image of the camera. While half the Academy of Sciences in Paris were struggling with the difficulty, a poorly-clad, half-famished-looking lad left a plate at the shop of Chevalier, the optician, on the Quai de l'Horloge, which proved that he had succeeded where all others had failed. He promised to return next day and show how the victory had been obtained. But from that hour to this he was never seen. Probably he fell sick and was buried in a pauper's grave, and the world will never know the name of the first professor of sun-picturing, or the details of its earliest romance.

'I was singing,' says Mr Edison, 'to the mouthpiece of a telephone, when the vibration of the voice sent the fine steel point into my finger. That set me thinking. If I could record the actions of the point and send the point over the same surface afterwards, I saw no reason why the thing should not talk. I tried the experiment first on a strip of telegraph paper, and found that the point made an alphabet. I shouted the words "Halloa! halloa!" into the mouthpiece, ran the paper back over the steel point, and heard a faint "Halloa! halloa!" in return. I determined to make a machine that would work accurately, and gave my assistants instructions, telling them what I had discovered. They laughed at me. That's the whole story. The phonograph is the result of the pricking of a finger.'

Though the examples here given by no means exhaust the roll of accidental revelation, they suffice to show that invention—to use the word in its now generally accepted sense — must be preceded by discovery, in the same way as production is a *sine quâ non* of manufacture. In each case nature provides the material, leaving the execution to the genius, art, and subtlety of man.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXX.—I RUN A NARROW ESCAPE FOR MY LIFE.

THIS was in April, and now the summer began to grow over the land. The days grew longer and the air more mild, the flowers came out on the hills—little mountain pansies and eyebright and whortleberry and the first early bells of the heath; the birds reared their young, and the air was all filled with the cries of them; and in the streams the trout grew full-fleshed and strong.

And all through these days I lay close hid in the wilds, now in one place, now in another, never wandering far from Tweeddale. My first hiding was in a narrow glen at the head of the Polmood Burn, in a place called Glenburn. It was dark and lonesome; but at first the pursuit was hot after me, and I had no choice in the matter. I lived ill on the fish of the burn and the eggs of wild-fowl, with what meal I got from a shepherd's house at the burn-foot. These were days of great contemplation, of long hours spent on my back in the little glen of heather, looking up to the summer sky and watching the great clouds fleeting athwart it. No sound came to disturb me. I had few cares to vex me; it was like that highest state of being which Plotinus spoke of, when one is cumbered not with the toils of living.

In this place I abode till near the middle of the month of June. Twice I had gone to the cairn on Caerdon and left a letter, which I wrote with vast difficulty on fragments of paper which I had brought with me, and received in turn Marjory's news. She was well and in cheerful spirits, though always longing for my return. The days passed easily in Smitwood; and as none came there, she was the better hidden. I wrote my answers to these letters with great delight of mind, albeit much hardship. The ink in the ink-horn which I had always carried with me soon became dry, and my pen, which I shaped from a curlew's feather, was never of the best. Then after the writing came the long journey, crouching in thickets, creeping timorously across the open spaces, running for dear life down the hill-slopes, until I came at length to the cairn on Caerdon, and hid the letter 'neath the gray stones.

But about mid-June I bethought me that I had stayed long enough in that lonely place, and resolved to move my camp. For one thing, I wished to get nearer Barns, that I might be within reach of my house for such provisions as I required. Also, there were signs that the place was no longer safe. Several times of late I had heard the voice of soldiers on the moors above my hiding, and at any moment a chance dragoon might stray down the ravine. So, late one evening about midsummer, I bade adieu to the dark Glenburn, and took off across the wild hills to the lower vale of Tweed.

The place I chose was just at the back of Scrape, between that mountain and a wild height called the Pyke-stone Hill. It was a stretch of moss-hags and rough heather, dry as tinder at this time, but, as I well knew, in late autumn and winter a treacherous flow. Thither I had been wont to go to the duck-shooting in the months of November and February, when great flocks of mallard and teal settled among the pools. Then one has to look well to his feet, for if he press on eager and unthinking he is like to find himself up

to the armpits. But if he know the way of the thing, and walk only on the tufted rushes and strips of black peat, he may take the finest sport that I know of. Here, then, I came, for the place was high and lonesome, and with a few paces I could come to the top of the Little Scrape and see the whole vale of Tweed from Drummelzier to Neidpath. I had the less fear of capture, for the place was almost impassable for horses; also, it was too near the house of Barns to be directly suspected, and the country below it was still loyal and with no taint of Whiggery.

Here, then, I settled myself, and made a comfortable abode in a dry burn channel, overarched with long heather. The weather was unusually warm and dry, the streams were worn to a narrow thread of silver trickling among gray stones, and the hot sun blazed from morn to night in a cloudless sky. The life on the whole was very pleasing. There was cold water from a mossy well hard by when I was thirsty. As for food, I made at once an expedition to the nearest cottage on my lands, where dwelt one Robin Sandilands, who straightway supplied all my needs and gave me much useful information to boot. Afterwards he came every second day to a certain part of the hill with food, which he left there for me to take at my convenience. Hence the fare was something better than I had had in my previous hiding-place. Also, it was a cheerful life.

However, ere June had merged in July, I found myself in want of some companion to cheer my solitude. I would have given much for some like-minded fellow-wayfarer; but since that might not be had, I was fain to content myself with a copy of Plotinus, which I had got with all the difficulty in the world from the house of Barns. It happened on a warm afternoon, when, as I lay meditating as was my wont in the heather, a great desire came upon me for some book to read in. Nothing would do but that I must straightway set out for Barns at the imminent peril of my own worthless life. It was broad daylight; men were working in the fields at the hay; travellers were passing on the highway; and, for all I knew, soldiers were in the house. But with a mad recklessness I ventured on the quest; and entering the house boldly, made my way to the library, and was choosing books. Then I was startled by the noise of approaching steps, and seizing hastily the first volume I could lay hands on, I set off for the hills at the top of my speed. The visit had renewed old recollections, and I spent a bitter evening reflecting upon my altered position. Howbeit, those who seek it will soon find it in the book of philosophy which I seek soon to publish with Master John Herries, in the West Bow of Edinburgh.

But toward the end of October, when the nights grew long and the sunsets stormy, a change came over the weather. The Lammas floods first broke the spell of the drought, and for three clear days the rain fell in torrents, while I lay in my hole, cold and shivering. These were days of suffering and hunger, though I shrink from writing of them, and have never told them to any one. On the fourth I made an incursion down to my own lands, to the cottage of my ally. There I heard evil news. The soldiers had come oftener than of late, and the hunt had been renewed. The reward on my head had been doubled, and with much sorrow I had the news that the miller of Holmes Mill had been taken and carried to Edinburgh. In these dim, gray days my courage fell, and it took all the consolations of philosophy, all my breeding and manly upbringing, to keep up my heart. Also, it became more difficult to go at the three weeks' end to the cairn on Caerdon with the letter for Marjory.

It was—as far as I remember, for I did not keep good count—on the second day of September that I set out for Caerdon on my wonted errand. I had had word from Robin Sandilands that the country-side was perilous; but better, I thought, that I should run into danger than that my lady should have any care on my account. So I clapped the written letter in my pocket, and set out over the hills in a fine storm of wind.

I went down the little burn of Scrape, which flows into Powsail about a mile above the village of Drummelzier. Had I dared, I would have crossed the lowlands just above the village, and forded Tweed at Merlin's grave, and so won to Caerdon by Rachan and Broughton. But now it behoved me to be cautious, so I kept straight over the hills; and, striking the source of a stream called Hopecarton, followed it to where it joined the river in the Mossfennan haughs.

All seemed quiet. The stream, now changed from its clearness to a muddy brown, was rolling on its way through the fields of stubble. The few houses smoked in peace. The narrow road was empty of travellers. . . . Without hesitation I ran down the slopes, caring not to look circumspectly to the left and right. . . .

I had not run far till something before me brought me to a halt and sent me flat among the grass. Just below the house of Quarter, coming from the cover of the trees, was half-a-score of soldiers.

My first thought was to turn back and give up the project; my second, to go forward and find a way to cross the valley. Happily, the foliage was still there, the heath was still long, the grass was dense: a man might succeed in crossing under cover.

With a beating heart I crawled through the heather to the rushes beside a little stream. This I followed, slowly, painfully, down to the valley, looking sharply at every bare spot, and running for dear life when under cover of bank or brae. By-and-by I struck the road, and raised myself for a look. All was quiet. There was no sign of any man about—nothing but the beating of

the rain and the ceaseless wind. It was possible that they had gone down the vale, and were by this time out of sight. Or maybe they had gone up the water on their way to the moors of Clyde. Or still again, they might have gone back to the house of Quarter, which they doubtless loved better than the rainy out-of-doors. In any case they were not there, and nothing hindered me from making a bold sally across the open.

I rose and ran through the corn-field, cleaving my way amid the thick stubble. The heavy moisture clung to my soaked clothes and the sweat ran over my face and neck; but I held straight on till I gained the dry-stone dyke at the other side, and scrambled across it. Here I fell into the stream and was soaked again; but the place was not deep, and I was soon through. Now I was directly beneath the house, but somewhat under the cover of the trees; and still there was no sign of man nor beast. I began to think that, after all, my eyes had deceived me, and taken nowt cattle for dragoons. Such a trick was not impossible; I had found it happen before at the winter's shooting. With this pleasing hope, I straightened my back and ran more boldly up the planting's side till I gained the moorlands above. Here I paused for a second to enjoy my success and look back upon the house.

Suddenly something rang past my ear, with a whiz and a clap, and a voice behind me cried, 'Stop! Gang another step and I fire.' So the cup of safety was dashed from my lip at the very moment of tasting it.

I did not obey, but dashed forward to the high moors with all my speed. It was conceivable that the men were unmounted and their horses stabled, in which case I might get something of a lead. If not, I should very soon know by the clear, convincing proof of a shot in my body.

My guess was right, and it was some little time ere I heard the cries of pursuers behind me. I had made straight for the top of the ridge, where the ground was rough for horses, and I knew that they could not follow me with any speed. I was aye a swift runner, having been made long and thin in the shanks and somewhat deep-chested. I had often raced on the lawn at Barns with my cousin for some trifling prize. Now I ran with him again, but for the prize of my own life.

I cannot tell of that race, and to this day the thought of it makes my breath go faster. I only know that I leaped and stumbled and ploughed my way over the hillside, sobbing with weariness and with my heart almost bursting my ribs. I never once looked behind, but I could measure the distance by the sound of their cries. The great, calm face of Caerdon was always before me, mocking my hurry and feebleness. If I could but gain the ridge of it I might find safety in one of the deep gullies. Now I had hope; now I had lost it and given myself up for as good as dead. But still I kept on, being unwilling that any one should see me yield, and resolving that, if I needs must die, I would stave it off as long as might be.

In the end—after hours, or was it minutes?—I reached the crest and crawled down the other side. My pursuers were still some distance behind, and labouring heavily. Near me was a little ravine, down which a slender trickle of flood-water fell in a long cascade. I plunged down it; and, coming to a shelter of overlapping rock, crawled far in below, and thanked God for my present safety.

Then I remembered my errand and my letter. I clapped my hand to my pocket to draw it forth. The place was empty; the letter was gone. With a sickening horror, I reflected that I had dropped it as I ran, and that my enemies must have found it.

THE FUTURE OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING.

THE most striking feature of the recent developments in electrical engineering science to the lay mind is the ease and completeness with which the electric current can be converted into other forms of energy at will. The modern electrical engineer has indeed obtained a very remarkable command of this strange, elusive force that we call electricity, and in recent years he has given many noteworthy proofs of his progress in utilising it for the service of mankind.

It will no doubt surprise many of our readers to hear that these modern applications of electricity are in nearly every case based upon facts or laws discovered by Davy and Faraday three-quarters of a century ago. The discoveries of these two noted men in the realm of electrical science earned for them undying fame, but they did not lead at once to the practical application which many of their contemporaries had no doubt expected to see. Excepting in land and ocean telegraphy, progress was slow; and until the commencement of the eighties the practical applications of electricity outside the field of telegraphy were few in number and unimportant in character. Since the year 1880, however, there has been a most rapid development in many directions; and in the coming century electrical engineering, in the opinion of those well qualified to judge, is destined to occupy a position of supreme importance. In order to enable our readers to understand the progress of the past fifty years, and to form an independent judgment concerning the hopes of the future, we shall give in this article an

explanation in non-technical language of those applications of electricity to the affairs of daily life that may be seen in our towns and cities at the present moment. In electrical science, as in other things, correct knowledge of the present is the most certain basis upon which to build judgment of the future.

If the various practical applications of electricity in the world about us be carefully scrutinised, they will be found to fall into three broad groups or classes. In the first will be found those applications depending upon the conversion of electricity into mechanical movement; in the second, those applications depending upon the conversion of electricity into heat; and in the third will be gathered those depending upon its conversion into chemical activity. Let us now examine these in detail.

Faraday, in one of his most notable experiments, discovered that if a piece of copper wire be bent into a closed ring, and be moved to and fro in the vicinity of a powerful magnet, currents of electricity flowed through the wire ring. These currents are called 'induced currents.' Repeating this experiment in another form, he found that if a light magnetic needle be suspended in the centre of the copper wire ring, and an electric current be passed through the latter, movement of the needle occurred. From these two comparatively simple experiments have sprung all those applications falling into the first group—that is, depending upon the conversion of electricity into mechanical movement.

Land and ocean telegraphy were the earliest practical applications of these principles; and it is instructive to note that it is only within the last fifteen years that the 'Society of Telegraph Engineers' has changed its title to the broader one of 'Institution of Electrical Engineers.' Telegraphs do not demand large currents of electricity; to this fact their early development was no doubt largely due.

A second application of small currents of electricity was perfected in the eighties—namely, the telephone. Twelve years ago this instrument was a novelty except in scientific circles; to-day it is an almost indispensable adjunct of business and social life. A perfect network of overhead wires in all our cities and manufacturing towns bears witness to the importance and extent of the telegraphic and telephonic systems. The first step in opening up all new countries is to erect a telegraph-line, and the telegraph-post has become one of the most infallible and most visible signs of civilisation. The world is now invested in a meshwork of cables and land-lines continually growing in extent and complexity; and through the operations of these it has become, in its social and political aspects, singularly subject to nervous shocks. In spite of this drawback, the telegraphic and telephonic systems will continue to grow, for their utility is unquestioned. The branches of electrical engineering connected with these two developments will therefore expand, and the progress in the future may certainly be expected to rival that of the past.

To turn now to other applications of the same experimental truth—that mechanical movement of coils of wire in the neighbourhood of powerful magnets produces electric currents—we find that the dynamo and the electric motor are both based upon this same principle. These appliances are, in fact, closely related to the telegraph instrument and to the telephone; their chief distinction lies in the magnitude of the currents which they produce or utilise. The dynamo is the machine by which mechanical motion is converted into electrical currents on a large scale; the electric motor is the machine which performs the opposite service. It is owing to the invention and perfecting of the dynamo that many of the more recent applications of electricity have become possible; for, while chemical batteries were the only source of electrical energy, the cost of the current rendered such applications wholly impracticable. In the past the chief use of the dynamo has been in connection with the electric lighting industry; but in the more recent developments of electric traction and of power-transmission upon a large scale the dynamo is also a most essential element of success.

For traction purposes the dynamo is used in conjunction with the electric motor. At some centrally-situated spot the boilers, steam-engines, and dynamos are set down, and the current generated here is carried by overhead or underground conductors to the tram or railway car on which it is to be used. For street vehicles this plan is impossible, and the current has to be passed into what is called a 'storage battery' carried by the vehicle itself. In all cases where motion is required, the current is allowed to pass through the electric motor with which each type of vehicle is provided, and the revolutions of the motor are then communicated by means of suitable gearing to the wheels of the vehicle. One of the earliest electric railways was erected by Messrs Siemens at the Giants' Causeway in 1883. A considerable number of schemes have been carried to completion in this country since that year; but the development has been slow compared with that witnessed in Germany and America. The advantages which especially fit electricity for use in cities and towns, as the propelling power for street vehicles, trams, and railways, are the freedom from smoke, foul gases, or dirt, and the facilities which it offers for attaining a rapidity of transit impossible by the present methods of propulsion. It is therefore not surprising that electricity is rapidly growing in popular favour for purposes of city traffic; and in fifty years (many would assert in a much shorter period) it is doubtful whether it will be possible to find in any city of Europe or America either trams or city railway cars propelled by horse or steam power. The city cab and bus horse will also give place

to this new propelling agent; and the fact that four electric vans have already commenced to run between the G.P.O., London, and the district sub-offices indicates still further displacement of the faithful horse. Electricity has therefore a very wide field of usefulness open before it in connection with the transport of men and merchandise in cities; and those branches of the electrical engineering business dependent upon this development will be kept busily employed for many years to come.

The dynamo and electric motor have also appeared in yet another domain of activity, and present indications point to a considerable growth in this direction in the future. The transmission of the power developed by the steam-engines in large mills and factories to the various points where it is utilised has in the past been effected by mechanical means. Long shafts and belt-gearing, however, entail great loss of power; and there is now a decided movement in favour of electric transmission. This is effected as follows: the energy developed by the engines is converted into electrical energy by means of the dynamo; copper conductors are then used to convey the electric current to the different points where the power is to be used, and electric motors of various sizes reconvert the electrical into mechanical energy at the moment and for the period it may be required.

This method has been adopted in many engineering works in Germany and America, and its introduction into this country has already occurred.

The still more extended applications of the method in connection with the development of power from falling water has been noticed in an article in the January issue of this *Journal*, and from wind in the article 'The Wasted Wind' in the April issue.

Faraday's simple experiment connecting mechanical movement and electrical energy has therefore received marvellously wide and extended application; for telegraphs and telephones, electric trams, railways, and cabs, and schemes of power-transmission in factories and works, are all the direct outcome of this experiment made nearly three-quarters of a century ago.

In the second group of the applications of electricity are found those depending upon the conversion of electricity into heat.

The laws governing the relationship between electricity and heat were discovered by Faraday and Ohm; but there is no doubt that Davy had noticed, in his electro-chemical experiments, that while platinum was heated to redness by the electric current, copper remained under similar conditions comparatively cold. All applications of electricity to lighting or heating purposes are merely developments of the facts and laws discovered by these noted investigators early in the century. In the small incandescent lamp the electric current is allowed to pass through a carbon filament, which is heated in consequence to whiteness. If air were present the filament would quickly burn away, but by enclosing it in an hermetically sealed glass bulb and exhausting the air, the combustion of the white-hot filament is avoided. In the arc lamp the air takes the place of the carbon filament of the incandescent lamp, and the obstacle—or 'resistance,' to use a technical term—imposed by the air-gap between the points of two carbon pencils is the direct cause of the dazzling chain of carbon particles that is carried by the current across the gap.

In the electric furnace, the 'resistance' of the materials which are to be heated is sufficient in many cases to produce the heat required when the electric current is made to pass through them. In other cases the electric arc is used in the furnace, since its temperature is higher; for dry air offers a greater 'resistance' to the passage of the current than any solid materials.

With regard to the past growth and present developments of these applications of electricity, the electric lighting industry, as the oldest, of course stands in the forefront. It is difficult at times to realise that only fifteen years ago the electric light was more or less of a novelty. To-day every city and town of any pretensions in both the New World and the Old is provided with the electric light, and the number of users of electricity for lighting purposes is rapidly growing. As in the case of electric traction and power-transmission, it is chiefly the convenience and simplicity of the method of use that is favouring the adoption of electricity as a lighting agent. The cost is still higher than that of gas or oil; but as the number of consumers increases the cost will fall, and this is an influence that is already making itself felt in winning new customers in many towns. The electric lighting industry will therefore undoubtedly continue to grow.

Though electricity as a heating agent is much more expensive than coal or gas, the practical applications of electricity for heating purposes are increasing in number. Two advantages balance this greater cost: the intensity of the heat obtained, and the wonderful convenience of its application. In the electric furnace temperatures can be obtained that are unattainable by any of the older methods of heating, and two manufacturing industries have been founded upon this use of electricity. Carborundum and calcium carbide, products of the electric furnace, cannot be made on a large scale in any other way. Electric welding is another application of electricity in which effects are obtained that cannot be arrived at by ordinary methods. Here the localisation within a small area of a very intense heat is desired, and the electric arc, or the heat produced by the local 'resistance' of the metal to be welded, is made use of to create the required welding temperature. Electricity as a heating agent for domestic use has not made a great advance, although here again its convenience is much in its favour. The last hotel erected in New York has,

however, been fitted throughout, as regards the bedrooms, with electric heating appliances; and such diverse ends as heating curling-tongs, frying pop-corns, and airing the bed, can all be effected by the mere insertion of plugs into sockets in the walls. Electricity as an agent for producing heat has therefore already attained a fairly wide field of utilisation, and progress in the future is certain to occur.

In the year 1807 Davy was experimenting in the laboratory of the Royal Institution, London, upon the action of the electric current when passed through fused salts, or solutions of the same. It was during these experiments that he discovered the alkali metals potassium and sodium, and raised himself to a position of pre-eminence among the chemists of Europe. The practical applications of Davy's discoveries relating to electro-chemistry, as in the case of those of Faraday relating to light and heat, were long delayed, owing to the absence of any cheap source of electrical energy. With the advent of the dynamo, electroplating and electrotyping developed into extensive minor industries. Electroplate is everywhere in evidence; and this manufacture is certainly one of the most useful and successful applications of Davy's and later workers' investigations concerning the deposition of metals by the electric current. It is not so generally known that electrotyping is an equally important industry. In the printing trade the preparation of electrotypes is one of the chief features of the quick methods of reproduction now employed, and many of these methods would be impracticable were it not for the ease and convenience with which exact replicas of printers' and engravers' blocks can be obtained in the electrolytic bath. Still more recently the development of water-power for industrial purposes has led to a great reduction in the cost of electrical energy, and a large number of electro-chemical industries, based upon the principles discovered by Davy over eighty years ago, have sprung into existence. The mere enumeration of the metals and chemical products that are now being manufactured by these new processes in Europe or America upon an industrial scale will serve to show how wide a field of usefulness has been opened by the labours of electro-chemists and electrical engineers. Aluminium, antimony, chromium, copper, gold, magnesium, nickel, potassium, silver, sodium, zinc, phosphorus, ozone, alkalies, bleaching-powder, bleaching-fluids, potassium chlorate, galvanised iron, and numerous organic products are all being produced by processes in which electricity plays a part at the present time. These new methods of production are in many cases highly successful, and the older methods of manufacture have already disappeared, while in others such disappearance is only a question of time. Though it is possible that some of the manufactures included in the above list may not survive the test of commercial trial, electro-chemistry is undoubtedly one of the most promising branches of applied electrical science, and its growth and expansion in the future are assured.

This review of those applications of electricity that are actually accomplished facts—not mere visions of the future—proves that electricity in the hands of the electrical engineer will occupy a foremost place among the applied sciences in the coming century, for its sphere of action will embrace every department of our social and industrial life.

A MYSTERY OF THE SWORD.

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

'YOU will have perceived the points which struck me as curious in this interview. For one thing, Stuttgart is not within the kingdom of Bavaria. For another, this person had learned my identity with *sang froid*. Now I not only flattered myself that my reputation had penetrated into Germany, but I had good reason to be aware of the notorious fact that nowhere in the world is the law of caste so powerful as amongst the arrogant nation we have such deep cause to hate. Yet only on second thoughts had it occurred to M. von Stulbach that my social standing was not sufficiently high to afford me the honour of crossing swords with an aristocrat—such as a Von must needs be over the border.

'On the next day it was rumoured that Von Stulbach had ceased to show himself in public, and in the evening the corner table at the café was without an occupant. Some said he had left Paris, others that he passed the entire day fencing in one of the schools; but Hallard declared that he had seen him in the Bois in the course of the morning.

'Immersed in speculations, I awaited the reply to my telegram with impatience.

'Meanwhile M. le Capitaine haunted my *salle-d'armes*, and practised diligently, but without making any progress. As far as I could judge, his adversary had but to protrude his sword and my pupil would inevitably impale himself upon it.

'On the eve of the decisive morning I asked my client if he had provided himself with a second.

'"You smile, monsieur; but pardon me if I say that your countrymen consider but slightly the conventionalities of societies other than their own.

We of the Latin races are not too self-centred to adopt all that we see of good in your institutions. For instance, we admire your methods of sport, and follow them; we appreciate and patronise your tailors of London. But your nation is more narrow and self-satisfied. You care to annex nothing outside your own shores—except, perhaps, continents!"

'Captain Brerliam replied that a friend was coming over from England that night to act for him.

'"You seem to have seen Von Stulbach," he added, "but can gather nothing about his antecedents. Is it not odd that he should be so completely unknown? Well, as I said before, I am out of my depth in this affair. Good-bye. If I live until to-morrow I'll look in and tell you what happened."

'He swung out of the door, his sunburnt face working, and repeating "till to-morrow," as if it were with me and not with the German that the quarrel lay.

'During this interval I had in private been perfecting myself in certain coups of which I alone possessed the secret. From my standpoint it was difficult to forecast the future. Up to the moment when I parted from M. le Capitaine I had received no reply from Stuttgart. I almost despaired of gaining the information I had hoped for, but it came at a late hour, and proved to be of a most explicit nature.

'The duel was to take place in the park of St Ouen; and, acting on my advice, my client went down with his second the night before and slept at an inn in the vicinity.

'Therefore, to reach M. le Capitaine before the encounter, I rose at dawn, and having partaken of a cup of coffee, I proceeded by the earliest train to St Ouen. I kept a lookout for M. von Stulbach's party, but saw nothing of them.

'Alighting on the platform in a shower of drizzling rain, with the signals and doors shaking in the cold wind from the river, I made haste to the inn, where I found myself well in advance of the appointed hour. Being informed that the Englishmen were not yet risen, I took upon myself the duty of awakening M. le Capitaine.

'After knocking at the door I entered.

'"Time to get up? All right!" he growled; then rousing more fully, he recognised me. "Hullo M. Desterre! Anything wrong?"

'For answer I begged to be allowed to address the gentleman who was to act in the interests of M. le Capitaine.

'"He's in there," replied Captain Brerliam, indicating a second door. "But if there's anything in the matter you can tell me"——

'I began to explain that I should prefer—— when the door burst open and a young man rushed headlong into the apartment.

'"Time, old man! Up you get! You've got to stick the Doitcher"—by which name he throughout continued to allude to M. von Stulbach—"in less than an hour—I beg your pardon—— But who the dickens is this?"

'"May I have the honour of a word with you, monsieur?" I interposed, adding an intimation as to who I was.

'"Right you are, sir!" exclaimed this gentleman. "You'll excuse me—early hours, you know—and it's cold. Come along."

'With that he preceded me into the adjoining room, where he requested me to sit down, while he scrambled back into bed, clasped his hands round his knees, and professed himself ready to listen.

'"By-the-way, my name's Guspitt," he added.

'Then I informed this M. Guspitt of certain facts. At the end of my recital he sprang from his bed.

'"You're a fine fellow, sir," he cried—"a deuced fine fellow! And if ever you should want a friend in any way, I beg you will apply to James Guspitt, barrister-at-law."

'Upon this the impulsive young man seized my hand and inflicted upon it a pressure I did my utmost to return; though, indeed, my fingers felt somewhat paralysed by the stress of his gratitude.

'"Shall we leave this Doitcher to cool his heels?" he demanded, drawing up a blind.

'"I think, monsieur, we must appear on the field. An interview is at least advisable."

'"Of course, of course! I'll interview him at the end of a cane, sir!"

'I realised that such an interview might be unpleasant, for I, who am a judge of men, saw the muscles jump out on his arm.

'"It grows late, monsieur," I said, "and your friend must start shortly."

'"I won't be half-a-minute," he responded.

'And, in effect, as I left the room I heard this grampus of a man plunging and splashing in a bath of icy water.

'In a short time they joined me at breakfast, M. Guspitt having recommended something more solid than coffee and rolls to fight on that cold morning.

'Captain Brerliam was inclined to silence, M. Guspitt continually urging him to decapitate the Doitcher, and laughing when I endeavoured to explain that such a course would be impossible.

'When we rose M. le Capitaine grasped the hand of M. Guspitt.

'"I'll pink him all right, old chap," he said; then turning to me, he continued: "M. Desterre, I am infinitely indebted to you for all you have done. As to repaying you—why, that may be the affair of my executors."'

Then we stepped out and walked quickly into the park. The morning had improved, and it was fine overhead, though the wind still blew sharply from the north. I need not describe the spot to you, monsieur. You know it—the little, level sweep of grass behind the thicker-growing trees close to the river-side.

'On coming round this belt of woodland we per-

ceived M. von Stulbach, dark-browed and sullen, already on the ground with his second. They were pacing up and down. At sight of us the second advanced. M. Guspitt detached himself from us to meet him.

'After the usual salutations the other said in a loud tone:

'"You are late, monsieur! Shall we place our men?"

'The words were unmistakably meant to reach the ears of Captain Brerliam, and were calculated to incense a person of his hasty temper. This in itself was an offence of an unpardonable nature.

'M. Guspitt smiled.

'"I shall have great pleasure in kicking your man, sir!"

'I stepped forward to interpose. Captain Brerliam stood appalled.

'"Guspitt!" he cried, frowning.

'But M. Guspitt had placed himself facing Von Stulbach.

'"Yes, I shall deal with you, sir," he exclaimed threateningly.

'"Afterwards, monsieur, afterwards—with pleasure," replied the German, with a sneer. "But first I must finish my affair with your principal."

'"There will be no 'afterwards,'" cried M. Guspitt. "Any affair will be with me, and of a very different sort to that you propose with Captain Brerliam. You're known, sir!"

'I, who was watching the face of the German, saw it contract slightly.

'M. Guspitt, turning to his friend, went on:

'"If I were you I'd flog him, Brerliam."

'Meantime the German's face flamed, while M. le Capitaine gazed from one to the other in amazement.

'"Stand back!" shouted the second of Von Stulbach, coming between them. "You cannot withdraw from the encounter now. All this mad bluster is useless."

'M. Guspitt spoke more collectedly.

'"It is impossible that this duel should take place. Brerliam, this man is not Von Stulbach, as he calls himself, but Worsen, a fencing-master of Stuttgart, hired to do the work of an assassin! We owe the discovery of the plot to M. Desterre."

'"Is this so?"' said M. le Capitaine.

'"Of course it is!" exclaimed M. Guspitt. "Otherwise would I be saying it?"

'"M. Brerliam is over ready to believe these absurd statements," remarked Worsen—as I must now call him—with a disagreeable accent.

'"We have ample proofs," I hastened to say.

'Captain Brerliam wheeled round and stared in the countenance of his adversary; then he uttered one of his big, sudden laughs.

'"Do you want a proof? I can give you one, then!" and with a swift movement he plucked the beard from Worsen's face. "Who put this new courage into you, man? You had no stomach for our last meeting at Berlin?"

'Then he advanced upon him with an aspect of fury.

'"I've a mind to give you a good hiding! Who sent you?"

'Worsen shrank back, but remained silent. We of the continent of Europe are not fond of the *jeu de mains*, as are the English. Besides, I have often observed that a man who will face a danger to which he is accustomed with coolness loses his nerve when confronted with one that is strange to him. Now, I had no doubt whatever that Worsen, though perfectly ready to meet the blade of the first swordsman on earth, had been unable to bring himself to look at death down the pistol-barrel of M. le Capitaine, nor at this moment could he endure the indignity and suffering of a hammering by the fists of this big Englishman. I felt for him, monsieur; I felt for him, in spite of all.

'The man of Stuttgart turned to me.

'"I owe this to you," he said harshly. "From you at least I can demand reparation."

'"Will you leave this matter in my hands, M. le Capitaine?" I said. "Nevertheless, M. Worsen, I believe I could, under the circumstances, refuse to meet you."

'Worsen sprang forward and struck me lightly on the chest.

'"Coward!" he exclaimed. "I knew it!"

'"You have already said so twice," said I.

'"I will proclaim it to all France," he cried, "if you continue to refuse me satisfaction."

'"There will be no need," I returned quietly. "We must meet for our individual honour and the honour of our respective nations!"

'"No, no, Desterre! this is my affair," broke in Captain Brerliam.

'"Leave it alone!" said M. Guspitt, taking him by the shoulder. "Your affair is with the master, not with the servant. And I should advise you, M. Desterre, to have nothing to do with this rascal either. He is unworthy of your sword."

'And that, monsieur, is the story of Captain Brerliam's affair.'

Desterre raised his glass and drained it. The murmuring silences of the summer night closed in upon his voice.

'Then you had a meeting with Worsen?' I asked at length.

'But, yes, monsieur. Ah, there was talk and enthusiasm in Paris about that affair! For I had a reputation then. Personally I was enchanted; he was a swordsman of the first rank. Nevertheless he lacked something—good fortune, perhaps. I had the luck to pass my rapier through his shoulder. My friends and clients held a fête in my honour. But those days are gone for ever! Everything passes, monsieur; everything passes!' he ended sadly.

'And what of Captain Brerliam?'

'He achieved his wishes; he united himself with the beautiful Countess. One can guess that he made capital out of the affair of Worsen to force

the brother-in-law to see reason—eh? I saw him at Mont St Michel three years ago. He is redder and more sunburnt than ever, but he carries always the same fascination. He and Madame did me the honour to invite me to dinner.'

By this time we were walking down the quiet, white road barred with shadows. Desterre, his head on his breast, had returned in thought to the brilliant days in Paris, for as we parted he said, 'Ah, monsieur, I had a reputation then!'

A SCOTCH TEACHER IN NEW YORK.

WHEN I landed in New York, about three years ago, I had no extravagant expectations of getting immediate and lucrative employment; and yet I was not prepared to find it so difficult to get placed. The objection to employing me—one which I met at every turn of the way in the first few months of my quest for work—might be formulated as follows: 'You appear to have the qualifications necessary for the position, and personally you would be acceptable to me; the only fear I have arises from the well-known fact that American boys are so unlike English boys, and require different methods of discipline.'

I first tried a well-known school agency in New York, which sent me several notices of vacancies in out-of-the-way places. For the nearest of these I applied by letter—it was in a ladies' college in Virginia; but, convinced by the lady principal's answer that what she really wanted was a sort of spiritual overseer and factotum, rather than a plain teacher of the humanities like myself, I dropped the negotiation and paid no further attention to agency vacancies.

At last, through persistent watching of the advertising columns of the leading newspapers, I did succeed in getting a position in New York as teacher of classics and mathematics in a school of about fifty boys. It was a preparatory or secondary school, and as it was not a boarding-school, I congratulated myself on being well rid of the galling burden of playground and domestic supervision under which I had so long chafed in England. I may here mention that, after graduating in Arts at the University of Edinburgh, I had taught in a Scotch school for one year; and then, after some months of private tuition, accepted a situation in an English boarding-school, where the salary, exclusive of board and lodging, amounted to sixty pounds a year. My salary now was to be seven hundred dollars (about £140), a figure which many American teachers would have turned away from, but which my circumstances did not permit me to decline.

As I have said, I had been repeatedly warned of the difference between American boys and British boys; and certainly, if their conduct in the home, and especially in the street, was to be taken as the criterion, the difference is patent to any observer who keeps his eyes open. But when I came to meet them in a well-ordered school—such as this one undoubtedly was—I found no such radical differences as had been predicted. Americans are too ready to assume that English boys are tyrannised over at school, and that no such pleasant relations as often obtain in their country between teacher and scholar can exist in a Scotch or English school. It is as difficult to convince them of the contrary fact as it is sometimes to make them believe that members of parliament receive no pay for their services. At any rate, I found it no such hard matter to manage a class of sixteen well-grown American boys; indeed, they proved, as a rule, to be not only apt and intelligent at their work, but remarkably attentive and respectful in their deportment as well. There was not a really troublesome boy in the whole lot, the only source of embarrassment being a chubby-faced youth of German stock, who had a turn for practical joking, though he weighed about 250 lbs.

About half of my class had passed through the regular course of the school from the primary department up to the graduating class. These were pretty well grounded; but the class as a whole would not have attained to a satisfactory standard if tried by a British test. One thing I considered largely to blame for the shambling, unsolid character of these boys' performances was the absurd system of marking up for lessons in vogue in the school. An average of 90 per cent. was what everybody looked for, while 60 per cent. was downright failure; and when a boy got a succession of low weekly averages he was very apt to take the huff, and by-and-by he might be heard of as attending some other school.

My boys were handicapped in still another way. Some time before Christmas they were set to 'memorising' orations, dialogues, and passages of Latin and Greek for recitation at the annual entertainment to be given by the school before closing for the holidays. Of course it resulted in their proper work being performed very perfunctorily, when it was not neglected altogether. When the great day, or rather evening, arrived, and the first part of the programme had been successfully rendered, the principal ascended the platform, and, making his bow to the packed audience, read off from a report-book a few details regarding those precious averages, which

seemed to be assumed by everybody to be exactly commensurate with the proficiency of the pupils.

Still another and most serious thing interfered with the efficiency of the class. There was no rigid and impartial examination awaiting it at the end of the session, to put the boys on their mettle, as is the effect on an English school by the approach of the emissaries of the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board; or as used to be the case in Scotland, in my earlier days, when the event of the year was the examination of the whole school by a deputation of the ministers of the presbytery, whose faces loomed fatefully on that morning behind a pile of glittering prize-books on the master's desk. Here the examination of my classes was to be conducted by myself, under the general supervision of the principal, at the end of the school year in June, or the end of May. In the public schools, of course, a much more rigid and effective system prevails, the examinations in them being periodically conducted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and his staff of assistants.

Long, however, before our 'commencement' day arrived—that is, the day for the final exercises of the school, when the public were again admitted—a whispered rumour had been going the rounds of the older teachers, which, when it reached my ears, sent a cold thrill down my spine. It was to the effect that, owing to causes which had been at work for some time back, the school was not paying, and that some of us would have to go without our last two months' salary. To pass over this miserable experience, I must do the principal the justice to say that he showed a creditable feeling for me in my hard position, without money or friends in a strange land, by recommending me for some other work, which, though not of a very congenial nature, stood me in good stead during the long and trying summer months—that sweltering, dusty, noisy season in American cities, when to the forlorn Britisher, unable to leave the scorching city, life seems not worth living.

I declined to re-engage with this principal for the following year, even with the bait offered of an increase of salary (that might never be forthcoming), preferring to try for what I could get in the way of private teaching. After many failures in this direction, I at last struck out a form of advertisement which soon brought me plenty of pupils—of a kind. It might be amusing, but not profitable, to expose the pecuniary value of a tutor's services, as estimated by many worthy people. In America the teacher in a good school gets much more than he does in the average school in Britain; but when it comes to private tuition, conditions seem to be reversed, and the reason, or at least the chief reason, is not far to seek. The public school in America takes a good deal of the ground from under the feet of the private teacher, because it not only imparts an elementary training to the children of all classes who choose to avail themselves of it, but it also largely serves the same purpose as the middle-class secondary school of Great Britain. In America one has to go up a step or two in the social scale to reach people with the means for employing private tutors. The possession of such means implies also a certain degree of culture; and consequently a private tutor is better off in America than could be expected in a country where the influence of a public school system extends to almost every rank of the community. As it is, large numbers of people, intelligent but not particularly cultivated, have means enough to hire private teachers for special purposes, at rates more directly dependent on the general trend of business than is the case in England and Scotland. And there is no such demand for the services of the private teacher in the United States as there is in Britain in connection with the competitive examinations for the various branches of the Civil Service, as well as for the preliminary examinations of certain professional bodies. Civil Service reform is still in its first stages in America, and it is questionable, under the present system of government, if its principles can ever be very generally put in practice.

It was among this large and thriving class of citizens that my work now lay for some time, and my most pleasant memories date from this intercourse, for several of my patrons were not only satisfactory pupils (adults) in a twofold sense, but also extremely sympathetic and companionable as fellow-sojourners in this vale of the teachers and the taught. I had pupils of every age above childhood, of both sexes, and of almost every European nationality and condition of life. I prepared young men for college entrance examinations, and brushed up squads of young clerks in their grammar and arithmetic, but could never get them (or my young lady pupils either, fluent and stimulating as they might be in their talk) to write down their thoughts in simple, idiomatic English. I read Latin with patient and reasonable lawyers—who almost invariably make satisfactory students—and German with testy and unreasonable physicians, who, in their burning impatience to be put in the way of reading the German medical periodicals, required of their teachers an exercise of power which they would have called miraculous if demanded of themselves by their patients. I taught heads of families their (English) letters, and gray-beards the extraction of the cube root and the solution of triangles. And almost in every case I found the foreign-born pupil, or the pupil born of foreign parents, whether German, or Swede, or Irish, or Cuban, or South American (I had none British), to be both brighter and more persevering than the descendants of long-established American ancestry—a fact to be accounted for by the anthropologist and not by

the teacher, who must take men as he finds them in that seething caldron of the nations henceforward to be known as Greater New York. The chief faults of those of American descent, especially of young men in business, who came to me to be intellectually groomed were engrossment in social dissipation and 'raw haste, half-sister to delay.' They were amiable and even-tempered to a degree, but fickle and easily discouraged; even those of them with more backbone than the average were at the bid of every call of pleasure, or too impatient of results from their work. The heritage of even a go-ahead temperament is not without its disadvantages, as enlightened Americans will readily admit.

As I had many excellent pupils whom I shall always hold in pleasant remembrance, so, as might be expected, an indiscriminate fisher such as I was must sometimes have netted strange fish. On the principle of *ex pede Herculem*, I shall give an instance or two of these.

A young man wanted very badly to enter Harvard University in the following fall term—it was March when he came to me. Accordingly we set to work, reading *Cæsar* first; but when he had glibly rattled off the first few well-thumbed pages of his book and emerged into pastures new, his eagerness oozed out, and he collapsed. On my reporting this discreditable breakdown to his father, who was a commercial man, I learned that the boy's sole ambition in wishing to go to college was to shine as a member of one of the athletic societies, of which, it appeared, his elder and more gifted brother was already a distinguished ornament. A tip-top university stamp for his muscle was all the young jackanapes was after; but, unfortunately for his aim, his pluck was not equal to his ambition, and he returned to his desk in his father's office, to the no small satisfaction of the latter, who doubtless felt he had done his part in surrendering one son to the Moloch of college athleticism.

One day a tall, stylishly-dressed young person came to me on somebody's recommendation, and was not long of letting me into the secret that she had leanings towards a career on the stage. She wished, before entering a school of acting, to read portions of the English drama under my guidance, with the view both of making some acquaintance with the literature of the stage and of improving her pronunciation. She spoke with a strong German accent, appeared to be very illiterate, but also very positive and self-sufficient. I took down the comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer*, to test her reading and expression, and when she had floundered through a scene or two in an execrable manner, she suddenly asked me to explain the meaning of the title. But my explanation fell flat: the two notions of 'stooping' and 'conquering' were so incongruous to her mind that she could not bring them together in consciousness. Such dense, 'yellow-primrose' literalness of intellect I never met with in any human being before or since.

Another time I was visited by a robust-looking man in the prime of life, who stated that he was a master plumber, and that, being deficient in his arithmetic, he was finding it difficult to keep track of his bookkeeper's accounts, now that his business was increasing. A little fencing, however, elicited the pitiable admission that he was totally unable to read! He could read figures, add a little, and just write his own name—all he had ever learned in his native country—the Green Isle; but though he had hitherto been successful in concealing his limitations from the people about him, certain circumstances had recently given him the alarm, and he had made up his mind to try and mend matters. And what a struggle was his! What pathos in his groping efforts to spell out his way through the primer which his own little son had thrown aside two years before! But night after night, summer and winter, he kept it up, until at last he had his reward, and he could look his little boy boldly in the face, and had no more fears of his bookkeeper.

At one time I had a class of young French-Swiss watchmakers in Brooklyn, who deluded themselves into thinking that they would learn English from a teacher while living clannishly by themselves in a boarding-house where not a word of English was spoken. They were very good, jovial fellows, and sometimes great fun as well; but they took up their daily lesson as if to speak any language but their own was a humiliation to them.

Perhaps the oddest pupil of all was an old man over seventy, a native of Alsace, who wanted to learn geometry, because, after vainly trying to satisfy his craving for knowledge by dabbling in history and philosophy and even modern science, he had come to the conclusion that the only truths which could satisfy a rational mind were the truths of Mathematics! Yet, paradoxical as it may seem, but is not, this arid-minded old fellow, who found even the bald statements of modern science too flowery for his taste, was a religious man, and a churchwarden to boot. Alas! he turned out to be not so single-minded as he appeared. He had his adamantine crotchets, which I, backed by Euclid with chapter and verse, was powerless to remove. He ended his lessons, which had gradually degenerated into ill-tempered altercations with his teacher, by one day breaking out into a savage tirade, not against the equator, but against the Proposition of the Three Squares (Euclid I. 47), and I saw him no more. It was his Waterloo.

But though, sometimes, I had a good run of pupils, the work was poorly paid, when the cost of living was taken into account. A single man who 'sets up for a gentleman' cannot live decently in New York under two pounds a week; and

when it is stated that the average compensation for private teaching is no more than half-a-dollar (two shillings) a lesson—only the fortunate few getting from three to four shillings—it is easy to see that a tutor must be kept very busy indeed to leave any margin beyond a mere livelihood. And there are those three dreadful months from the middle of June to the middle of September to be considered and provided for, when New York is a Sahara to the unfriended foreign teacher.

A TUNISIAN TUNNY FISHERY.

SIDI DAUD, where the fishery is, is about forty miles from Goletta by sea, across the Gulf of Tunis, and something over sixty by land. The journey is generally made by sea, as the road is bad; although it can be done on horseback in eighteen hours, it, as well as the majority of the roads in the regency, is quite impassable for carriages.

Leaving Goletta, the port of Tunis, twelve miles from the capital, the traveller embarks in one of the native lighters—a two-masted lateen-sailed craft, destitute of cabin or any accommodation other than a seat on the cargo. With a good wind, Sidi Daud is reached in about four hours. As Goletta fades away the islands of Zembola appear in sight, where the usual track of ships is left, they turning to the left past Cape Bon. The larger of these two islands is inhabited by three or four Sicilian families, who bring the later days of Defoe's hero vividly to mind. Each family lives in a one-roomed stone house, guiltless of mortar. Goats abound, and the islanders milk them to make cheeses, with which, now and again, they venture in the rickety tub owned by the community on a voyage to Tunis—the whole of the male population, four men and a boy, acting as crew. The island simply consists of two mountains covered with a good deal of scrub. It was evidently thought a good point of fortification by the ancients, for it is covered with the ruins of what were once substantial structures. The smaller island adjacent is inhabited solely by gulls and by rabbits, which latter do not breed on the mainland, being at war with the jackals, or perhaps it is the jackals who are at war with them.

Some way out is a reef under water, which forms the port of Sidi Daud. It is thought to have been an ancient breakwater. The whole bay answers to a description in one of Virgil's *Eclogues*. In bad weather boats cannot make the port at night, and have to run to Hammam Corbus for shelter. In the seventies the *White Sea*, of 1000 tons, went aground here. The captain refused the help of a crew from the fishery, thinking that they were pirates, and the vessel was totally lost. A French vessel also went ashore there, but eventually, although deserted by all her crew except the captain, mate, and chief engineer, got safely off.

The boat plying between the fishery and the town belongs to a man named Tita, who has a contract to buy as many tunny after each haul as he likes at fifty piastres a hundred kilos (220 lbs.). A piastre or real is there worth sixpence. Tita also serves as post, as he makes fairly regular weekly trips. Whenever he carries any one from the family owning the Tonnaro, or letters, he hoists a flag of which he is very proud—Corriere di Sidi Daud.

When Tita draws up alongside the jetty at the fishery, the visitor is met by the heads of the island, the whole of which is appropriated to the fishery, forming a little kingdom of its own—the Capitano, his son (captain of the fishery steamer), Padre Paulo the priest, and the Doctor. The Padre, of course, represents the church and the Doctor science; and, as has happened in bigger communities, the two are a little at loggerheads.

Going up the town past the seamen's quarter, the principal rooms face what is called the Piazza, and are on the second story. As in all native buildings of any pretensions, the rooms surround an open space or patio on to which they all open; each division consists of two rooms, an outer lobby and a bedroom. In addition to the bedrooms, there is a dining-room, kitchen, store-rooms, and a pharmacy—for, unfortunately, the doctor's services are often in requisition, generally for wounds. There is not much sickness in the island.

One rises at various hours, from three in the morning to eight, when the inevitable cup of black coffee is presented, and, soon after, breakfast, consisting of a bowl of hot coffee and milk, eggs, and a seaman's biscuit; a light lunch and a dinner of mutton or tunny constitute the meals. Kouskousou, a native stew of grain, vegetables, and of course mutton, is a favourite and very good dish. The servants are a sailor, a Moor, and a cook. The Moor is footman and the sailor housemaid. The butter is churned by Arab women in the villages on the mainland by the tedious process of tossing it to and fro in a skin. Meals are turned into a species of torture by the number of flies, despite Padre Paolo, who exorcises them by waving a birch broom over and into everybody's plate.

The seamen live in the High Street, a long row of buildings accommodating them in batches of eight, sleeping in hammocks. Each batch has

a boy to fag for it. They are paid standing wages of one franc a day, with a bonus on each fish caught, and a share of each catch, which they sell for their own benefit. One of their most valued perquisites is the roe; but half of this they are bound to sell back to the fishery at a fixed price. They have thus a direct interest in the success of each haul. The mechanics who do not fish have, of course, fixed wages. Law and order is represented by an old Arab named Reis Ali, who persists in augmenting the usual attire of a son of Mahomet by a pair of blue breeches.

The most exciting time for every one is when a haul is made.

Nets are laid out in the beginning of spring in the bay. They form a series of chambers, with a long wall of net which intercepts the course of the fish and leads them into one of the outer chambers. The inmost chamber is made of very strong net, with a flooring of net. If the fish do not enter this of their own accord, the skull of an ox or a horse is let down. This attracts the fish, and when sufficient have entered, another net is let down, and they are secured.

The haul is called a *matanza*. Work begins about three in the morning, by the boats being towed out to the nets. There are two large boats, the size and build of a Thames lighter, each towed by four smaller ones with fourteen oars. The two large boats form the ends and the others the sides of an oblong corresponding with the size of the inmost chamber where the fish now are. As soon as the boats are moored the men begin to haul up the nets, when the fun begins. As the fish feel the net moving beneath them they rise to the surface, splashing the water with their tails and drenching the spectator who has not had the forethought to bring a waterproof with him. The *capitano* takes his position in a small boat in the centre of the nets, whence he directs operations, and has a really exciting time. From eight hundred to eleven hundred fish are taken at a time, averaging two and a-half to three hundredweight each, so it will easily be imagined that while the net is being raised they make things very lively. As soon as the net, which requires much noise on the part of the men to raise it, is high enough to bring the fish within reach of the weapons, slaughter, or rather capture, begins. If one is watching the fish rushing about in frantic efforts to escape, it is difficult to see the first attempt at capture; but the fact that it has started is brought to notice by the water being turned to blood colour. A certain number, the *élite* of the men, are armed with long harpoons or hooks. These seize the fish behind the head and draw them to other men armed with short but strong gaff-hooks. If the men with the long hooks are not very expert to seize the fish in exactly the right spot, they often get pulled into the water themselves, and lose their fish and weapon. About six of the men with the shorter hooks seize the fish and haul it up, when, catching hold of two of its fins, they shoot it over the gunwale into the hold, carefully avoiding a blow from its tail. The largest fish are from nine to ten feet long and six in girth. A good-sized one, but by no means the largest, weighed four hundred kilos (over 7 cwt.). As before stated, a successful *matanza* means about one thousand fish, and in favourable years two a week are made during a season of about two months—April and May. When all the fish are caught the nets are let down again, and the weary task of towing the loaded boats home commences, under a sun that is just beginning to gain power. The nets are about three miles from the island. On the way home some of the men are deputed to remove the roe and clean the fish.

When the boats get back, about nine o'clock, the fish are thrown overboard and dragged up a paved incline under two arches, which extend into the water. They then have their head and fins removed by three strokes of an axe, are lifted by eight men on to the back of a ninth, who staggers under the load to a beam, where a rope is fixed round the fish's tail, and it is left hanging. It is a great point of honour with the men that two shall not be employed to carry one fish. By one o'clock all the fish are, or ought to be, hung up, and the men take a rest until evening. The fires are lighted and coppers heated, and at six work begins again, to go on without intermission until ten or eleven the next morning. The first process is cutting up the fish. For this there are three tables about ten feet long, having in front of each a large and somewhat shallow tank with a constant supply of water. It is the duty of the carver to keep this tank full of cut-up fish. A tunny is thrown on the bench, and the chief carver divides it, passing half to each side of him, where it is again divided and subdivided until there remain only little pieces of about six cubic inches. There are five men to each table, and less than two minutes suffice for each fish. The pieces are transferred to other tanks for a second washing, and thence to the coppers opposite. They are not put directly into the coppers, but into strainers which fit the coppers, and are carried there by means of a tramway crane. The process, which goes on all night, is weird and picturesque in the dark—the gloomy arches lit by fitful oil lamps, steam from the coppers, the crane bearing a steaming strainer overhead, the smoke from the chimneys, and the noise of the men and music of the choppers. The cooks have ten-foot ladles for stirring the fish, and wear untanned sheepskin aprons and either jack-boots or none. They never adopt any middle course. When pronounced to be cooked, the fish is carried off, strainer and all, suspended on poles on four men's shoulders, and left to cool in an airy warehouse. When the cooking is done, about ten on the following morning, the men

have the rest of the day to themselves, and on the ensuing morning packing begins. The fish is either salted or put up in oil specially brought from Susa. This olive oil is an expensive item for the fishery. The barrels are packed full of fish, and oil poured in and left to soak, more and more being added as wanted. The head cooper examines each cask before it is stored away, about five thousand barrels being filled yearly. Fish is also put up in tins in the same way, but they are steamed before being closed up. The rest of the fish is salted. This, though it does not require so much care at first, is a longer process. The fish is carved in the usual way, but at different tables, and passed to a man standing on the other side of the table, who dips it in salt. It is then put in a barrel. The barrels are stood in the open, and brine poured in; they are then covered over with salt, which is continually renewed until they hold no more.

The fish in oil is for the Italian market, while that in salt is for the Maltese. At Malta it is sold to vessels going east, being much used where there are lascars on board.

The Campo Santo is wisely placed at the extremity of the island. Here the heads of the fish are hung on beams, and the fins, tails, &c. are left to rot, in which process they yield an oil readily saleable for medicinal purposes.

Everything wanted for the fishery is as far as possible home-made. Tin plates are obtained from England, and all the tinsmiths' work done on the spot. Boxes and barrels are made in the same way. There are blacksmiths who do all the iron-work, including the old-fashioned wooden-stocked anchor. Shipwrights build and mend all the boats, except, of course, the steamer and larger brigs. The nets are perhaps the most important work done, as miles of netting are required. Esparto grass is served out to the wives of the men—they are mostly Sicilian fishermen, who only come over for the season—who make it up into strands during the winter. Before the fishing commences it is made up into ropes, cables, and nets on the island, and each year after the season it is sold for paper pulp. The only net of hemp is the centre net, in which capture takes place. This has to be very strong, the meshes being about an inch in size, while those of the guiding nets are nearer a foot. During a *matanza* every one except the head mechanics has to turn to and fish, whatever his natural trade. Sometimes the fishery meets with ill luck. In 1874 no fish at all were taken, the whole of the nets being washed away. If the weather is rough and there is much sea, the fish may jump over the nets and get away, or if a shark gets caught with them they may break the nets in a stampede. Once the nets were cut to pieces by a steamer out of her course. As before stated, the whole island belongs to the fishery; but it is a very short distance from the mainland, with which it is connected by a foot-bridge in a ruinous state of repair, and by a ford. Any one who has travelled about the country always prefers the safety of a ford to the danger of a bridge the parapet of which is repaired with stones from its buttress. There is no fresh water on the island, and to secure this is the real object of the crazy bridge, pipes being laid along it.

As soon as the fishing is over the fish is all sent off to its destination, and the island left to the custody of some Arab care-takers until the following season.

Not far distant there are a series of caves which are worthy of investigation by some one of better knowledge than that possessed by the islanders. They are elaborately cut in the cliffs, with a shaft to the open air; but there is not even a tradition as to their origin or purpose.

THE ARBUTUS.

Here Love, with straying feet, shall go
Where Spring's paths meet together;
One way the Winter went, I know;
And it was blust'rous weather.

The snow was falling, wide and white;
In calm it melted slowly;
Again I looked—for well I might—
I saw a blossom holy:

A cream-cheeked thing, on slender stalk,
So timid and so vagrant;
I might to tropic gardens walk
And find no bud so fragrant.

We gathered lilies in the south,
You and I together;
You pressed them to your chin and mouth,
And laughed; 'twas summer weather.

You loosed a lock to fix a rose
That crowned a faery valley;
Caressing it (I saw the pose)
With lightsome wit and sally.

Among the deep blooms of the Fall
I watched your soft hand reaching
Unto (I saw no cardinal)
An answering heaven, beseeching.

But, dear! this trailing, pink-lipped flower,
First of Spring's gentle creatures,
I tender in life's hopeful hour:
The picture of your features.

Green, for your gown; pink, for your blush;
White wreath, for beauty gleaming;
This perfect perfume, for the hush
Of Love, when it is dreaming.

John Stuart Thomson.

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DRAGON-FLIES.

By E. STENHOUSE, A.R.C.S.

To-day I saw the dragon-fly
Come from the wells where he did lie.
An inner impulse rent the veil
Of his old husk; from head to tail
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.
He dried his wings: like gauze they grew;
Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
A living flash of light he flew.

TENNYSON was not only a great poet, but a close and accurate observer of Nature; and naturalists may well feel grateful that he occasionally used his marvellous gift to describe in verse the phenomena which they — equally susceptible to the beauty of Nature's wonders, but tongue-tied — watch with such loving enthusiasm.

There could scarcely be a greater contrast than that which exists between the perfect dragon-fly, with its brilliant colours and active flight, and the grovelling little monster from which it is derived, living its sordid life in the slime of a malodorous ditch. It would be difficult to find a creature which for sheer hideousness could match the early stage or larva of a dragon-fly. Its colour is a dingy gray, a hue which resembles so much that of the muddy bottom of the ditch that the beast is almost invisible until it begins to move. This protective colouration is, of course, of immense service, as it screens the animal from the observation of enemies and victims alike.

The body of the larva is divided into three parts—head, thorax, and abdomen. The head carries the 'feelers,' a pair of prominent eyes, and a most formidable system of jaws. On the thorax are fixed the six long, sprawling legs. The abdomen is distinctly subdivided into rings like those of the hinder part of a lobster's body.

The larva of one family of dragon-flies has three delicate plates attached to the end of its tail. These plates are gills, and are the organs by which the animal breathes. The whole body is clad in a sort of horny shell, which is a veritable suit of armour.

The larva is incapable of active movement, but a tireless vigilance enables it to stalk successfully the most nimble prey. The head of one species is quite suggestive of that of a cat, and there is something truly feline in the manner in which it lies *perdu* beneath the shade of a water-weed, or half-buried in the mud which it so closely resembles, stealthily awaiting the approach of its victim.

As the unsuspecting tadpole swims lazily within striking distance, like lightning out shoots a pair of murderous pincers, and the wriggling but helpless prey is conveyed to the mouth, to be leisurely devoured. This terrible paw, with its terminal pincers, is a very characteristic feature of the dragon-fly larva. The end of the weapon is carried, when not in use, in front of the face, and completely hides the jaws which are used for chewing. It is known as the mask, and is borne upon a jointed arm, which is fixed under the animal's chin.

When the structure is closed, the hinge of the arm points backward between the legs, and the creature looks the type of stolid virtue. The larva is, however, perhaps the fiercest inhabitant of the ditch, and woe betide the succulent adventurer who is seized in the ruthless grip of the toothed jaws when the mask is thrown off.

Let us now turn to the breathing apparatus of this tyrant of the waters. Like every other living thing, a dragon-fly larva can only carry on its life-activities when it can obtain a due supply of oxygen. Every movement of the body, legs, or mask uses up a certain quantity of oxygen and produces a poisonous gas called carbon dioxide. The oxygen must be renewed and the carbon dioxide must be got rid of, or the larva will sicken and die. The manner in which this is carried out is perhaps the most interesting feature of the animal's life-history.

I have already mentioned that the larva of one family of dragon-flies (the family rejoices in the impressive appellation of Agrionidæ) carries at

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the end of its tail three delicate leaf-like plates, the tracheal gills. When the gills are examined by means of the microscope they are seen to be made up almost wholly of a fine meshwork of tiny air-tubes. So delicate are the gills that the air in these little tubes is only separated from the water of the pond or ditch by a membrane of excessive thinness.

The water of the pond always contains air dissolved in it, and an interchange is constantly taking place between the vitiated gas contained in the delicate air-tubes of the filmy gills and the life-giving dissolved air of the water. Now, the little air-tubes of the gills are in communication with a very perfect system of pipes which ramify throughout the whole of the larva's body; and thus it comes about that every organ, however remote from the tail, is constantly being supplied with fresh oxygen.

It is only the aristocratic Agrionidæ, however, that possess these tracheal gills. The other families must perforce obtain their oxygen in some other manner. If one of these commoner larvæ be touched, it will be seen to move away from the annoyance with a sudden dart forward, although no propelling force can be distinguished. As a matter of fact the impulse comes from the sudden ejection of water from the end of the intestine. This terminal portion of the digestive tube is thrown into a number of folds, which increase its surface enormously. As the folds contain in their walls a multitude of fine air-tubes, gaseous interchange can as readily take place here as in the leaf-like external gills of the Agrionidæ. All that is necessary is that the water shall be constantly changed, and this is effected by a complicated system of muscles. The abdomen can be seen to rhythmically dilate and contract. When it dilates, the cavity of the intestine increases, and water flows in. Then the muscles contract, and the diminution of the space causes the expulsion of the water. Thus the change of the water bathing the air-tubes, which the Agrionidæ effect by wagging their tails, is brought about in other families by the action of the wall of the intestine as suction-pump and force-pump alternately. The alternate sucking in and driving out of the water are as truly inspiration and expiration respectively as the similar processes by which a man renews the air of his lungs. The air-tubes which permeate the intestinal folds are connected with the general system of air-tubes of the body in the same way as are those of the Agrionid gill-plates.

In this manner does the young dragon-fly larva spend his days. In the meantime he is growing larger and larger, and therefore finds it necessary to periodically cast off his old suit of armour, and grow another one more in accordance with his ampler dimensions. Tiny wing-rudiments begin to make their appearance on his back, and a growing restlessness and irritability indicate the impending crisis of his life. He no longer breathes dissolved air only, but frequently rises to the surface, and takes in the stimulating oxygen direct from the atmosphere by means of a series of tiny mouths which have opened along the sides of his body. Whilst he is actually submerged these openings are, of course, of no use, and the larva relies upon his gills, caudal or rectal according to his social position.

At length the critical hour approaches, and the larva leaves the water for ever. He betakes himself to the shore, and clasping a friendly stem or branch, awaits his transformation. When he is firmly fixed, the larval skin splits down the back of the thorax, and the split extends forward until the head and thorax can be completely withdrawn from their sheaths. Then the animal bends back his body and draws his six legs out of their cases. The unprotected limbs are at first quite soft, and far too flexible to be of much use. The animal therefore rests from his labours until the legs are somewhat hardened. When the joints are strong enough for the final effort—and this strengthening process may last for nearly half-an-hour—the beast firmly fixes his feet upon the thoracic part of the larval skin, and, with a final mighty pull, completely withdraws his abdomen.

The famous Réaumur has given such an interesting description of what follows that I should like to quote it here:

'Though the dragon-fly was now free, it had a very different appearance from those which range the fields. It seemed deformed; the abdomen, though longer than the sheath from which it had issued, had not yet acquired its full length. The wings seemed little larger than when they were enclosed in their sheaths. They were turned edgewise, laid side by side, and folded up like a fan or like a leaf in the bud. Not only were they folded along their length, but also transversely. The wings expanded so rapidly that it was difficult to get a faithful drawing made of them. At this time the fly carefully avoided spreading his wings, for though they afterwards become firm as sheets of talc, they are at present soft as wet paper. It is important to avoid the slightest derangement, or even contact with one another. The abdomen is carefully bent into such a position as to avoid touching them. As the wings expand we can see the veins spreading farther and farther apart, and the folds becoming effaced. The expansion is apparently due to the injection of liquid into the veins. . . . More than two hours are often necessary before the wings can be spread out horizontally, and two or three hours more are required before they are able to bear the weight of the body. All the time that the wings are expanding the abdomen is being gradually prolonged.'

It is quite evident that the insect, during the transformation, is the very type of timorous help-

lessness, and the savage younger larvæ are said to sometimes leave the water and dine upon the juicy probationer. Critical indeed is the time, for any injury received at this period is certainly permanent, if not fatal.

Although such an enormous change has taken place in its external features, the animal has lost none of its native ferocity, and the brightly-coloured fly, darting hither and thither in the sunshine, preys as pitilessly upon its insect contemporaries as in its youth it dominated the pond. Its powerful wings and keen sight render it as formidable in the air as its terrible mask did in the water, and the gaily fluttering butterfly finds a short shrift if it carelessly invades the hunting-ground of its merciless foe. One by one the beautiful wings are shorn off, and the body is speedily devoured.

No one could fail to be struck with the singularly perfect adaptation of the insect's structure to a life of aerial piracy. The four wings are large, and, in proportion to their weight, enormously strong. Each is supported by a wonderfully-arranged network of slender ribs, which give the necessary rigidity to the thin, transparent membrane forming its basis. The muscles by which the wings are moved are massive and powerful, and are so arranged among themselves that the animal is capable of steering its course with an unerring accuracy which any bird might envy. In this power it is largely aided by a marvellous keenness of sight; for, in addition to the two great, gorgeously-coloured compound eyes which make up so much of the head, the insect possesses three smaller 'simple' eyes, making five eyes in all. The prey when overtaken is seized and devoured by means of powerful, sharply-toothed jaws.

An animal which lives such an active life naturally requires a very perfect breathing apparatus, and this is amply provided by a system of holes on the sides of the body which open into an elaborate network of air-tubes, supplying every part of the system. The air in these tubes is constantly renewed by the regular compression and dilatation of the body by special muscles.

The dragon-fly also finds time for domestic duties, and its long abdomen is of service in enabling it to deposit its eggs below the surface of the pond without actually entering the water.

In the fullness of time the eggs hatch, and give rise to another generation of larvæ as hideous and savage as the last. Overhead, the winged insect disports itself merrily in the sun, until Nemesis overtakes it at last, and it provides a delectable morsel for one of the birds which alone dispute with it the empire of the air.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXXI.—I FALL IN WITH STRANGE FRIENDS.

I LAY there, still with fright and anxiety, while the wind roared around my hiding-place, and the noise of the horses' feet came to my ears. My first thought was to rush out and meet my pursuers, engage the company, and get the letter back by force. But a moment's reflection convinced me that this was equal to rushing on my death. There was nothing for it but to bide where I was, and pray that I might not be discovered.

The noise grew louder, and the harsh voices of the men echoed in the little glen. I lay sweating with fear, and I know not what foreboding, as I heard the clatter of hoofs among the slates, and the heavy tread of those who had dismounted and were searching every tuft of heather. I know not to this day how I escaped. It may be that their eyes were blinded with mist and rain; it may be that my hiding-place was securer than I thought, for God knows I had no time to choose it; it may be that their search was but perfunctory, since they had got the letter; it may be that they thought in their hearts that I had escaped over the back of Caerdon, and searched only to satisfy their leader. At any rate, in a little all was still, save for the sound of retreating voices, and with vast caution and great stiffness of body I drew myself from the hole.

I have rarely felt more utterly helpless and downcast. I had saved my skin, but only by a hair-breadth, and in the saving of it I had put the match to my fortunes. For that luckless letter gave the man into whose hands it might fall a clue to Marjory's whereabouts. It is true that the thing was slight, but still it was there, and 'twas but a matter of time till it was unravelled. All was up with me. Now that I was thus isolated on Caerdon and the far western ridges of the Tweedside hills, I could have little hope of getting free; for to return to safety I must cross either Holmes Water, which was guarded like a street, or the lower Tweed, which, apart from the fact that it was in roaring flood, could no more be passed by me than the gates of Edinburgh. But I give my word it was not this that vexed me; nay, I looked forward to danger, even to capture, with something akin to hope. But the gnawing anxiety gripped me by the throat that once more my poor lass would be exposed to the amenities of my cousin, and her easy, quiet life at Smitwood shattered for ever. An unreasoning fit of rage took me, and I dashed my foot on the heather in my hopeless vexation. I cursed every

soldier, and wished for Gilbert the blackest torments which my heart could conjure.

But rage at the best is vain, and I soon ceased. It was, indeed, high time that I should be bestirring myself. I could not stay where I was, for, in addition to being without food or decent shelter, I was there on the very confines of the most dangerous country. Not two miles to the north from the place where I lay the hills ceased, and the low-lying central moorlands succeeded, which, as being a great haunt of the more virulent Whigs, were watched by many bands of dragoons. If my life were to be saved I must get back once more to the wild heights of the upper Tweed.

I climbed the gully, and keeping lower down the hill, made for the mountain named Coulter Fell, which is adjacent to Caerdon.

When I reached the head of the ridge I thought that the way was clear before me, and that I had outdistanced my pursuers. I stood up boldly on the summit, and looked down on the Holmes Water head. The next minute I had flung myself flat again, and was hastening to retrace my steps. For this was what I saw: all up the stream at irregular intervals dragoons were beating the heather in their quest for me. Clearly they thought that I had made for the low ground. Clearly, also, there was no hope of escape in that quarter.

With a heavy heart I held along the bald face of the great Coulter Fell. I know no more heartless mountain on earth than that great black scarp, which on that day flung its head far up into the mist. The storm, if anything, had increased in fury. Every now and then there came a burst of sharp hail, and I was fain to shelter for a moment by lying on the earth. Very circumspectly I went, for I knew not when, through the wall of mist, a gleam of buff coats or steel might meet me. In such a fashion, half-creeping, half-running, I made my way down the hills which flank the Coulter Water, and came at length to the range of low hills which look down upon Biggar and the lowlands of Clyde.

I struggled to the top and looked over into the misty haughs. The day was thick, yet not so thick that I could not see from this little elevation the plain features of the land below. I saw the tall trees of Coulter House, and the gray walls and smoking chimneys. Beyond was the road, thick with mud, and with scarce a traveller. All seemed quiet, and as I looked a wild plan came into my head. Why should I not go through the very den of the lion? What hindered me from going down by the marsh of Biggar and the woods of Rachan, and thence to my hiding-place? It was the high-roads that were unwatched in these days, and the byways which had each their sentinel.

But as I looked again the plan passed from my mind; for there, below, just issuing from the gateway of Coulter House, I saw a man on horseback, and another, and still another. I needed no more. A glance was sufficient to tell me their character and purport. Gilbert, verily, had used his brains to better advantage than I had ever dreamed of. He had fairly outwitted me, and the three airts of north and south and west were closed against me.

There still remained the east, and thither I turned. I was shut in on a triangle of hill and moorland, some three miles in length and two in breadth. At the east was the spur of hill at the foot of the Holmes Water, and above the house of Rachan. If I went thither I might succeed in crossing the breadth of the valley and win to the higher hills.

I do not very well remember how I crossed the Kilbucho glen, and stumbled through the maze of little streams and sheep-drains which covers all the place. At a place called Blendewing I lay down on my face and drank pints of water from the burn—a foolish action, which in my present condition was like to prove dangerous. In the pine-wood at the back of the sheiling I laid me down for a little to rest, and when once more I forced myself to go on I was as stiff as a ship's figure-head. In this state I climbed the little hills which line the burn, and came to the limit of the range above the place called Whiteslade.

It was now about two o'clock in the afternoon, and the storm, so far from abating, grew every moment in fierceness. I began to go hot and cold all over alternately, and the mist-covered hills were all blurred to my sight like a boy's slate. Now, by Heaven! thought I, things are coming at last to a crisis. I shall either die in a boghole, or fall into my cousin's hands before this day is over. A strange perverted joy took possession of me. I had nothing now to lose. My fortunes were so low that they could sink no farther. I had no cause to dread either soldier or weather. And then my poor silly head began to whirl, and I lost all power of anticipation.

To this day I do not know how I crossed the foot of the Holmes valley—for this was what I did. The place was watched most jealously, for Holmes Mill was there, and the junction of the roads to the upper Tweed and the moors of Clyde. But the thing was achieved; and my next clear remembrance is one of crawling painfully among the low birk-trees and cliffs on the far side of the Wormel. My knees and hands were bleeding, and I had a pain in my head so terrible that I forgot all other troubles in this supreme one.

It was now drawing towards evening. The gray rain-clouds had become darker, and the shadows crept over the sodden hills. All the world was desert to me, where there was no shelter. Dawyck and Barns were in the hands of the enemy. The cave of the Cor Water was no more. I had scarce strength to reach my old hiding-place in the hags above Scrape, and if I did get there I had not the power to make it habitable. A

gravelled and sanded couch with a heathery roof is pleasant enough in the dry weather, but in winter it is no better than a bog-hole.

Nevertheless I slid down the hill as best I could, and set myself to crossing the valley. It was half-filled with water-pools which the flood had left, and at the far side I saw the red, raging stream of Tweed. I remember wondering without interest whether I should ever wade over or drown there. It was a matter of little moment to me. The Fates had no further power to vex me.

But ere I reached the hill-foot I saw something which made me pause, reckless though I had come to be. On the one hand there was a glimpse of men coming up the valley—mounted men, riding orderly as in a troop. On the other I saw scattered soldiers dispersing over the haughland. The thought was borne in upon me that I was cut off at last from all hope of escape. I received the tidings with no fear, scarcely with surprise. My sickness had so much got the better of me that though the heavens had opened I would not have turned my head to them. But I still staggered on, blindly, nervelessly, wondering in my heart how long I would keep on my feet.

But now in the little hollow I saw something before me, a glimpse of light, and faces lit by the glow. I felt instinctively the near presence of men. Stumbling towards it I went, groping my way as if I were blindfold. Then some great darkness came over my brain, and I sank on the ground.

A HOLIDAY ON LOCHTAYSIDE.

By Rev. HUGH MACMILLAN, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

I SPENT my summer holidays in a recent year at a farmhouse near the head of Loch Tay. It is a charming spot, situated where two large burns—that rise, the one from the corrie behind Mael Ghlas, and the other from Loch Larig, at the summit of the Glenlyon pass—flow down the declivity in many a foaming waterfall to the loch a short distance from each other. Several huge plane-trees of great age form an avenue leading from the high-road almost to the door. These ancestral trees, and the scanty remains of a baronial castle near at hand, indicate that the place must once have been of considerable importance.

The view in all directions is magnificent. Westward, over a series of undulating heights, rises up the lofty cone of Ben More, filling all the horizon in that direction. Below, to the south, the smooth, dark waters of Loch Tay occupy the long trench-like hollow between the hills; and beyond, on the other side, the mountain slopes climb up to the sky-line adorned with fertile pastures and sunny copses. The shores of the loch are fringed with woods; and the water-channels that seam the sides of the hills have lines of shrubby vegetation veiling them from the summer heat and marking out their course. Here and there on some lonely knoll, or beside a secluded burn, are the dismantled ruins of once flourishing croft-houses and hamlets, from which the inhabitants were driven out to give place to sheep-holdings or larger farms. The sight of these relics of the past fills one with sadness, and raises perplexing questions regarding the rights and duties of property. But whether the expulsion of the hardy and honest natives, whose forefathers had tilled the ground from time immemorial, was justifiable or not, it is at least certain that it has turned out for the best; for they all have thriven wonderfully in those Canadian or Australian settlements to which they betook themselves, and to which they gave, with a pathetic patriotism, the old beloved names of home. Here and there the monotony of the green pastures is diversified by large patches of crimson heather, shining in the afternoon light as if the sunset glow had settled permanently upon them. At the back of the house the ground slopes up gradually to the lofty summit of Mael Ghlas, with a corner of the highest part of Ben Lawers standing out in darker hue behind the green shoulders of the hill. This view gives an alpine appearance to the landscape; and when veiled in dense clouds, the crags and corries under the dark fringes of mist look sombre in the extreme, and lead the imagination up to an unknown Cimmerian realm of storm and mystery.

Portions of old querns and two barley mortars lying neglected near the kitchen door of the farmhouse set me thinking of the primitive agriculture of former times in this part of the Highlands. It certainly must have been of the rudest kind. The people had not appliances for the removal of the great boulders which cumbered the ground, and they simply turned up the soil round them in patches here and there. The marshes, also, were only partially drained, and the lower slopes of the hills were rendered impassable by the overflowing waters of the streams. In these circumstances the farmers sought the higher grounds, where the soil was drier, and the line of boulders which marked the height of the old glacial stream fell short of the limits of cultivation, and there were fewer encumbrances in the shape of wood and stone to remove from the soil. Accordingly we

find most of the old tillage on the uplands. But there were other obstacles to contend with there. The heather, being native to the soil, and best adapted to the situation, was a more formidable weed to keep at bay than the common weeds of the fields at the base of the hills, and began at once to encroach upon the green enclosure during the slightest relaxation of toil and care. Owing to the latitude and altitude, the corn and barley did not ripen till a late period, and had to encounter the storms and floods which usually occurred at the close of autumn. And not once, but many times during a crofter's lease, must have happened what took place on one occasion on the minister's glebe in the far north. The minister's man, shearing the corn in the beginning of October in an exceptionally favourable season, was asked by an English tourist passing by if the soil in the neighbourhood was good. The minister's man replied that the stranger could judge for himself; for this year they had two crops on that very field. The stranger went away considerably mystified; but the true explanation was that the previous crop had not been gathered in till January, and now in October of the same year they were reaping another crop.

Lochtayside has always been more a pastoral than an agricultural region. The growth of corn has been subordinate to the raising of sheep and cattle. The mountains are remarkably green to the very top, only a small portion of heather being found here and there, and yield rich natural grass for the large herds that roam over them. But before the invention of artificial food and the growth of turnips, when the cattle all the year round fed upon the natural pastures, there was no provision made for their upkeep when these pastures were hid under several feet of snow. We read how, in these circumstances, the cattle that were sheltered in the byres were reduced almost to starvation, and yielded hardly any milk. All that is now changed. The population of the district, greatly thinned by emigration to our large cities and to the Colonies, are able to maintain themselves in comfort; and nowhere can finer fields of potatoes be seen than on the slopes of these hills, finding there a soil and situation similar to the conditions of their native country, and therefore most conducive to their welfare in a foreign land.

I spent a good deal of my holiday-time in exploring the numerous traces which the old population of the district had left behind; for the pathos of a vanished race seemed to breathe over every height and hollow. I found the task, though melancholy, exceedingly suggestive. I wandered over the dim paths which they had made, and which were now almost obliterated by the footsteps of time. I lingered beside the lonely ruins of the houses where they lived, and where the nettle grew luxuriantly round the cold hearthstone, and the solitary rowan that overshadowed them had failed to charm away the witchcraft of change and death that comes some time or other to every human family. I followed up the rough, winding peat-roads, over broken bridges and quaking marshes, till I stood beside the dark bogs where they used to cut their fuel, and which still showed ineffaceable touches of their sturdy toil, although Nature, with her luxuriant growth of mosses and lichens, strove to bring them back to her universal bosom. But what interested me most were the remains of the hoary sheilings, which I found scattered over the uplands in considerable numbers. There was one cluster especially that attracted my notice on account of its large size and apparently great age. I found these sheilings in the corrie of Ben Lawers, following up the old zigzag peat-track on the western bank of the Carie Burn till the first plateau is reached, where the people used to make peats. Here was a curious assemblage of circular foundations made of stones and turf, and looking wonderfully green in contrast with the dark bogs around them—an oasis in the wilderness. All tradition of these sheilings has disappeared in the district; and several hundreds of years must therefore have elapsed since they had been in active use.

I used to sit within one of these broken-down huts—often when the shades of evening were beginning to fall, and to cast the brown hue over the landscape which is so conducive to meditation—and try to picture the curious state of things which they so vividly recalled. What an idyllic mode of life that residence in the mountain sheiling during the summer months of long ago must have been! It has disappeared from Scotland for nearly a hundred years; but it still survives in Norway and Switzerland. In the *saeter* of the Norwegian fjelds and in the *châlet* of the Swiss Alps we have a picture of what the old life of the Scotch sheiling must have been.

I have said that the cultivation of the Highlands was in former times more on the heights than in the valleys, in places that are now overgrown with heather on the moorlands. But, higher than the highest line of corn-growing fields, there are spots among the hills where a carpet of the greenest and smoothest turf is laid among the brown heather and the black peat-moss. Some bright knolls, covered with the most compact grass, rise above the quaking marshes; and on the sheltered side of one of these green mounds, where the ground is especially dry and hard, the rude sheiling was built of the rough stones lying about, without any cement, and roofed with branches of trees and bits of sod. It had no comforts of any kind, and barely afforded shelter from the elements. The inmates, especially when the weather was severe, had to rough it in a way that would have astonished our modern tramps and lowest poor. They lived an almost entirely open-air life, con-

stantly engaged in watching their cattle and in milking them at suitable times, and storing the milk and converting it into butter and cheese. Beside the sheiling there was always a little rill that flowed past all day with its manifold voices, as it rippled over its irregular bed or fell over a barrier rock in lines of white foam into swirling brown pools, and all night sang its quiet tune, while the moonlight whitened the rude stones under whose shelter human hearts were dreaming. The water of the streamlet was necessary not only for drinking, but also for washing the milk-dishes and preparing the butter. Around were patches of verdure scattered over the stony hillsides or over the rugged corries; and there the dun-coloured cows browsed diligently all day, and obediently came to be relieved of their milky spoil at the call of the maidens.

To these sheilings the grown-up women of the farm retired about the beginning of June each year, and remained in this seclusion among the hills, far from the dwellings of their nearest neighbours, till the end of August or September, when the labours of the harvest demanded their help, and when the shortening days and the decaying verdure reminded them of the necessity of returning to the farm in the low grounds. But the maidens were not so solitary as one might suppose. Young men, their friends and sweethearts, came up from the farms from time to time to cheer them when their own work was over. And the romance of love in such novel circumstances shed a halo over the passing hours. The pathetic song of the 'Flowers of the Forest' alludes to the courting of the lads and lasses among the green knowes around the mountain sheiling. The maidens, when left alone, often beguiled the time in singing; and many a beautiful Gaelic song describes the charm of this simple pastoral life. One of the oldest and most popular of the Highland songs is a sheiling song called 'Crodh Callein,' or 'Collin's Cattle,' whose music afterwards developed into the plaintive tune of 'Lochaber no more.' It is curious how this emigrant's farewell of Scotland, which breathes the purest love of country, should have grown out of a cow-song like the 'Ranz des Vaches' of Switzerland. The song of 'Crodh Callein' marks the transition from the huntsman's life to the pastoral and agricultural. The first was considered for a long time the nobler and manlier mode of life; and it was with reluctance that the roving huntsman settled down to the tame pursuits of the shepherd and farmer. By-and-by, as the old mode of life receded into the past, and the new became more common and confirmed, a well-stocked farm and a herd of milk-giving cattle browsing around the sheiling were thought far more of than the huntsman's skill and daring and the chance products of the chase. The song in question indicates the beginning of this preference; for the cattle of Collin, who was a huntsman, were in reality the wild deer of the mountain, and they were cunningly alluded to under figures of speech which changed their identity, and made them seem the cattle of the byre and the sheiling, as if only under this semblance were they of any consideration.

It not infrequently happened that what was called a *creach* took place in some lonely mountain sheiling, and the cattle were carried away by marauders of another clan, to the great mortification and sorrow of the helpless maidens in charge. There is a story of such a *creach* that happened about two hundred and fifty years ago, and gave rise to another popular Highland song. The men of Keppoch at that time came down in force upon the defenceless sheiling of Cashlie near the head of Glenlyon, in the neighbourhood of where I was staying. They carried away all the cattle and the two dairymaids who were in charge of them. The Glenlyon men, made aware of the raid, pursued them as they were marching northwards to their home, and, coming upon them at the west end of the glen, a desperate fight ensued, in which the reavers were defeated with great loss. During the combat one of the dairymaids was slain; and the other was brought back by the victors to Meggerney Castle, where she composed the touching song descriptive of her feelings on the harrowing occasion. The name of this musical Highland maid has not survived, although that of her companion who was killed has been handed down to us and associated with a cairn still standing on the scene of the tragedy, called Carn Mic Cridhe, or Macrie's Cairn. Memories of love and war are connected with the gray ruins of the sheilings; and the names of some of them recall many a stirring deed. The effect of this mode of life in developing the musical and poetic instincts of the people is remarkable. It would furnish many a picturesque theme for the romance-writer. In this field there is hid a rich treasure of human story waiting to be appropriated by some original genius—as a new kind of kailyard literature. On the shoulders and in the corrie of Mael Ghlas, and up in the gloomy ravine of Larich-an-Lochan, there are ruins of numerous sheilings, bearing witness to a large population that once inhabited this part of Lochtayside. In the wild recesses of Creag-an-Lochan, the growth of the nettle around shapeless heaps of mossy stones still testifies to human occupation, and shows how, as in Switzerland, the wildest parts of the Scottish mountains were not left to waste their scanty crops of spontaneous grass uneaten by the cattle of the dairymaid.

Talking one day with my landlord, the farmer, whose own wife was seriously ill at the time, about the sanitary condition of the locality, he made the shrewd remark that in olden times the country people were much more healthy than they are now; and he attributed the cause to the variety which the pursuits of the summer-sheiling gave to their life.

They had in the transition from the low grounds to the heights of the mountains a complete change of air and scene; and even the food was, if possible, plainer, and the mode of life was brought back to the primitive simplicity of Nature. Whereas at the present day the occupations of the farmer have no such complete transitions. They are continuously carried on in the same place from year's end to year's end without any change or break. And even the summer holidays in the south, which are made possible by the near presence of the railway, are no real compensation for the loss of the sheiling life. For such holidays are more artificial than the farmer's ordinary existence, and bring the fever and the worry of the great world to make his pulse beat faster, instead of laying upon his wearied energies the calm, cool hand of Nature in ancient repose, like a mother's blessing.

What a change has come over the Highlands in recent years! In olden times it was the Highlands that invaded the Lowlands, and carried off much spoil and blackmail. But now the condition of things is reversed, and it is the Lowlands that are invading the Highlands every year and paying down good money of the realm for the sight of purple mountain heights, and for the honey breath of crimson heather, and the fragrance of fir-forests and bog-myrtle. Every spot, even the loneliest and most inaccessible, is crowded with summer visitors from the south; and instead of the soft accents of the Gael you hear the high tones of Ludgate Hill and Bedford Street. We read of the old Celtic saints wandering over the scantily populated districts of the north in search of a solitude in which no hermit had built his cell, and being frustrated in their efforts; for in every glen and island there was some holy man already located, leading a life 'by heaven too much oppressed.' But still more vain would be a search nowadays for some spot in which one could spend a summer holiday apart from all associations of one's ordinary life, 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot.'

Every one feels the craving for change. Life is so busy and conventional that there is an ardent desire to go back for a few days or weeks each year to the quiet simplicity of Nature. Dr Louis Robinson, in a recent article in the *National Review*, endeavours to show why it is that change of air does us so much good. He traces the reason back to primitive habits and ancestral instincts. Mankind have passed through three stages of life—the hunting, the pastoral, and the agricultural. For countless generations our ancestors were obliged to roam about in search of the game on which they lived, and it is only within a comparatively short period that their descendants have settled down to agricultural pursuits. Dr Robinson holds that the old vagrant habits of the nomadic stage of life through which we have passed have become a part of our physical inheritance, and that, therefore, the confinement of our large cities and stated occupations, being a violence to this second nature, is apt to develop evil consequences, especially when for some reason or other the general vitality has been lowered; and therefore a renewal of the vagrant conditions to which our constitution was originally adapted might be expected to contribute to the recovery of a good state of health. This reason may seem far-fetched; but it is undoubtedly true that we have all, from the highest to the lowest, a strong spice of the savage in our nature; and a longing at times comes over us to break loose from the restraints of civilisation and revel in the wild freedom of our barbarian ancestors. The grouse-shooting fever may be one of the periodical ebullitions of the original temperament; and the deerstalker's enthusiasm every autumn seems to bring back the hunting stage of primitive life. But to all of us the annual reversion to simple, hardy life is a gratification which is felt all the more keenly the more that ordinary life is artificial and restrained. And though every one cannot on occasions return to the hunting stage of life like our wealthy classes—for, strange to say, it now costs too much—yet we can all return to the nearest approximation to the pastoral stage, and experience in some degree the benefits of the old sheiling-life among the mountains.

FRIDA PETERSEN'S LOVER.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THEY were bringing old Petersen from his farm in Siov to lay him in the Thorshavn churchyard.

'Easy, boys,' exclaimed the handsome young man who sat in the stern of the boat, side by side with Frida, the dead man's daughter. They round the basalt rocks which hedge in Thorshavn's little harbour: terrible rocks against which no vessel would have a chance in anything like a storm. Then, as they swept round into the haven, the young man's eyes were suddenly caught and his attention held by the imposing form of a British gunboat, with the Union-jack flying at its stern.

'She come in the night,' whispered one of the oarsmen. 'It is for to protect the Shetland and the

Grimsby men off the Iceland waters. The French, they too have a warship; but there will be no trouble. The officers will give themselves dinners and shoot things, and so they will return.'

Frida, pale and grief-worn though she was, seemed almost as much interested in the fine vessel as was her companion; but only for a moment. A gun was fired from the tiny fort on the end of the basaltic headland. Then they heard the tiny tinkle of the church bell—the church itself white and tall above the other black little houses of the town, saved from absolute gloominess only by the green turf on their gabled roofs. This was in honour of old Petersen. He had been a worthy Faroeman, known and respected by all the eleven thousand inhabitants of the isles.

Hearing these sounds, the girl again covered her pale face with her hands, and let her long yellow hair fall to the front. As she bowed forward in her distress the yellow hair caught the sunshine, so that it looked like spun gold. It certainly contrasted wondrously with the plain black coffin which stretched from her feet forward. The coffin bore neither flowers nor covering: only the words, 'Jens Petersen, aged 69.' It was ugly and forbidding in its sombre nakedness. But it held nearly all in the world that Frida cared for.

The young man put his arm round the girl's waist and gazed at her with genuine sympathy, and more than sympathy. Then he whispered, so that none else could hear his words:

'Sweetheart, bear thyself up; it will soon be over. The old man is happy; and remember he said almost with his last breath that he wished *you* not to be unhappy about losing him.'

This comfort seemed to have much effect upon Frida. She raised her head and looked at her companion with her placid, tear-stained blue eyes. Her restraint before the four stout peasants in blue mob-caps was pathetic in its childishness. Yet why should she think of dissembling? Had not the four oarsmen been born and bred on her father's land, worked and fished for and been tended by him alone? And did not they and all Kollefjord know full well that young Graham, though not a Faroeman, was as good as plighted to her?

On arriving at the pier quite two hundred people followed the corpse to the church, and afterwards to the bare and even repellent little God's-acre among the heather and rocks outside the town. He had been an uncommon sort of Faroeman. His daughter was more beautiful by far than most Faroe girls; and the inclusion of young Graham in his household some three years back had seemed so very audacious a step, only justified, as it happened, by the young stranger's exceptional qualities both of person and ability.

Graham and Frida were, of course, the chief mourners. And, to tell the truth, as they walked arm-in-arm, the scores of women and girls, with black silk handkerchiefs over their heads, paid much more attention to these two than to the service or the solemn lesson which the scene ought presumably to have taught them.

Douglas Graham was six feet high and well made. He was what the Faroese call 'a fine man;' yet there was that in his face which, though strongly inspiring confidence (affection the girls would have said), hinted at certain experiences which had left their mark on his mind.

But when the service was ending and the pastor had cast his three shovelfuls of earth into the grave, a knot of British sailors strolled into the cemetery, with a petty officer or two among them. They were reverent enough, yet they immediately distracted the attention of most of the company. A ray of sunlight stole through the fog immediately over the cemetery and shone upon the gold hatband of one of the man-of-war's men. One of these latter had barely time to murmur to his comrade, 'That's a pretty girl,' indicating Frida, when the funeral group broke up. This was the moment the poor girl most dreaded. She trembled on Douglas Graham's arm as she looked her last at the forbidding black box (made and painted at home) which held her father.

'Sweetheart,' whispered Douglas when he had again wrapped up Frida in the warm shawls of her own knitting, and in other respects made her as comfortable as possible, 'now I have you all to myself I will be father, and husband, and brother to you, please God!'

The girl could only sob for reply; but she thrust her little hand between his two sinewy brown ones when they were again out in the harbour; and thus hand-in-hand they made the return voyage. The sea was again all a-sparkle with sunlight, and the capricious Faroe fog clung only to the sides of the distant mountain of Naalsoe.

Meanwhile the men ashore from her Majesty's gunboat *Goshawk* had divided into two groups. Of the one group one of the sailors had sauntered, or rather 'slithered' (so he said), down the greasy, malodorous steps cut in the rock which led them into the heart of poor little Thorshavn town.

Of the other group a petty officer named Porteous was the leading spirit. Hardly had Porteous come into the cemetery than something seemed to affect him strongly. He stared at Douglas Graham with might and main, and only latterly at Frida. It was difficult to say which of the two moved him the more.

Afterwards, however, he signified his intention of returning at once to the ship. This was when he had seen the mortuary boat rowed off to the north.

'Jack,' he said to one of the men, 'I mean to follow that little craft, and so, if you've no particular objection, we'll just get leave and chase 'em.'

The others would have preferred to stay in Thorshavn, but Nick Porteous was not a man to be

opposed in anything. Soon, therefore, they were once more alongside the gunboat, and then pulled off in a northerly direction. The requisite permission had easily been obtained. The barometer was consoling, and the *Goshawk* had been at sea so long that it would have been hard lines to refuse this one day's pleasuring, especially to so valuable a man as Porteous.

'Pull hard, my lads,' said this person when he had seated himself and taken the tiller in hand. 'They've got a good start, but you'll want flogging if you can't catch these Johnnies with straw beards before they get ashore.'

One of Porteous's intimates began jesting with him about this petticoat-chase, as he called it. But Porteous was not in a humour for fun of this kind, and he showed it.

'I don't mind telling you, Jim,' he said, 'that I'm a bit curious about yon long-legged fellow who was alongside the girl at the grave. If I didn't know him at Kirkwall a few years back, I'm very much mistaken. If he's the man, then he'd better look out for squalls, for I've as tough a bone to pick with him as he'll have in *his* lifetime.'

The other laughed. 'If that's so, Nick,' he said, 'he can have all the picking of it with you. I'd not like to be in *his* shoes—queer shoes they wear up here, don't they?'

'There's this, though,' said Porteous. 'I don't want to let on that I'm the man I am till I've got to know more about him. I'm much changed since then, what with beard and all—and especially with this beauty-mark—for which he's responsible.'

Porteous touched a great scar running from his left eye to his beard. It was an ugly scar, but not half so ugly as the expression in his face.

'Now then, there, no loafing—pull, you fellows!' he cried the next moment.

But scarcely had half-an-hour passed ere Porteous and the others were fain to confess that the Faroemen were as clever with their oars as themselves. The boat with Douglas and Frida in it had turned into Kollefjord, while the *Goshawk's* boat was quite two miles distant from the head of the fjord.

Eventually, however, the man-of-war's men reached the channel and pulled for the shore. Kollefjord was at this moment in one of its fairest moods. The afternoon was an ideal August one for Faroe—a thought chilly, but not too much so. Besides the simple thatched cottages which dotted the northern shore of the fjord, from the sea-end of it to the extremity of the inlet, one other object demanded immediate notice. This was the great bulk of the famous Skellingfjeld, Strömö's highest mountain. It rose up from the end of the fjord like a tremendous wall; and a thousand feet up, another huge, precipitous rock-mass towered from it, like one great cube set erratically upon another. Eight days out of ten Skellingfjeld is not to be seen in its entirety. This afternoon it was unveiled to the summit. No wonder the Jack-tars were eager to try and scale it. But Porteous straightway checked their enthusiasm in this matter.

'Not this time, my lads,' he said. 'We'll be back here in a month. Then we'll have a rattling fine picnic ashore, and it'll have to be a devilish tough mountain if we can't climb it then. What you have to do now is just to saunter about here, while I go off up the shore a bit.'

Porteous meanwhile had found guidance towards Petersen's farm. High up among the overhanging rocks could be seen the figure of a man. With his sharp vision Porteous had long ago determined that this was Douglas Graham. Had he doubted it he would have been less eager to steal a march on him.

In spite of the sad circumstances of the day, the maid-servant asked the officer into the house immediately. To give him his due, Porteous felt that he was a brute. But that did not deter him from his intention to play a brute's part.

Frida came to him at length, pale and listless.

'Be so good,' she explained at once, 'as to excuse me from welcoming you. I have to-day buried my dear father. But Marta shall provide refreshment, which you will be so good as to enjoy.'

Porteous was eager in apologising for his intrusion.

'I should not,' he said, 'have come if I had not seen an old acquaintance with you just now in Thorshavn—Douglas Graham, or I'm much mistaken.'

'Oh! do you know Douglas?' cried the girl, clasping her hands.

'I know him well enough to hope that you are not married to him,' said Porteous slowly and emphatically. The ghoul noted with avidity the shadow that flitted upon the girl's face at these words.

'What does that mean?' she asked.

'It means just this. Three years ago Douglas Graham killed a man. He escaped hanging by—coming here, I suppose. That is all. Douglas Graham is a murderer.'

'A—h!' She did not understand at first. Her English was not irreproachable. But the word 'murderer' struck her to the heart. She sighed — and swooned. Faroe maidens are not generally of the swooning kind, but Frida had been sorely tried of late, and this last blow was too much for her.

Porteous had not expected this. He had hoped the chance might offer for a love-passage or two on his own account. But he had to be content that he had cast his dart.

One thing, however, he could not resist. The girl's helplessness was his opportunity. He kissed the pale, chilled lips and the soft but colourless cheeks, and then went away.

'Back, my lads!' he cried quite gaily when they were in the boat again. 'And there's not one of you will be more eager to call here on our way south than Nick Porteous.'

THE FINEST CYCLING ROUTE IN THE WORLD.

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER.

EVERY wheelman is nowadays looking afield for new cycling worlds to conquer. The man who suggests a new ride which is pleasant and easy, with not too many hills to climb, which takes him to wonderful places full of historic interest, and through beautiful scenery, and where he need never have any fear of indulging in profanity owing to rain, is regarded somewhat in the light of a public benefactor.

I have no wish to be regarded in that spirit; but as I have ridden over what is undoubtedly the finest cycling route in the world, I think there are others who would care to follow my example. A few years ago such a suggestion would have been useless, for then cycling was a distinctly plebeian amusement, followed by men who had only a month's, or a fortnight's, or less, holiday in the year. But now that bicycles are ridden by folks who belong, as Mr Toole would say, to the 'hupper suckles,' and to whom time is not so much a consideration, there are no doubt hundreds of people who are willing to travel for a good bicycle ride.

The road I have in my mind is in India, and stretches twelve hundred miles from Lahore to Calcutta. It is the famous Grand Trunk Road. Let me explain its nature, though one cannot do so by comparison, for there is no road of five miles in England that is anything like it. It is level; indeed, there is not above a mile the whole distance where even a lady need dismount to walk. Around Battersea Park is supposed to be the easiest little spin in London. The Grand Trunk Road is infinitely superior to Battersea Park. The material with which it is made is called *kunker;* and if you care to turn that word into concrete, you have an idea of what it is like. It is exceedingly hard, and as smooth as a prepared pavement. There is no dust. When I first got on this road and enjoyed the luxury of easy travelling, I said, 'This is magnificent; but in a little time I suppose it will become gritty and uneven.' I went fifty miles, one hundred miles, two hundred miles, five, six, seven hundred miles, and it was always the same, with not even a small stone to give a jog. Nearly the whole of the way is lined with a double row of majestic trees. The concrete road runs like a long white ribbon down the centre, and along each side are loose-soil tracks, over which the native bullock-carts creak a slow two miles an hour.

With two friends I rode across India during the hottest time of the year, in April and May, and was never seriously inconvenienced by the heat; for, at a pace of fifteen miles an hour, one could always create a draught. In the winter months, from December till March, thousands of English people go to India sight-seeing. They are rushed in the train from one city to another; they see the fine buildings and a few fine bazaars, but they don't see India as it might be seen. Therefore, I would say to people going to India this coming winter: Take your bicycles with you; and when you get to Lahore abandon the train and ride on your machines the rest of the way to Calcutta. After a short thirty-six miles' run out of Lahore you reach Amritsar, the great Sikh city, with its marvellous Golden Temple and quaint, picturesque scenes; you go on to Umballa, and run down to historic Delhi, with its marble mementoes of the Great Moguls; you reach Agra, and grow poetical under the full moon while sitting before the Taj Mahal, the most bewitching monument in the wide world; you ride through a country reminiscent of the Mutiny to Cawnpore, and, if you like, take a turn off to the left and visit Lucknow; you speed on to Allahabad, and cross the holy river Ganges, and in one day, if you have a mind, reach Benares the sacred, the city of ten thousand temples. Then you drop into Bengal, where you get runs through wild jungle and a land full of nodding palms and rich giant vegetation; for one day you hasten through the coal district of North India, and then you reach the jungle again, where gorgeous-plumed birds whirl in the air, and groups of monkeys spring from bough to bough accompanying you. You rest a night in a little patch of French territory, Chandernagore, in a French hotel, by the side of a lovely boulevard overlooking the broad waters of the Hooghly; and then, after another twenty-five miles, you are in Calcutta, the city of palaces. And besides all these, you have been through thousands of villages; you have actually seen native Indian life, the hooded bullock-carts in which the purdah ladies travel, and the palanquins in which the rich rajahs are carried; you have seen the Hindu in his little wayside temple, and altogether you have got some idea of the physical and picturesque aspects of India.

'Yes,' the reader will say; 'but how about accidents, food, and sleeping accommodation?' Now, I would not advise a cyclist who cannot have a nut screwed without the assistance of a cycle repairer to go on such a journey. But the man who can repair a puncture and attend to the ordinary necessities of a machine need have no fear. I rode the entire distance with but a single puncture. As to the food, there are dâk-bungalows at every twenty or thirty miles along the route. These are government houses built for the accommodation of travellers. At many of them is a cook, though I confess fowl is the staple and eternal dish, of which one soon gets tired. My friends and myself often covered seventy and eighty,

and sometimes a hundred, miles a day; and as for a thousand miles the road is never more than five or six miles from the railway, we usually had dinner and breakfast at one of the many refreshment-rooms, and then carried something in our bags for lunch. Of course we slept at the dâk-bungalows. There is just enough discomfort and slight hardship to make the expedition interesting. There are beds, but no mattresses or pillows. But a man who likes to rough it can easily turn his coat into a pillow.

Of course there are those who would like to cycle over this fine road, but want none of the attendant inconveniences. To those there is a plan of travelling in positive luxury. At Lahore they could employ a native servant, speaking English, who could travel each day by train to the afternoon's destination with baskets of food, wine, and the necessary bedding. Everything would be ready at the dâk-bungalows before the cyclists arrived. At only one part of the route would this be impossible—namely, for some two hundred and fifty miles after leaving Benares, on the way through Bengal. But there are cooks at most of the dâk-bungalows there, and even in out-of-the-way villages I have found shops selling European delicacies.

The climate of India is exquisite during the cold weather. There is never any rain. There is delightful scenery, fine historic cities, and a road which has not its like on the earth. I have cycled in many strange corners of the world; but I will always regard the Grand Trunk Road from Lahore to Calcutta as the paradise of wheelmen. And now to English cyclists with leisure and means, and desiring to spend an enjoyable month, I would say: Go this winter to India and ride those twelve hundred miles.

MURCHISON'S MARCH.

A STORY OF ALASKA.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS, Author of *How they took the Olga out*, &c.

IT may interest some to learn that the auriferous wealth of the Yukon region is by no means a new discovery. Gold has long been found in more or less paying quantities throughout the basin of the great river, and five years ago a party of miners came down with the writer from Alaska, bringing out nearly five hundred ounces. They went up into the wilderness seven in number; but three had laid their bones among the gloomy cañons, and the rest would carry the memory of that journey with them all their lives, they said. Hitherto, however, glacier-ribbed range, snowy pass, and foaming torrent have barred the gates of the northern Eldorado to all but the hardiest. It is also probable that the comparative few fortunate enough to discover the secrets of the hidden placers had reasons of their own for saying little of their success.

The outline of this story was told by a young Englishman, who once made a memorable march through the Alaskan snow, one autumn day when we lay in the shadow of the mighty redwoods above the black rocks guarding the entrance to Vancouver harbour. The wreck of the *Beaver*, the first steamer to enter the Pacific, lay beneath us, and there was snow upon the range across the sunny inlet, which, the narrator said, brought the scenes back more sharply.

A crackling fire of driftwood blazed among the boulders beside a lonely lake, far away among the snow-crested hills which lie between the Yukon and the Ko-wak rivers.

A cluster of weather-beaten, weary men were seated about the fire, sucking lazily at their pipes, the red glow lighting up rugged faces that were bronzed by snow-glare as well as sun. They were a characteristic group—free prospectors to the manner born, ruined stock-raisers from the eastern plains, Ottawa lumbermen, and a few restless adventurers whose antecedents it would have been hard to guess. They had foregathered by treacherous ford and lonely pass on their hurried journey south, for winter was closing in unusually early that year, and there was no time to lose if they would reach safe quarters before every defile was choked with snow.

Presently an old miner drew closer in under the lee of a boulder. 'A bitter wind,' he said, 'an' six months dreary winter ahead, onless there's them among you fools enough to follow the Captain's lead.' Then the speaker dropped his voice a little as he added, 'Give it up, Murchison, an' winter at the Fort with the rest. It's temptin' Providence to cross the ranges now.'

A murmur of approval followed, and a tall, broad-shouldered man, with an indefinite something in face and manner which stamped him as different from the rest, though there were men of education among them too, laughed lightly as he answered, 'Well, we three are going to try. It's all a matter of taste; but being snowed up six months in a log hut when I've gold, and all the cities from 'Frisco to Mexico to spend it in, does not appeal to me. Eh, Jasper and Allen?'

Then a big Canadian who was leaning against a boulder straightened his gaunt form, and answered in a deliberate drawl, 'I'm with the Captain; but it's not a jamboree that's temptin'

me. I've struck enough to stock the clearin' 'way back by Superior shore; and if it's any way possible to make the south bend of Yukon and catch the last steamer, I'm going to do it. I've had enough of Alaska to last my life.'

Geoffrey Allen, a young Englishman, and the third of the trio, nodded silently, and thought the more. He had sufficient reasons of his own to attempt the passage of the mountains in the face of any risks. Murchison and Jasper were his partners. They had met in the early spring by a certain glacier-barred pass, three men of widely different birth and character, who afterwards learned to trust and respect each other on the ground of a common manhood and courage. What Murchison's past had been Allen never knew; but there was a reckless daring and unostentatious pride about the man, as well as a tone of command in all he said, which had gained him the sobriquet of Captain. Indeed, from odd sayings let fall at times, Allen gathered that he had once served her Majesty upon the sea. Jasper was different. He was merely a rough woodman, great with the double-bitted axe, and kindly in heart.

Presently the miner who had first spoken growled something about an early start, and the weary men dropped off to sleep one by one, while Allen lay rolled in his blanket beneath a boulder, looking out into the night. A bitter wind sighed through the pines above, and, crisping the open centre of the lake into ripples, set the fringe of ice heaving and crackling. Upon the farther shore he could see the rigid conifers rising darkly from the water's edge, while a line of snow, jagged and serrated, shone very cold and white against the deep indigo above. Then his thoughts went back to the shingle-roofed house by the sunny shores of Burrard Inlet, where he knew an anxious heart waited for the news of his safety which never came, and he determined that if it was in the power of man to force a way to the great river it should be done.

A hand was laid upon his shoulder, and Murchison flung himself down at his side. 'Still awake, partner?' he said. 'Thinking of the folks at home, and too anxious about the journey to sleep, eh?'

'Yes,' was the answer. 'We have been good comrades, Murchison. Listen to a little story—and then you'll understand. For three years I worked harder than any slave, breaking prairie in Manitoba, and twice the crop was good. Then Elsie came out from home, and we were married in Winnipeg. A few happy months followed, for the crop promised well and I had put my last cent into wheat. Then the hail came and wiped it out, smashed every blade and ear down into the earth, and left me a ruined man. I sold out for what I could get, took a little house for Elsie at Vancouver, and left her all I had in the world except enough to bring me here. The money must be running very low, and what might happen when it's gone I dare not think. Here I am, with enough to start us fairly again—and get through I must.'

Murchison laughed bitterly. 'I did more than that for a woman once,' he said—'threw away caste and prospects—and she mocked me for it afterwards. There was another, too, who would have laid down her life for mine. Foolish, of course, but the best men and women who have crossed my path have been fools—and that's why I like you, Geoffrey. I was then—— But let it pass; the gates of that life are barred against me for ever.' The voice grew deeper, and Murchison added, half to himself: 'Stay up here with nothing to do for six months but think; it would drive me mad.' Then he laughed his old careless laugh. 'Never mind me; there's something on my nerves to-night. Sleep and dream of home.'

The young Englishman pillowed his head on his arm, and his eyes grew very heavy; but until he sank into dreamless sleep he could see a tall figure pacing to and fro across the shingle by the lake, and when he awakened he found Murchison's blanket about his shoulders as well as his own. Rising stiffly to his feet, he found breakfast prepared, and his two partners already feasting on very rusty pork and grindstone bread, while the rest of the miners were stirring and grumbling among their blankets. An icy wind went through him like a knife, and he shivered when he felt the chill of a feathery snow-flake on his face. Then, after a hasty meal, they loaded up a light Indian canoe—a thin shell of cedar-wood with a sweeping stem cut in the likeness of the head of a bird—with the last of their provisions and blankets, lashed her on to red-pine runners, and were ready to start.

The miners clustered round, and rugged men wrung the partners' hands as they wished them 'Good luck,' for 'the Captain' had a way which made many friends.

Murchison smiled as he answered, 'Good-bye! I'll remember you among the snow when I'm basking in Mexico. Think of us still, sometimes, if we never meet again;' and the three, followed by an Indian packer, breasted up the slope, with the snow driving in their eyes. It was not an easy climb, for fallen pines cumbered the way, and the canoe was hard to haul; but, in a region of forests choked with fallen trees, glacier-seamed ranges, and countless torrents, a river is often the only road, and a canoe was almost indispensable. Presently the dwarf pines gave place to a slope of snow, the work became less toilsome, and at last they stood panting on the crest of the ridge.

Allen looked back, and saw a line of dark figures creeping along the margin of the lake. Afterwards he swept his glance southwards across

the chaos of snowy summits rising range beyond range, among whose defiles their pathway lay, and for a moment his heart sank as he contemplated the white wilderness before him.

Then Murchison smote him on the shoulder, and pointed to the long slope of snow, undulating white above, save where a blue-gray rock or stunted bush cropped through, and fringed below with sombre pines. 'The Indians' way is the best,' he said. 'Launch her off and save an hour's tedious easing down. Hang on forward, and I'll steer her with my feet. Get into the canoe for dead-weight, Jasper.'

'Not me,' answered the big Canadian emphatically; 'there's plenty ways of breaking one's neck easier than charging a pine at twenty miles an hour. That thing's not a toboggan, any way;' while Donovitch, the packer, smiled until his high cheek-bones almost hid his almond eyes, as he gave vent to a succession of sonorous 'u-chuck-chucks,' which doubtless meant something in his own tongue.

'Don't stand there grinning like a graven Siwash image, but thrust her off,' cried Murchison; and Jasper observed dryly, 'Guess we'll find you in the lake, if you ever get through the forest. Stand by, while we let her go.'

Allen braced his foot against the forward lashing, and leant upon the canoe as she commenced to slide down the slope; then the pace grew faster, and a rush of keen air smote his face like the lash of a whip. The hillside dropped more steeply, and a cloud of feathery particles whirled up from beneath the runners as the extemporised toboggan leapt forward at headlong speed.

'Hang on tight,' yelled Murchison, lying with his chest across the canoe and his left leg buried to the knee in the torn-up wake of snow, as he tried to swing her clear of a jutting patch of rock. But the canoe was not to be steered after the manner of a *tuque-bleu* toboggan. She was going her own way now—the shortest to the bottom, across whatever might lie between. Next moment there was a grinding crash, and Allen felt every bone in his body shaken. The runners smoked as they hissed across the stone — and then they were flying downhill again, with the wind screaming past his ears and nearly taking his breath away.

'Exhilarating while it lasts — but there's trouble on hand below,' gasped a voice; and Allen shuddered as he watched the dark belt of pines rushing towards them from beneath. Then a bush of tall furze, or it might have been a cluster of young conifers, lay before them, and he saw half his comrade's length stretched out into the snow, with a white mass curling across the human rudder like the wash of a screw propeller. But again the rudder failed to act. The canoe drove straight down upon the obstacle, obliterated it from off the face of the snow, and, with a mass of broken brushwood piled about her, and the helmsman's garments torn to ribbons from ankle to knee, swept on towards the pines.

'I don't think she would go through a boulder, or a tree. Perhaps we had better jump,' Allen heard his comrade say; and, even as he pulled himself together for the leap, there was a sudden jolt, a wild lurch, and he was flung bodily through the air, and driven head-foremost into a bank of snow. When he sat up gasping and scraping the stuff from his eyes, he saw Murchison quietly poking a rammed-down mass of white from out the ragged sleeves of his deerskin jacket.

'If we could only travel all the way like that. You may thank the top of that boulder we didn't charge the wood,' said the latter, as though nothing unusual had happened. Twenty minutes later Jasper and the Indian arrived, when they righted the overturned craft, tightened the lashings, and, after easing her carefully down among the pines, launched out on a stream which swept through the winding gorge below.

For many following days they journeyed through a wilderness of wild and awful beauty, wherein but once or twice a white man had ever set his foot. At times they paddled and drifted hour after hour down some foaming rush of water stained pea-green by glacial clay, making toilsome portages to avoid the shallower rapids, for the streams were shrinking day by day as the frost bound fast the feeding glaciers on the heights above. At others they hewed a pathway with the axe through the network of fallen boughs and brushwood which choked the forests, or, with toil incredible, dragged the canoe over the crest of a divide.

Twice the thin ice in the centre of a forest-girt lake gave way beneath their feet; and once a great charred trunk in a 'brulée,' or burnt forest, came thundering down across their path, and one blackened limb swept Jasper's hat from off his head.

But the rivers were open still, and generally these trended south in the direction they would go.

Then it came about that at last they drifted down a white-streaked rapid towards the mouth of a gloomy cañon, through which the river thundered, the spray rising like steam above it into the frosty air. Out of the haze there rose a hoarse, pulsating roar, the voice of many waters, and Allen shuddered as he gazed.

Murchison, however, surveyed it critically and approvingly. 'Very much like the mouth of Sheol,' he observed, 'or, to put it poetically as well as practically, a pathway driven for us through the heart of the eternal hills. How long it would take to cross that range, or if it could be done at all, Heaven only knows. I prefer going through by the road the river made.'

Jasper answered nothing for a while. He had learned the tricks of Canadian river 'lumbering'

by the banks of the Ottawa. Then he said, 'The Captain's right, and the river's the only way. But whether we'll come out at the other end men or ground-up bones is more than I can tell.'

Allen said no word, but clutched his paddle the tighter, and prepared to face what lay before them. Soon the giant walls of rock closed about the river; and, veiled in a haze of spray, the canoe slid on down a frothing swirl of water, while huge boulders, clinging pines, and ragged quartz-shelf went flashing by. Once, when they crossed an eddying black pool, he glanced aloft, and saw a sheer rise of blue-gray stone, stained vermilion in places and veined with milky quartz, towering so far overhead on either hand that the heavens above appeared a mere strip of blue. Then the intermittent boom of falling water drew swiftly nearer, and the Indian, crouching in the bows, pointed towards a slide of green where the river poured bodily over a ledge. There was a great spouting of white where it met the eddy below, and Allen noticed a curious flash in Murchison's eyes as he said, 'Will she ever go through, Jasper?'

'I've been down worse; but it's bad enough, and there's not foothold for a mink ashore,' was the answer. 'Ready with the paddles!' and Allen held his breath as they drove her towards the fall. For a moment the canoe slid steadily and upright down the centre of a smooth-skinned lip of green. Then she leapt forward—he could feel the light cedar dropping from beneath his feet—and with a mighty plunge drove out through the boiling confusion below.

'All together; paddle for your lives,' yelled Jasper, and the blades beat the water madly. Just in time, for the grasp of the whirling eddy had closed about the canoe, and was dragging her back stern-first towards the foot of the fall. For a few moments she hung stationary, and the veins stood out like whip-cord on the adventurers' foreheads as they plied the bending paddles. Then a curious funnel-mouth opened up beside them, and sucked down a fir-branch that floated past. Again and again the dripping paddles flashed, and foot by foot they drew out of the clutch of the side-swirl, until the central rush swept them out of the pool and down the boulder-strewn rapid beyond.

This was safely passed, and, just as darkness closed down, a narrow strip of shingle opened up in the mouth of a transverse gully, and they ran the canoe ashore. A roaring fire of resinous driftwood, which will burn when soaking wet, was made, a meal prepared, and then the four lay shivering in a narrow pit scooped out of the shingle, with their feet towards the fire.

Tired as he was, Allen could not sleep. A bitter wind swept sighing through the gorge, the mighty walls rang and vibrated with the roar of water, and he lay watching the red glow of the fire flicker across the face of the tossing rapid, and the canoe swinging to and fro upon an eddy. He afterwards remembered that its mooring line slid across a shelf of rock at times. Murchison also was wide awake; in fact, he rarely seemed to sleep, and the two men often sat talking for hours as they shivered over the fire.

Presently he knocked the ashes out of his pipe and said sombrely, 'Allen, I would give all this yellow dross to be even as that savage, or the good-humoured and blindly-courageous animal by your side; and yet six years this very night there was no prouder man than I. I remember that night well, for something happened that left a mark.'

Then Murchison laughed, and added lightly, as he proceeded to refill his pipe, 'Probably this moralising palls upon you; but sometimes one cannot resist the childish delight of talking—and I like you, Allen.'

As had happened before, the younger man wondered whether his companion spoke in jest or earnest; therefore he only answered stolidly, 'Go on if it will do you good.'

Murchison frowned as he continued: 'I remember the roar of Spanish guns saluting the flag as our sister-cruiser steamed into the roadstead of Santa Cruz, the loveliest bay in all the Atlantic isles, and that night the *élite* of the Spanish city came off to our dance on board. I can see the whole thing now—the long white deck, the moonlight on the bay, and the great black Cordillera above it all. There was a throng of olive-skinned beauties on board, and two Spanish warships flashed their search-lights upon the brilliant crowd filling our quarter-deck. Warmth and brightness, music and flowers, and I the—— Pah! what of that? In a week we may be frozen stiff in the Alaskan snow. You're going back to your wife and home—lucky man—and I to waste this gold in half the gilded hells between Seattle and Mexico, in pleasure—heavens and earth, in pleasure!'

Allen stirred uneasily, and his partner continued, slowly and deliberately: 'I've about worked out my sentence, for there are things which no man can endure for ever. If anything unexpected happens remember that, and divide the gold between yourself and Jasper. If not, you can set it down as the light-headed nonsense of an over-tired man—there's no liquor in this delectable region.'

Then the adventurer smiled carelessly as ever as he said, 'Good-night!'

Allen still lay awake, and now and then he cast puzzled glances at his companion. Murchison's face seemed strangely drawn and old when the firelight fell upon it, and his jaw was set like flint. 'Another man with a history, and a striking one at that. I always fancied there was something upon his mind,' he said, as at last his eyelids closed.

It was broad daylight when he awakened, and

breakfast was under way. While he rubbed his hands and shivered, the roar of water drew his gaze towards an awful, tossing rapid a hundred yards away, where the whole weight of the river thundered down a slope, among mighty splintered masses fallen from the cliff above. When he took his seat beside the fire Murchison greeted him with his usual careless ease. 'I was talking nonsense when half-asleep last night, partner,' he said. 'Nothing like sunlight for brushing the vapours aside.' Then he commenced one of his inimitable stories, and even the stolid Jasper laughed until the tears stood in his eyes.

Breakfast was just over when the Indian sprang to his feet with a hoarse cry, and Allen's heart stood still. He saw the canoe, with all their stores on board save the few that lay upon the rock, slide slowly out of the eddy, the end of the chafed-through mooring line hanging across her bows.

'Sure starvation, and long odds on drowning, unless I can get her in time,' cried Jasper, tearing at his long knee-boots; but Murchison broke in: 'Are you mad—with a family depending on you? This is my time—at last,' he said. Then a dark figure launched out through the air, and clove the green flood with its arms above its head.

'Swims like a pickerel or a log-driver; but he'll never get there in time. God help him!' said Jasper hoarsely, as their comrade shot out across the streaky flow. There was neither foot nor hand hold on either of the smooth-worn walls beyond the shingle, and Allen felt something drumming in his ears as he watched man and canoe drive faster and faster towards the deadly smother below. Just on the fringe of the mad rush, down which the swamped canoe was already whirling, Murchison turned towards them, and for a moment raised an arm out of the water. Allen fancied he waved his hand—he was sure there was no cry for help; then a curling white ridge broke across the swimmer's head and sucked him down. Once, as the two stood with staring eyes and half-open lips, something which might have been a shapeless heap of clothing broke the surface of a frothing eddy, and sank again; and with the cold perspiration beading their foreheads they turned their gaze away.

For a time neither spoke, until Jasper said slowly and huskily, 'The Captain's gone; the river's got him now;' then he gripped Allen's arm as he added, 'I saw his face—just at the last—and I could have sworn the man was glad. Well, partner, there's starvation here, an' we can't be far from the big river now. What's the matter with trying the range?' But Allen made no answer; he was too horror-stricken to speak.

With the gold, which always lay beside them, and but a few days' rations, they turned their backs on the fatal cañon, and clambered up the transverse gully. For a week they floundered through the snows above, starving on a handful of food each day, until one morning Allen cast himself down upon a frosted shelf of rock, his breath coming thick and fast, and pointed to a mighty flood of pea-green water sliding through the gorge below.

Several days they waited, crouching about a fire among the boulders, feeling the cold hand of death already closing about their throats, and then a little stern-wheel steamer came panting down the river, and they knew that they were saved.

Allen collapsed limply and abjectly as ready hands dragged him out of the steamer's scow, and it was not until he was sweeping south across the Pacific in the last ship of the season that he began to recover his nerve.

There is little more to tell. The young Englishman was fortunate in one or two contracts he took in Vancouver City, and dwells there now in comfort. Never was he able to learn anything concerning the unknown adventurer whose bones lie whitening in the lowest depths of some deep, black pool. He only remembers him as a true and kindly comrade, who had been called to answer for his deeds in a court which is greater than any on earth.

THE HOPE OF LOVE.

THERE is not time enough to love you here—
Only a few quick years to hold you fast.
Days burn away: Love brings the sun so near!
And nights but breathe their blessings, and are past;
And season melts in season. Oh, my dear,
And must we part at last?

Yet, search mine eyes, and tell me if my youth
Laughs out to you as when you called it first.
Nay, but I know it must, for I, in sooth,
Was older then than now. 'Twas you who nursed
My soul from sickly doubt to faith and truth
When life was at its worst.

And, looking back within your eyes, I find
A smile that overcomes the fear of age:
A brave smile, telling how the joys behind
Were not more sure than those that gild a page
Of life as yet unread—delights designed
For our joint heritage.

. . . . . .

And is there something farther distant still—
Somewhere without the world—for you and me,
When we have stepped across the quiet rill
That men would magnify with mystery?
What can we say, O heart, of what may be?
'Love hopeth all things:' let us hope until
God smiles and bids us see.

J. J. BELL.

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THE JEW IN MODERN LIFE.

By Arnold White.

IT is pretty certain that, unless a great war submerges lesser questions in the welter of international conflict, the Jew will engage the close attention of Europe and the United States during the next score of years. Racially and individually, the Jew is probably the most interesting personality of this day; but the books—their number is legion—that have been written about the Jews and the Jewish Question deal almost exclusively with bygone times of the race.

I purpose to describe the modern Jew as he is, not as he is supposed to be. Thus it is unnecessary to do more than glance at ancient and mediæval history, except to point out that the outburst of Jew-hatred of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which ended in the expulsion of the 'Chosen People' from England, France, Portugal, and Spain, seems not unlikely to be repeated early in the twentieth century.

Although I shall not dwell on the history of the Jews of old—a dozen handbooks on the subject are available in every free library—it may be pointed out that the first regular settlement of Jew money-lenders in England were those traders in cash who followed William of Normandy to England between 1068 and 1071, and were enabled to establish themselves in separate quarters ('Jewries' of the chief towns of England), the Jew being then the king's chattel. He was too valuable a possession to be sacrificed to the mob, and was, accordingly, protected by the sovereign himself against any anti-Semitic outbreak. The presence of the Jew was beneficial to the kingdom at large—at all events in the earlier years of his settlement. The outburst of architectural enterprise which followed the Conquest covered Britain with castles and cathedrals. The erection of these stately buildings was due entirely to the loans of the Jew. John Richard Green describes the buildings, which at Lincoln and at Edmundsbury still retain their title of 'Jews' Houses,' as almost 'the first houses of stone that superseded the habitations of the English burghers.' The Jews assisted in the revival of physical science. There was a Jewish medical school at Oxford; Roger Bacon studied under English rabbis. All went fairly well until 1290, when the success of the Jews in amassing wealth, the tenacity with which they held to their particular ritual and customs, and the attitude of aloofness which they have preserved throughout the long centuries aroused against them popular hatred, which grew rapidly in intensity. While royal protection did not waver, popular feeling was powerless to injure them; but when Edward I., eager to find supplies for his treasury, made a money-bargain with the clergy and laity, the Jews were driven from the realm, and Edward himself was provided with supplies for his treasury. Sixteen thousand Jews preferred exile to apostasy. Many were wrecked; others were robbed and flung overboard. From the time of Edward to that of Cromwell no Jew touched British ground. The achievements of the Elizabethan era, its rich harvests in art and literature, its triumphs by sea and land, and its colonising enterprise, were accomplished without the presence of the Jews.

Shakespeare and Marlowe were obliged to resort to Venice and to Malta, respectively, to find a type of Jew for presentation to the British public. Until the reign of Charles II., the Jews had no legal status. They have remained in this country since the time of the 'Merry Monarch.' Charles II., impecunious as Edward I., saw in their advent an opportunity to refill his treasury.

The history of the Jews in England is the history of the People of Dispersion in other lands, with the exception of the Holy Roman Empire; and the significance of the recent outbreaks against the Jews in Russia, in Austria, in Germany, in Algeria, and in France lies in the fact that they are but the repetition in modern garb of the popular outbreak to which brief allusion has been made as having occurred in the reign of Edward I.

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The race-hatred against the Jews is not new. A comparison between the records of their sojourn in the various countries of Europe—allowing for the differences of environment—seems to include certain 'features' common to them all. In the first instance, whether the king or democracy is sovereign, the entrance of the Jews into a country is suffered as a matter of convenience. The entry once made and their position established, their temperance, assiduity, and power of will secure them more or less easy victory in the race for wealth. There are but two nations with whom the Jews have been unable to effect a lodgment: Scotsmen and Armenians are impervious either to their fascinations or to their attack; and in Scotland and Armenia, accordingly, the modern Jew is scarcely found except in the form of a few hard-worked journeymen tailors in the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and a few nomadic pedlars in the towns of Armenia.

The majority of living Jews are subjects of the Emperor of Russia. The Jewish Question in Russia is regarded by the Russian ministry as an insoluble problem. Some six millions of Jews are pent up in the sixteen western provinces of Russia and the ten provinces of Poland. Rapid increase and low death-rate of the 'Chosen People' impale their Russian rulers on the horns of a dilemma. Massacre is no longer available as an expedient for thinning out the superfluous Hebrew subjects of the Tsar. Pestilence possesses no terrors for the Jew; long residence in the slums of Europe has rendered his constitution immune against the terrors of smallpox or typhoid or other fever. If pestilence or massacre is not within the region of practical Russian politics, the ministry of which Monsieur Pobedonostzeff is the responsible spokesman is equally unable to let the Children of Israel go and to give them chances similar to those of the orthodox inhabitants of Russia.

One dire consequence of this overcrowding and constant multiplication of the inhabitants of Russian Jewry is the spiritual, moral, and physical degeneration of its inhabitants. The continual misery, the absence of hope, the constant assertion of their inferiority by the ruling authority, have modified the original characteristics of the majority of the Russian Jews. They are not permitted to be gardeners, to hold land, to live in the country, or to take part in agriculture; and they are debarred from the healthy means of life open to the rest of their fellow-subjects. The consequence is that, in order to provide bread for his family—the Jew marries early as a matter of course—many of them are compelled to resort to dishonesty in order to escape starvation.

Probably the five and three-quarters or six million Jews under the rule of the Tsar form the unhappiest community on the face of the earth. Intellectually endowed far beyond the average European, they (except a small fraction of them) are deprived of the means of education, and their spirits are depressed by the compulsory restrictions arbitrarily imposed upon them. What wonder, therefore, that a considerable number of the Russian Jews are driven by the errors of the Russian government to exploit vice, since they are not permitted to develop industry? If many Russian Jews live by preying on the weakness and passion of others, the reason is neither that they have a double dose of original sin, nor that parasitism is an indelible characteristic of the race, but that the poor Jew is compelled by the government of Russia to make a choice between starving and wrong-doing.

The vast majority of Russian officials and citizens believe that the Jews are merely parasites—that they cannot live except as middlemen, money-lenders, and exploiters of vice. The French have recently come to the same conclusion. Is it based on fact? Wherever material comfort and personal safety are obtainable, there is the nimble brain, the deft finger, and the sensitive organisation of the Jew to seek them. In other countries medicine, music, law, surgery, politics, journalism, and art are being rapidly captured by the Jewish race. In Russia, except to a very few, careers in those professions are closed against the Jew. Russia is honest in this matter. The ministers hold that it is better to lose a limb or an eye than to enter whole into destruction. Russia does not affect to love the Jew. She believes him to be to-day what he was in the time of Moses—the devoted worshipper of the Golden Calf. To keep the Jew from contact with the main body of the Russian people is, accordingly, an integral part of Russian policy. He is not allowed to settle in Siberia, and, unless a drastic change be made in the administration and control of Jewish subjects of the Tsar, all the raw materials for a bloody tragedy are to be found within the Russian pale.

As the Russian Empire comprises one-seventh of the land surface of the globe, and covers an area of nearly nine million square miles, the exclusion of the Jews from the higher ranks of the Russian civil and military services, notwithstanding their admitted intellectual superiority, is the most extravagant compliment ever paid by a great governing race to downcast wanderers on the face of the earth—without a common country, or a common language, or a common policy. With the tremendous task confronting the Tsar's ministers in the Russification of Asia from the Caspian Sea to Port Arthur, and with the absence of a middle-class such as that which is the strength of Britain, whence is Russia to draw her administrative material if she continues to exclude from her service the ablest of her subjects? In an undeveloped country such as Russia, the presence of one Jew in eight hundred of the population would scarcely seem to constitute a formidable danger to the State. Russians,

however, think otherwise; and the only alternative practicable is to give the Jews a larger area of settlement, either contiguous to the Russian pale, or in Armenia, when that country finally comes under the sceptre of the Great White Tsar.

Notwithstanding that the state of the Jew in Russia is parlous, he is not much happier in Austria or in Hungary, although the power that he exercises and the conditions of his life are wholly different. Education is open to the Austrian Jew. The proportion of Jews in the Austrian universities is much in excess of what might be expected from their actual number in the country. Jews form 5 per cent. of the population; but 19·3 of the students at the universities are Jews. In the Communal School of Vienna, among 42,624 pupils, 5600 were Jews. Still, the Jews are not handicraftsmen; they prefer working with the head. Of the 6274 pupils at the technical schools of Vienna, only 110 were Jews. The Jews of Austria and Hungary are powerfully represented in every walk of life that leads to influence and fortune. The great business houses and the banks and the railways that are not owned by the State belong to or are controlled by them. The press, with the exception of the Czech organs, is almost exclusively in the hands of the Jews.

'Have you any Christians on your staff?' Mr I. Zangwill asked the editor of the great Pesth newspaper, the *Pesther Lloyd*.

'I think we have one,' was the editor's reply.

The mastery of the press in Austria is symptomatic of the Jewish capture of newspapers all over Europe. Every shade of thought speaks through the pen of the Hebrew. Even the anti-Semitic papers are, many of them, written by Jews.

The control of finance and the stupendous success which follow their devotion to the trade in money have brought to the Jews great fortune and much hatred. As in the thirteenth century, the peasantry, goaded to madness, rose against those whom they deemed to be their persecutors.

Look at this picture.

It is evening, in winter. The tearing wind from the north howls and moans, driving the snow before it in dust that finds its way into every nook. A hovel stands by the roadway, its rickety door secured by a padlock. The few sticks of furniture, even the miserable bed upon which its emaciated occupant lay, had been seized by the Jew to whom she is in debt, and the door is closed against her. The rags that scarcely cover her are all the worldly goods that she possesses. Food she has none. Old, lonely, and ill, she has no strength to drag herself to the village. She sinks down in the snow to die. In the morning her frozen body is found with a smile on its worn face.

This is no fancy sketch. It is a fact. The sequel is equally striking. The peasants, furious at the cruelty, surrounded the Jew money-lender's house the next night. Having caught him and bound him, they skinned him alive. Then they burnt him to death.

And thus the weary circle of Jewish extortion and un-Christian resentment is traversed in Austria as in every country where Jews and Gentiles have come into conflict since the Dispersion. So much for the poor Jews.

No Jew is received in society. The only exception is in favour of the Rothschilds, and even they are not treated as if they were really members of society. An aristocracy which prides itself on its pedigree and sixteen quarterings has still much of the tradition of its Crusading ancestors—that the bitterest enemies of Christendom are the Jews.

The story of Prince Festetics and the Prince of Wales is well known in Austria. The Prince of Wales was invited to shoot with the late Baron de Hirsch, and, while staying at St Johann, suggested going on from there to the Austrian magnate. 'I should be glad to receive your Royal Highness on any other occasion,' wrote Prince Festetics, 'but not coming from the house of that Jew.'

In commerce and money-making generally the Jew beats the Austrian all along the line. The Austrian's weakness is his opportunity. Among the pleasure-loving and indolent Austrians the Israelite reaps a rich harvest. The Austrian revenges himself by hatred and abuse. He perceives that he is outdistanced; but he refuses to see that the real cause is his own idleness and Jewish industry.

In France the feeling against the Jews has been so frequently described in the newspapers that there is no occasion to dwell upon the facts which gave rise to it. The multiplication of their numbers, and what may be called the 'aloofness of Israel,' are rapidly bringing the Jewish Question to the front. Jewish champions compare themselves with the Huguenots; but the large majority of the Jews, whether in England or elsewhere, have no title to be included in the same category as that of a race whose absorption by the land of its adoption is a matter of two generations. The difference between the Jewish element in national life and in every other racial constituent lies in the fact that, whereas all other races intermarry, worship, and eat with us, the strict Jew will do none of these things. He remains aloof. He preserves his tribal customs. He is intensely proud of his origin, and not seldom, secretly or openly, contemptuous towards the people of his adoption.

In an article in the *Contemporary Review* for January 1898, a Russian Jew, who has accepted the hospitality of England for a few years, writes as follows: 'The English workman is . . . a mere labourer. His work is like his temperament, drink, and diet—strong, stolid, and durable, but at the same time rough, coarse, and tasteless.' Again: 'The heart of the average British workman never throbs with any such sentiments—that

is, family love, religion, and race. I doubt whether it beats at all except when perhaps he is engaged in rabbit-coursing, dog-fighting, or other such noble and innocent amusements. Poor innocent creature!'

British workmen are contemptuously known as 'yokels' among Jewish workmen.

But there is a further element which differentiates the Jew who is loyal to his faith from all other foreigners who seek asylum with any nation. His close connection by blood and religion with a separate community existing in all other countries gives to the Jewish race a solidarity and a separateness which prevents it from ever becoming wholly absorbed by the country of its adoption. Whenever the question of the good or evil conduct of a Jew is discussed in the public press, this solidarity is exhibited. In the recent Dreyfus case every good Jew believed Dreyfus to be innocent because he was a Jew; for the same reason, the Jew-haters believed him to be guilty; the judgment in each case being arrived at without available evidence on either side.

The synagogues and the Jewish congregations in Poland, Lithuania, and Galicia, in case of need, exercise a stronger influence in the West over good and humane Western Jews than any of the social or religious forces by which they are locally surrounded. As long as their diet is different, as long as Sunday is a week-day, as long as their origin is Oriental, as long as they decline to intermarry, so long is it impossible to regard the Jews as English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, or Russian. There exist, no doubt, a few of the upper classes who are absorbed, and by intermarriage and education have become Anglicised as the Huguenots are Anglicised. Of these I do not speak: I refer to that far larger proportion of the Jewish immigrants whose colonies are to be found throughout Europe. A great change is at hand. After six centuries of more or less toleration, the signs are not wanting that the Jewish Question is ripe for entrance into a new stage. As in other matters, it is for Russia to take the lead. She is compelled to do so; and her part will consist in the provision of territory by which the redundant population of her own Jewish pale may find a home, and perhaps found a state. The only spot available seems to be in the depopulated valleys and plains of Armenia. It will be strange if prophecy is fulfilled in this way. Personally, I believe it to be not only likely, but inevitable.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE BAILLIES OF NO-MAN'S LAND.

THE next period in my life lies still in my mind like a dream. I have a remembrance of awaking, and an impression of light and strange faces, and then all is dark again. As to these days my memory is a blank; there is nothing but a medley of sickness and weariness, light and blackness, and the wild phantoms of a sick man's visions.

When I first awoke to clear consciousness it was towards evening, in a wild glen just below the Devil's Beef-Tub, at the head of the Annan. I had no knowledge where I was. All that I saw was a crowd of men and women around me, a fire burning, and a great pot hissing thereon. All that I heard was a babel of every noise from the discordant cries of men to the yelping of a pack of curs. I was lying on a very soft couch made of skins and cloaks, in the shade of a little, roughly-made tent.

I lay still and wondered, casting my mind over all the events of the past that I could remember. I was still giddy in the head, and the effort made me close my eyes with weariness. Try as I would, I could think of nothing beyond my parting from Marjory at Smitwood. All the events of my wanderings for the moment had gone from my mind.

By-and-by I grew a little stronger, and bit by bit everything returned to me. I remembered with great vividness the weary incidents of my flight, even up to its end and my final sinking. But still the matter was no clearer. I had been rescued, it was plain; but by whom, when, where, why? I lay and puzzled over the situation with a curious mixture of indifference and interest.

Suddenly a face looked in upon me, and a loud, strident voice cried out in a tongue which I scarce fully understood. The purport of its words was that the sick man was awake and looking about him. In a minute the babel was stilled, and I heard a woman's voice giving orders. Then some one came to me with a basin of soup.

'Drink, lad,' says she. 'Ye've had a geyan close escape; but a' is richt wi' ye noo. Tak this and see how ye feel.'

The woman was tall and squarely built like a man; indeed, I cannot think that she was under six feet. Her face struck me with astonishment, for I had seen no woman for many a day save Marjory's fair face; and the harsh, commanding features of my nurse seemed doubly strange. For dress she wore a black hat tied down over her ears with a kerchief, and knotted in gipsy fashion beneath her chin. Her gown was of some dark-blue camlet cloth, and so short that it scarce reached her knees; though whether this fashion be meant for expedition in movement or merely

for display of gaudy stockings I know not. Certainly her stockings were monstrously fine, being of dark blue, flowered with scarlet thread, and her shoon were adorned with great buckles of silver. Her outer petticoat was folded so as to make two large pockets on either side, and in the bosom of her dress I saw a great clasp-knife.

I drank the soup, which was made of some wild herbs known only to the gipsy folk, and lay back on my couch.

'Now, sleep a wee, lad,' said the woman, 'and I'll warrant ye'll be as blithe the morn as ever.'

I slept for some hours, and when I awoke sure enough I felt mightily strengthened. It was now eventide, and the camp-fire had been made larger to cook the evening meal. As I looked forth I could see men squatting around it, broiling each his own piece of meat in the ashes, while several cauldrons sputtered and hissed on the chains. It was a wild, bustling sight; and as I lay and watched I was not sorry that I had fallen into such hands. For I ever loved to see new things and strange ways, and now I was like to have my fill.

They brought me supper, a wild duck, roasted, and coarse home-made bread, and a bottle of very tolerable wine—got I know not whence, unless from the cellars of some churlish laird. I ate heartily, for I had fasted long in my sickness, and now that I was recovered I had much to make up.

Then the woman returned and asked me how I did. I told her 'Well,' and thanked her for her care, asking her how I had been rescued and where I was; and this was the tale she told me.

She was of the clan of the Baillies, the great gipsies of Tweeddale and Clydesdale, offshoots of the house of Lamington, and proud as the devil or John Faa himself. They had been encamped in the little haugh at the foot of the Wormel on the night of my chase. They had heard a cry, and a man with a face like death had staggered in among them and fainted at their feet. Captain William Baillie, their leader, of whom more anon, had often been well entreated at Barns in my father's time, and had heard of my misfortunes. He made a guess as to who I was, and ordered that I should be well looked after. Meantime the two companies of soldiers passed by, suspecting nothing, and not troubling to look for the object of their search, who all the while was lying senseless beneath a gipsy tent. When all was safe they looked to my condition, and found that I was in a raging fever with cold and fatigue. Now the gipsies, especially those of our own country-side, are great adepts in medicine, and they speedily had all remedies applied to me. For three weeks I lay ill, delirious most of the time, and they bore me with them in a litter in all their wanderings. I have heard of many strange pieces of generosity, but of none more strange than this—to carry with much difficulty a helpless stranger over some of the roughest land in Scotland, and all for no other motive than sheer kindliness to a house which had befriended them of old. With them I travelled over the wild uplands of Eskdale and Ettrick, and with them I now returned to the confines of Tweeddale.

'The captain's awa' just now,' added she; 'but he'll be back the morn, and blithe he'll be to see ye so weel.'

And she left me; and I slept again till daybreak.

When I awoke again it was morning. I saw by the bustle that the camp was making preparations for starting, and I was so well recovered that I felt fit to join them. I no longer needed to be borne like a child in a litter, but could mount horse and ride with the best of them.

I had risen and gone out to the encampment, and was watching the activity of man and beast, when one advanced from the throng toward me. He was a very tall, handsome man, dark in face as a Spaniard, with fine curling moustachios. He wore a broad blue bonnet on his head, his coat was of good green cloth, and his small-clothes of black. At his side he carried a sword, and in his belt a brace of pistols; and, save for a certain foreign air in his appearance, he seemed as fine a gentleman as one could see in the land. He advanced to me and made me a very courtly bow, which I returned as well as my still-aching back permitted me.

'I am glad you are recovered, Master John Burnet,' said he, speaking excellent English, though with the broad accent which is customary to our Scots Lowlands. 'Permit me to make myself known to you. I have the honour to be Captain William Baillie, at your service, captain of the ragged regiment and the Egyptian guards.' All this was said with as fine an air as if he were his Majesty's first general.

At the mention of his name I called to mind all I had heard of this extraordinary man, the chief of all the south-country gipsies, and a character as famous in these days and in these parts as Claverhouse or my lord the king. Something of his assumed gentrice showed in his air and manner, which was haughty and lofty as any lord's in the land. But in his face, among wild passions and unbridled desires, I read such shrewd kindliness that I found it in my heart to like him. Indeed, while the tales of his crimes are hawked at every fair, the stories of his many deeds of kindness are remembered in lonely places by folk who have cause to bless the name of Baillie. This same captain had, indeed, the manners of a prince; more, he was reputed the best swordsman in all Scotland, though, as being barred from the

society of men of birth and education, his marvellous talent was seldom seen. He was of the most indomitable courage and self-possession; and even in the court, when on his trial, he spoke fearlessly to his judges. I do not seek to defend him; but to me and mine he did a good deed, and I would seek to be grateful. When, long afterwards, he was killed in a brawl in the alehouse of Newarthill, I heard the tidings with some sorrow, for he died bravely, though in an ignoble quarrel.

He now informed me with great civility of the incidents of my escape and sickness. When I thanked him he waved me off with a great air.

'Tut, tut!' said he, 'that is a small matter between gentlefolk. I have often had kindness from your father, and it is only seemly that I should do my best for the son. Besides, it is not in my nature to see a man so sore pressed by the soldiery and not seek to deliver him. It is a predicament I have so often been in myself.'

A horse was brought for me, a little wiry animal, well suited for hills and sure-footed as a goat. When I felt myself in the saddle once again, even though it were but a gipsy hallion, I was glad; for to one who has scrambled on his own feet for so many days, a horse is something like an earnest of better times. Captain Baillie bade me come with him to another place, where he showed me a heap of gipsy garments. 'It is necessary,' said he, 'if you would ride with us, that you change your appearance. One of your figure riding among us would be too kenspeckle to escape folk's notice. You must let me stain your face, too, with the juice which we make for our bairns' cheeks. It will wash off when you want it; but till that time it will be as fast as sunburn.' So, taking a crow's feather, and dipping it in a little phial, he with much skill passed it over my whole face and hands. Then he held a mirror for me to look, and, lo and behold! I was as brown as a gipsy or a Barbary Moor. I laughed loud and long at my appearance; and when I was bidden put on a long green coat, the neighbour of the captain's, and a pair of stout untanned riding-boots, I swear my appearance was as truculent as the roughest tinker's.

Thus accoutred, we set out, the men riding in front in pairs and threes, the women behind with donkeys and baggage shelties. It was a queer picture, for the clothing of all was bright-coloured, and formed a strange contrast with the clear, chilly skies and the dim moor. I had no guess at our destination; so, when we turned to the westward and headed through the moss towards the town of Biggar, I was not surprised. Nay, I was glad, for it brought me nearer to the west country and Smitwood, whither I desired to go with the utmost speed. For, with my returning health, my sorrows and cares came back to me more fiercely than ever. It could not be that my cousin should find out Marjory's dwelling-place at once, for in the letter there was no clear information, only indefinite hints which in time would bring him there. The hope of my life was to reach the house before him and rescue my love, though I had no fixed plan in my mind, and would have been at a sore loss for aid. Nevertheless I was quieter in spirit and more hopeful. For after all, thought I, though Gilbert get my lass, he yet has me to deal with; and I will follow him to the world's end ere I let him be.

(To be continued.)

THE WILD CATS OF THE PAMPA.

NOWHERE can one find more curious or more fascinating creatures to make pets of than on the pampas of South America. During the few years that I lived there many strange varieties passed through my hands. Perhaps the monotonous existence on those monotonous plains made one turn with a greater interest to the animal life around one. There was a peculiar pleasure in noting, as the garden became stocked with fruits and flowers, and the tiny new trees grew big enough to afford some shelter, that birds till now unknown in the district found it out and set to work nest-building and establishing themselves in its kindly enclosure. Outside, the birds of the *campo* had learnt to do without shelter. We knew to seek for their eggs where the ground was barest; they scorned even the tufts of grass or high-growing *paja*. Yet how difficult it was to find them! The polished wine-coloured eggs of the *martinete*, and the gray-green, marked roughly with brown, of the *teru-teru* (plover), seemed to wear the colours least likely to catch the eye.

Having no knowledge of natural history, I could only watch and wonder at the ways of my bird and beast friends, and I fear too often, from ignorance, allowed them to die in captivity.

These wild creatures of the pampas seemed even more difficult to rear than the animals of more civilised lands. I have a suspicion that the abundance of rich food given to them in ignorant kindness by the servants was the chief cause of death to creatures used to feeding on coarse grass or on their natural prey, sought after with difficulty. Water they could only have found in rain-holes, which are often dried up for weeks at a time.

Their death was all the more distressing as no birds or beasts more readily accepted petting. Surely, in this newly-populated country, they had not yet learnt to look on man as their deadly foe.

The beautiful *gamitos* (young deer), from the hour they were caught, allowed themselves to be handled, showing no signs of fear; yet when tied up they died of rage or in struggling for freedom. Antonia, my native maid, adored all living creatures, with the exception of vipers and the poisonous toad and spiders; these she would bravely attack and promptly kill, declaring that they were deadly. She had the gift of taming wild creatures. She taught me to leave the *gamitos* alone. When I did so they made no attempt to wander, but would follow us about, even into the house, snuffing curiously at the strange things found there.

A hideous, grotesque *mulito* (small species of armadillo, named from his long ears) became very tiresome from the way he pattered along at our heels, in danger of being trodden upon, with a provoking persistency that at last drove us to return him to his native wilderness. Another curious pet, known as the *chuño*, seemed thoroughly to enjoy the somewhat dangerous society of Antonia's little brother. This large, handsome bird was said to be peculiarly clever in killing snakes, seizing them in his beak and dashing them on the ground. Certainly he had a very effective beak: no one could marvel to see the small José fly before it, as, with outstretched neck and flapping wings, the *chuño*, striding on his lengthy legs, drove him to take refuge in the kitchen; yet José was without doubt *muy guapo*—that is to say, very plucky. Unfortunately, during one of these encounters the *chuño* snapped one of his slender legs. Antonia, never at a loss in an emergency, with great skill glued the broken bits together, setting the leg in a splice. Strange to say, the patient survived some weeks, but died before the hot weather had brought out the snakes; so we never had a chance of testing his skill.

But of all our pets Kit was the dearest and prettiest. He was a *gato-de-paja* (grass cat), so called from the thick, high grass in which he makes his home. He lies very close and probably sleeps during the day, but is sometimes seen at dusk prowling after his prey or playing with his kittens.

It is supposed that these cats are never tamed. At one time I had three kittens: never have I seen greater savages. They took very kindly to raw meat, tearing and clawing it with flashing eyes, and growling fiercely, like little bears. We found they suffered from confinement, so gave them the run of the garden. Three times a day they walked in solemn procession, with muttered growls and humped backs, to the kitchen, where Antonia fed them with a too liberal supply of beef (there is no butcher's bill on an *estancia*). Two of them died, and the third, we hope, returned to his friends in the *paja*.

These cats so interested me that when a friend brought me Kit—a baby of a week or so, as fluffy as a Persian kitten and as jolly as a puppy—I determined to tame him. He was strictly fed on milk and soaked bread, and never teased or excited to anger. From the first he was wonderfully tame and showed signs of affection, soon following me about like a dog, and even answering to his name. This, I believe, is not usual with cats. In course of time he developed a fine ruff down his backbone, and cinnamon-coloured stripes appeared on his dark fur; his face was sharper than that of the domestic cat; his legs thicker and shorter, and his tail broader, with longer hair; his ears were, I think, larger and tufted. Though not as lithe as an ordinary cat, he played with charming grace. When excited he would growl, and when pleased purred like any pussy. Climbing and leaping were not amongst his accomplishments; but I have seen him sit up on his hind-legs and look out of the window for two or three minutes at a time. Most cats can put on grand airs that recall their royal cousin the tiger; Kit had a far stronger resemblance to a bear: I am afraid he too often deserved to be called as cross as one. Yet he was very sociable, and showed great affection for me. I left home for a month, and for a few days Kit seemed to miss me. When I returned he appeared a little shy, but during dinner he climbed up my skirt and settled himself on my lap—his favourite place. The next morning Antonia found him waiting outside my bedroom door; he ran up to my bed and asked to be taken up and petted, purring with satisfaction when his wish was granted. It struck me as very wonderful that a creature of so wild a race, perhaps never from generation to generation ever seeing man, certainly never coming in contact with him, should be so friendly and affectionate.

When left to Antonia's care he had learnt to steal from the kitchen, and suffered in consequence. One evening I missed him, and called for him in vain in the garden and orchard. Early next morning he was found, cold, wet, and limp, lying in the dew-covered grass. He revived a little with warmth, but seemed in pain; once he turned to me with sad eyes that seemed to ask for help, and then he tried to lick my hands, and shortly afterwards gave a few sharp cries and died. It was a great sorrow to us all. I missed my little friend very much, especially in the evenings, when we used to walk out on the *campo* in the dusk, and Kit would dodge the owls who swept down on the ground before him, wondering if he was a creature to be caught and eaten.

A larger, and I believe much fiercer, cat was to be met with in our district—the *gato monté*. He took possession of the *montés*, or woods, as they grew up and formed dense cover. How did these creatures find out these island-like woods, sparsely

scattered on the great sea of the pampas, in our neighbourhood only planted within the last twelve years?

It was through the clever robbery of a neighbouring poultry-yard that we were first introduced to this cat. The yard stood on the edge of a wood. Constantly during the night three or four fowls would disappear off their roosts; they were carried over a wire-fence and dropped at some distance, apparently unhurt, but each had a small wound showing the marks of a wild beast's teeth. So silently was this done that men and dogs on the watch were not disturbed; yet the cat must have made several journeys, dragging heavy birds over a fence from eight to ten feet high. Such a thing had never happened before; it was black magic. After some months of watching, the thief was caught taking a *siesta* on the forked branch of a tree; he was shot on the spot. As no more fowls were stolen, he must have been the only robber of poultry-yards in our neighbourhood. In the almost tropical forests of the Gran Chaco, in the far north of the republic of Argentina, amongst the many wild beasts that are found there is a third species of the cat tribe—the tiger-cat.

FRIDA PETERSEN'S LOVER.

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

TWENTY-FIVE days had passed. The weather had broken for Faroe, as it ever does with the beginning of September. The gloom of the long winter had begun to steal over the land, and things looked gloomy indeed. Miss Frida had been to school in Copenhagen, and she could play the piano—a gaunt instrument of black and gold, which, after the stuffed sea-birds and minerals, was the chief object of interest in the 'best room' of the farmhouse. She had never seemed very much at home in the *rogstue*,* and, from the time of her father's death, not once had she spent the evening there with the farm-hands and damsels.

Of course it was expected that she would show a certain reasonable amount of grief for her loss. But she seemed to carry it too far. It was, too, extremely odd that she should be so energetic in facing the bogs and rough weather at Skellingfjeld's roots, just on purpose to attend service at the Leinum church on Sunday, as if Douglas Graham's own reading of the service in the big barn at Siov ought not to have been enough for her, especially seeing that he and she were about to——

But herein also there was mystery. Frida had changed with regard to Douglas. From the day of her father's funeral something had come betwixt their hearts. None knew what the something was save only Nick Porteous and the two lovers themselves.

Douglas was never likely to forget the day of old Petersen's interment.

When, that evening, he had returned from his ramble on the hills (there was nothing like it for clearing the cobwebs from the brain) he had found the farm in a turmoil. Frida had had a succession of fainting fits, and no one knew what to do under such extraordinary circumstances. The farm-hands and neighbours had, in fact, done everything possible to induce the girl to die beneath the shock. But Douglas brought wisdom with him, and Frida was soon able to speak and look like herself.

'Douglas,' she had said, almost with her first breath of reason, 'a man has been here—an Englishman—and he says that you once murdered a man. Tell me, my heart, that it is not true.'

She had repeated her question.

'Just the one word "No," Douglas. It is such a little word, and it shall be enough, for I love you very, very much!'

But still the young Scotchman had remained dumb, with fixed eyes, as he recalled only too distinctly the incidents which had led him to exile himself. The fellow had outraged all humanity, and wronged his — Douglas's — sister. How could he measure the force and consequence of a blow at such a time? And how was he to blame if the brute fell senseless against the edge of a chopper set with its blade in the air?

He was a murderer, sure enough—yet was there not excuse for him?

'Tell me,' the girl had pleaded, with her arms round his neck at length. 'I am your little Frida. You call me little, though I am not little; it is because of your love for me, is it not? Say that man lied—he had a bad face—and I will believe you against him; and it would make no difference if every other Englishman in England took his part against you.'

Then Douglas could keep silence no longer. He had tenderly unwound the girl's soft arms from his neck, and said:

'Frida, it is the truth. I killed a man three years ago.'

'With those hands?' the girl had whispered, her face still and horrified like a dream-face.

'With this right hand. But listen; I will tell you about it.'

'No, no; I will not hear—I cannot! So my Douglas is a murderer; and my father is dead!'

* Literally, smoke-room: the kitchen or common room of a Faroe house.

After which Frida had lapsed into the state of indifference towards all things (including Douglas) which so vastly astonished the Siov people. She read her books (of which she had an uncommon store), and evolved sad noises from the piano, and let domestic and business matters take their chance.

'It be hard saying what Miss Frida would do if she had not the Herr Graham to look after her,' said the Siov folk; and this was the opinion throughout the archipelago.

Several times Douglas had interceded on his own behalf with Frida. If only she would let him tell the story of his crime, he felt she could not, being a sensitive and sympathetic woman, condemn him to the pit of disappointment and despair in which his heart seemed now to be chained down. But Frida was imperative in this matter, if in no other.

'It will kill me,' she would sob; or, 'Stay and take care of me, if you will; but never, never mention *that* to me!'

It was a heart-rending situation, and after three weeks had passed, Graham resolved that it should end. Frida had a cousin in Kalsoe—an elderly dame of much respectability, and renowned in Kalsoe for her masterfulness. He would, on his own responsibility, invite this good lady to Siov, and contrive to shift the reins of management into her leathery hands. The interest in the estate that had been bequeathed to him by old Petersen was realisable; but he knew that it was morally conditional upon his marriage with Frida. Thus there was nothing to keep him in Siov, and since not in Siov, in Faroe either. He would go forth with this Cain's brand upon him, and try and make a new life for himself in America. At twenty-seven one can hope ardently. And, after all, his conscience did not treat him one quarter as severely as Frida. If only he had loved her less, he could have borne this second expatriation as easily as (that is, with not more suffering than) the first. But the worst of it was, that the knowledge that Frida had become what she had become for love of him, and naught else, had intensified his love for her immeasurably.

This was how matters stood in Siov on the eighteenth of September, when word drifted down Kollefjord from Leinum that the English gunboat had returned from Iceland and was in Westmanshavn.

No one but Douglas and Frida knew the effect the coming of the *Goshawk* had had upon their two lives. Yet somehow the maid who told her mistress the news expected that it would interest her. The girl had put two and two together, and had the dim fancy that Frida's swooning and Frida's sudden change towards 'the master' (as they called Douglas) were both connected with the hard-featured ship's officer with the gold band round his hat.

'Frida,' said Douglas that evening, 'I am going to Westmanshavn; the gunboat is there. I must see the man who came—you know why and when.'

Nothing more than the way the girl lifted her eyes to him, with a sudden light of love and animation, proved to Douglas that in her heart she had never felt more fondly towards him.

'Do not go,' she cried, pleadingly. 'They will take you. And, besides, Marta tells me that if the fog keeps away to-morrow, there is a party of the men coming to climb Skelling and descend into Siov. *He* will be among them.'

'How do you know that?' inquired Douglas quickly.

'I cannot tell how I know it, but I feel that it will be so. You will not go?'

'I will not go. But listen, Frida; this life of ours must end. A little longer, and you will have seen the last of me.'

He had expected her to receive this news excitedly, perhaps with fresh swoons, or even an hysterical outburst of reproaches or tenderness, for he had learned much of the strange contrariness of woman's nature. Instead of this, she put her white hand (still with the ring upon it that he had given her) on his arm, and, looking him calmly in the eyes, said:

'Wait; I think all will be well. I cannot tell how, but I have dreamed, and I believe the dreams will come true.'

'Frida!' cried the young man, himself in a passion of affection. He would have taken her in his arms, but her extended hands, as she said, 'Not yet, Douglas,' effectively restrained him.

'I pray we may not have to part,' the girl murmured almost under her breath; and then she left him.

That day waned to night with leaden slowness for Douglas. He yearned to know the particulars of his crime. When he had struck the blow, and seen his enemy senseless and bathed in blood at his feet, he had fled; and ever since he had remained in ignorance of what had afterwards happened. Was he still sought by the officers of the law—to be hung when caught? And what said they of him in Kirkwall, where he had been born and had grown to manhood with the goodwill of all who knew him—save only the man who had tempted him to wreak the Almighty's vengeance upon him?

The following day opened blithely enough for September. The wind was north again, and a light sprinkling of snow was on the tops of the *fjelds*.

At breakfast Frida asked in a low and tremulous voice:

'Will the weather remain good, do you think?'

'Good enough for them, no doubt,' Douglas had replied.

How he longed to have gone in the first glow of the morning towards Skellingfjeld's huge roots and scaled the giant from the east to meet the English sailors on the summit! But he remained faithful to his promise to Frida.

He worked through the morning as best he could, ever turning his eyes toward Skelling's

gigantic head. It was possible, he thought, to distinguish the forms of the tourists on the summit, if they were there. With the telescope at any rate it was possible enough. And so he went for the glass and looked through it again and again—until noon had arrived.

By then, however, something had happened. The wind had shifted to the west, and the inevitable sea-fog had swept up and swathed great Skelling, all except its enormous, square, black head, with the blood-curdling precipices on its four sides. They were used to these sights in Kollefjord, but to a stranger it would have seemed more than half a miracle, or a supreme natural marvel at the least.

Yet not for long was Skelling's crown left unveiled, hanging as it were between the murky heavens and the fog-wrapped earth. Soon all was mist. Even the waters of the *fjord* were hid; and it was possible for a Kollefjord man to lose himself though he were but a good stone's-throw from his own cottage.

It was just ere the absolute obliteration of Skelling that Douglas received a shock. He was staring at the mountain-top through the glass, when it seemed to him he heard a cry like that of a man in mortal agony. Where before had he heard such a cry in such a tone? Both were familiar to him. Then, as he was moving the glass, he saw two moving dots on Skelling's edge. That was all. The fog cut off his chances the next moment.

This adventure, if so it might be called, much impressed Douglas. None knew better than he that if there were men on Skelling at that time they were in a compassionable plight. The mountain's cliffs and chasms were not to be lightly tackled even in the best of weather.

He told his surmises to one of the Siov farmers. This man uttered an ejaculation which was a sort of requiem upon the *Goshawk's* men if they had been caught in the fog. As for the thought of going to their aid, the Siov man treated it as the notion of a lunatic. As well might one man leap into a vat of boiling oil to rescue a comrade who had fallen headlong therein.

'We must just wait for the morrow,' said the man.

It was a long weary night that followed this day. Both Douglas and Frida slept little through it. Several times Douglas rose from the blue feather-bed on which he lay, and looked out to see if the stars were yet visible. It was, however, five o'clock ere the fog broke sufficiently for this. Then Douglas dressed himself and prepared for the journey of exploration that was before him.

He woke three other men, and having warmed their throats with hot coffee and put flasks of corn brandy in their pockets, they set forth up the valley. Never had Kollefjord looked more lovely than on this chill September morning, with the stars mirrored in its glassy, dark depths.

They had plenty of hard work before them. When they were a few hundred feet up the mountain they began to shout; and they continued arousing Skelling's mighty echoes until the dawn had broken, and Kollefjord was at their feet—a frightful distance down.

They had got to the summit of the first of the mountain's cubes, when they fancied they heard a response to their shouts. Listening intently, they were assured of it. In half-an-hour they had absolute proof of it in the four British tars, wan and miserable-looking, whom they found in a niche of the mountain, precipice-bound, half-frozen and hungry.

Douglas scanned the men narrowly.

'Oh, by the way,' suddenly exclaimed one of them, 'there's poor Porteous. I reckon he's dead as mutton now; but we ought to make sure!'

'Porteous!' said Douglas, and his heart stopped beating.

'Yes; he slipped last night and fell no one knows where. We ought to find him.'

'We will find him—and alive, please God!' cried Douglas.

And they did. But it was not for long. He was sensible, but shockingly damaged. There seemed little likelihood of getting him down the mountain alive. Brandy and care, however, between them worked wonders with him.

He had not spoken so far, nor when they were on the Siov road and nearing Petersen's farm. Periodically he had opened his eyes and closed them. It seemed to him that he could not open them without seeing Douglas Graham, and he resented it. But anon, as his vitality weakened, the strength of his resentment also lost force. Thus it happened that, close to the farmyard, their eyes met.

'You know me, Nick Porteous?' asked Douglas tremulously.

The words 'I know you' were whispered back.

They got him into the 'best room' of the house, and having deposited him, the Jack-tars straightway returned to Westmanshavn to report themselves.

Then Douglas went to Frida and told her everything. He was not a murderer after all. By the strange working of Providence, he had been able to save the fragments of life left to his enemy, whom he believed he had killed long ago.

'Come, Frida, and hear it from his own lips,' he said.

'I do not want to,' was the glad reply. 'I believe it.'

'Oh, but I wish you to, sweetheart. He will speak too—I feel that he will, before dying.'

In this hope, however, until the last moment, Douglas seemed to be deceiving himself. Porteous lay dying and apparently incapable of any effort, until the evening. Then, just when the crimson western flush was on the tops of the *fjelds* over against Siov, and the crimsoned cloud-fleeces were mirrored in the waters of the *fjord*, Porteous wrenched himself into a sitting posture.

'Graham,' he cried.

Douglas was near.

'Coming,' he responded. 'Frida, I want you,' he added.

The two went to the dying man's side, and Douglas supported him.

'I—I want to say, Graham,' stammered Porteous —'that I—I'm sorry—you—you didn't kill me before, but I'm dead enough now, or soon will be, I guess.'

He hurried through the final words at a great rate, and had hardly ended them when he gasped and became a burden like lead in Douglas's arms.

'Are you satisfied, my heart?' asked Douglas when he had taken Frida out of the room.

For answer she put her hand between his two, and then stooped and kissed the uppermost of them.

AN OLD-FASHIONED RAILWAY LINE.

WHEN Stephenson began to lay down his first railways, and so inaugurate a new mode of travelling, one of the earliest lines to be constructed was the little, narrow-gauge line, about seven miles in length, between the towns of Bodmin and Wadebridge in Cornwall. For over sixty years it was the only railway line touching these places; but now that the Great Western and South-Western Railways are extending themselves in many directions over the south-western county, it has been swallowed up by the latter system, and its pristine nature has been utterly destroyed. Before the remembrance of its quaintness and originality is allowed to pass into oblivion some record deserves to be made.

What would the traveller of to-day think of a railway whose stations possessed no platforms, whose stationmasters were also booking-clerk, porter, ticket-inspector, station policeman, shunter, and general factotum; whose first-class carriages were wooden-seated conveyances similar to trucks, open to the sky; and whose third-class carriages were covered trucks, almost like the meat-vans of to-day—windowless, bufferless—and were also used as guards' and luggage van? Yet this was the state of affairs which prevailed on this old-world railway up to the year of the Queen's Jubilee (1887).

The line itself was not enclosed in any way, but the public were at liberty to wander over it at will, and turn it into a thoroughfare and promenade. The engines were of a very primitive type, and their speed very rarely exceeded ten miles an hour. If any obstruction appeared on the line, the engine-driver promptly stopped his train, and got down to remove it or drive it away if it were cattle or other animals. The train was often stopped to recover passengers' hats, which, owing to the open carriages, frequently blew off. Passengers might board the train, or get off, at any point on the journey; it was only necessary to hold up stick or umbrella, in the same manner as old ladies stop the trams, to bring the train to a standstill.

The fare was a shilling, each way, first-class, and sevenpence third-class. Tickets were triangular—either blue or white—and were not dated, because they were used over and over again. A hole was conveniently punched in the middle, so that they could be kept on a string, and so be handy for future use. At the last, however, the use of tickets was discontinued, and the fares were collected by the engine-driver, simply because the supply of tickets was worn out. If any one boarded the train at any point on the line no regular charge was demanded; a tip to the engine-driver sufficed, as it also did if one wished to ride on the engine. It is most difficult to imagine that this state of affairs could have existed down to within the last ten years, but it is nevertheless a fact.

The regular train-service was one train each way on alternate days, so that it was totally unnecessary to consult any time-table. A story is told of a pushing 'commercial' who arrived at the Bodmin terminus of the line one day, out of breath with his exertions to try and catch the train, which had just left, and asked what time the next train would leave. On being gravely informed that this important event would happen 'the day after to-morrow,' he solemnly shook his head at the stationmaster, and said, 'Poor man, I suppose he has escaped from the big institution yonder' (meaning the county asylum). He soon found, however, that if he waited for the 'next train' he would lose his orders, and so he concluded to walk the seven miles to Wadebridge.

Excursions were occasionally run on this line, at which times the endurance of the panting little engine was sorely tried. When approaching any slight incline it was the custom of the stoker to go forward and sit between the buffers of the engine, and strew sand on the rails from a box. On one occasion the train, having got about half-way home, suddenly stopped by reason of the engine wheels 'skidding' on the slippery rails. The supply of sand being exhausted, the engine-driver promptly uncoupled his engine, and, telling the tired excursionists that 'he would be back directly,' gravely steamed away to the terminus for more sand, leaving the train and its load standing on the track for three-quarters of an hour.

The delays were always exasperating to the market-women, who used roundly to abuse the driver because they lost the sale of their butter and eggs. One old lady, when asked if she were

going on by the train, retorted to the 'general official,' 'Think I'm going to wait for thee; I shall get home sooner if I walk.' The engine-driver invariably waited until all his passengers were ready. In spite of all this laxity accidents were rare, nothing beyond an occasional 'run off' being heard of.

This little railway passes, or rather did pass (for the ruthless hand of the railway contractor has been at work), through some of the loveliest bits of scenery to be found in the county. The train ran for the greater part of the way beside the river Camel, through woods and along the hillsides, from which lovely peeps of country could be obtained. In other places the line had been cut through the solid rock, which towered up like cliffs on either side. Where the line ran through any exposed spot, avenues of elms had been planted, which were in their prime when they were wantonly cut down as an offering to the god 'Progress.'

Altogether, this little railway, as a link with the past, was unique, and it seemed a pity to destroy it; but the South-Western Railway Company, by buying the line, has been enabled to keep a hold on the North Cornwall railway route, of which the line now forms part. The old stationmaster, Mr Worth (no doubt the oldest stationmaster in England), is still alive, and, although beyond work, loves to wander down by the side of his old line, and talk of the 'good old times' to all who care to draw him out.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

BAMBOO SCAFFOLDING.



N this country during the past few years the use of bamboo for various purposes has greatly increased; and, judging from the bundles of the material to be seen at certain shops, there must be a growing demand for it. In a recent report from the Netherland Indies, a French consul advocates the use of bamboo as a material for builders' scaffolding, and states that in Japan a lighthouse has been built with its help. Poles of great length and extreme lightness can be obtained; and they are much stronger than those of other wood, although the one is hollow and the other may be solid. He speaks of bamboo cane with a diameter of eight to ten inches and a length of sixty-five feet—albeit no such canes are imported into this country—and says that the power of resistance which such giants possess is enormous. Bamboo does not rot either in the ground or in water, possibly because of its flinty coat; and the older it grows the firmer and harder it becomes. We have no doubt that builders would take to bamboo instead of fir poles if they could get them.

JAMAICA.

A very interesting paper about this important British possession was recently read before the London Chamber of Commerce by one who for many years was governor of the island—Sir Henry Blake. He describes its unrivalled beauties in glowing terms, and its climate as being of a range in which every tropical and subtropical product, and many of those of the temperate regions, can be grown. The sugar industry has suffered terribly in consequence of the foreign bounty system; but Jamaica, unlike some other of the West Indian Islands, has alternative industries, and promises of new ones to be established, which should still keep her in a flourishing condition. As reported in our columns at the time, an attempt was made last year to import oranges to Britain; but, owing to bad packing of the fruit, it arrived here in bad condition. The Jamaica oranges are of splendid quality; but they are considered too light in colour for the British market, and it has been proposed to darken them by artificial means. Sir Henry is much opposed to such a course, and would prefer to introduce them as a new brand, say the Jamaica *Primrose* Orange. He advocates the establishment of direct steam communication with England as a first step towards the advancement of the island's interests; and he prophesies that whenever commerce cuts its way through the Isthmus of Panama—whether by canal or ship-railway—Kingston in Jamaica will become one of the great commercial ports of the world.

INFUSORIAL EARTH.

A strange instance of like curing like is found in a memoir recently presented to the Paris Academy of Sciences by M. J. Hauser, in which that gentleman urges the use of infusorial earth as a perfect means of filtering liquids and separating from them the most minute organisms or particles of matter. The earth is first of all calcined at a high temperature, after which it is powdered and mixed to a creamy consistence with water. The mixture is then left to throw down a deposit on any suitable support, such as asbestos cloth or glass wool, and is then ready to act as a filter.

A NEW FIRE-EXTINGUISHER.

Mr T. A. Ready of New York City has patented a device which he calls a 'fire battery,' and its object is to join together and discharge the water from several fire-engines in one tremendous jet. The apparatus has the appearance of an ordinary field-piece of artillery, in that its principal part

consists of a long tube mounted upon trunnions and fixed on wheels. This tube is a tapering one, its larger end being closed and fitted with several nozzles, to which the hose from as many engines can be attached; from the other end the conjoined water-supply issues in a single jet. The tube can be moved or set at any required angle by means of a hand-wheel operated by one person, and the 'fire-battery' has other attachments for use in cases of emergency. We can well imagine circumstances under which this concentration of the water-power available would be of extreme value in the rapid extinction of a fire.

WINE FROM BARLEY.

An interesting account of the manufacture of various wines from barley has recently appeared in a consular report from Naples. The chief seat of this new industry is a factory at Wandsbeck, near Hamburg, which is said to produce a quarter of a million gallons of wine per annum. The barley, after being malted and carried to the fermentation-point, has added to it lactic acid and various ferments under certain careful regulations as to temperature. The mixture is then vatted and ripened artificially by heat, after which it is racked into smaller casks, or bottled, and is ready for consumption in three or four months' time. The wine has a somewhat high percentage of alcohol, which is wholly derived from the fermentation process, and is not the result of 'fortifying,' as the process of adding spirit is called. The new beverage is known as 'highly fermented barley wine,' and sherry, port, tokay, malaga, &c. are most successfully imitated by the producers. It is largely used in the German hospitals, and is favourably reported upon by the medical authorities.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MARVELS.

Most amateur photographers have occasionally met with ghostly markings on their gelatine plates, for which they could not account, and the manufacturer is generally blamed when such a spoilt plate is discovered. But it would seem from experiments lately conducted by Dr W. J. Russell, and described by him in the annual Bakerian Lecture delivered before the Royal Society, that several substances, some organic, some metallic, will affect a sensitive plate by being kept near it, and not necessarily in contact with it. Wood kept near a plate in darkness for a few days will picture itself on the sensitive surface, the image showing when the plate is developed. A sheet of perforated zinc will, in like manner, give up its pattern to the plate, and a nickel coin is especially active, giving an excellent copy of all its markings in a comparatively short time. Gum copal and printers' ink are two of the organic substances which are most active—a reminder to the amateur not to wrap his plates in newspaper. Dr Russell states that the general conclusion to be gathered from the experiments is, that the metals and substances under consideration have the property of giving off vapours which affect the sensitive surface of a photographic plate; that these vapours will pass readily through such bodies as gelatine, celluloid, collodion, &c.; and that the action is greatly intensified by a rise of temperature. Dr Russell will continue his experiments, and expresses the hope of being able to bring before the Royal Society further developments of these curious and, at the present time, little understood actions.

TROUT FROM NEW ZEALAND.

Twenty-two fine trout, of an average weight of five pounds, were recently brought to London by the steamship *Otarama*. These fish five weeks previously were swimming about in one of the rivers of New Zealand, and were taken with rod and line. They were brought to this country frozen into blocks of ice, as certain flower-blooms have previously come to us from the antipodes. Perhaps the most interesting part of the story is that these fish were hatched in New Zealand from trout ova which were originally sent to the colony from Britain. They come to us as a very satisfactory proof that the acclimatisation of British fish in New Zealand is an accomplished fact. It would be interesting to know how far the flavour of the fish is retained after its long sojourn in an envelope of ice. Salmon which has been kept for any long time in a frozen state is certainly very inferior to freshly-caught fish.

THE VALUE OF WORMS.

It is an old saying that we do not appreciate the worth of a thing until we have lost it. Possibly the worthy farmers who own the large tract of land in Essex which was in November last flooded by salt water, owing to the break down of a sea-wall, think of this adage when they ruefully look at their sodden ground. The despised worms by their constant burrowings kept the land well drained; but when the sea-flood came they were all killed and the sea-birds had a great feast. That land, measuring about fifty thousand acres, is still in a spongy state, and is likely to remain so until the farmers' friends—the worms—have time to recover their lost position.

BOILING WATER FOR A HALFPENNY.

The latest application of the coin-in-the-slot principle is one which will be greatly valued by the poorer inhabitants of our large towns and cities. Lamp-posts are being erected in busy centres, so arranged that the waste heat of the gas is employed to heat a cistern of water, from which a jugful can be obtained by any one by the expenditure of one-halfpenny. The 'little bit o' fire' for boiling a kettle in a poor home is often a consideration of some moment,

to say nothing of the weary time which has to elapse before that kettle will 'come to the boil.' Under the new dispensation all this trouble will be avoided for the expenditure of a halfpenny, and the system is already in active operation both in London and Liverpool, and it will presently be greatly extended. The installation in Leicester Square, London, which will be patronised by all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children, will be reinforced by penny packets of tea, coffee, meat-extract, and other provisions, and the tired wayfarer will now have the means of refreshing himself at moderate cost without entering a tavern. It may be mentioned that the syndicate under which this new system is managed agrees to pay the vestries half the cost of the gas consumed in each lamp, so that the ratepayers have an indirect interest in the success of the new venture.

BESSEMER STEEL.

The death of Sir Henry Bessemer removes from among us one who earned a very distinguished position on the roll of fame, for by his inventive genius he caused a revolution in the manufacture of steel which has proved to be of incalculable value to his countrymen, and indeed to the whole world. Under the old method molten iron was converted into steel by the operation called 'puddling,' in which heavy masses of the semi-plastic metal were turned over and over at the end of long rods—a work most laborious to the men engaged in it. The object of this puddling was to bring fresh surfaces of the metal in contact with the atmosphere, so that the contained carbon could be burnt out of it. Sir Henry Bessemer conceived the idea of bringing the air to the iron instead of the iron to the air, and in his process air is pumped from below into a mass of molten metal many tons in weight, the chemical action raising the temperature to a white heat and decarbonising the metal. It was long before the steel-makers of the country saw the advantage of the new process—not, indeed, until Bessemer had set up steel-works at Sheffield in their very midst, and they found themselves being undersold by about £20 per ton. Unlike most inventors, Bessemer reaped the reward of his patient labours during his lifetime, and amassed a fortune.

COMPRESSED AIR.

On the American railways compressed air is being used to a great extent and for a variety of purposes. Among these is the spraying of the track on the Pennsylvanian line with refuse petroleum, which is found to be a most effective method of preventing dust—an operation which does not need repeating for several months, and costs under £10 per mile. Compressed air is also used for sweeping and dusting the passenger cars, and for painting them and the various railway buildings. Cranes and riveting and other machines are also operated by the same agency; and even the bellows of the smiths' forges are replaced by a pipe and stop-cock. Still more important is the application of compressed air to the working of signals. At all the more important stations this system prevails, by which the signalman, instead of pulling over a heavy lever which taxes all his strength, can do the same work by means of a small bell-handle. Away from the towns and cities, where the railway work is not complicated by shunting and other operations, a train signals when the line is occupied or when it is clear to the train which follows it, and the signalman is altogether dispensed with. All this is done automatically, and the motive-power is compressed air.

SKETCHES BY TELEGRAPH.

There have been many reports of late of a wonderful German invention by which pictures presented at one end of a telegraph-line can be seen at the other end. A variation of the story is that a newspaper exhibited at one end of the line can be instantaneously reproduced at the distant point. There is obviously much exaggeration here, and we must wait for more authoritative statements than telegrams at present afford. In the meantime we have received particulars of the Telepantograph, an apparatus patented by Mr R. Greville-Williams of Heywood, Manchester, by which drawings, photographs, and documents in fac-simile can be telegraphed from place to place. The principle of the machine is as follows: The drawing or photograph—the latter must be cut up into dots or lines as for ordinary process work—is expressed in resinous ink on copper foil. This foil is bent round and fastened to a cylinder, which, as it revolves, is traversed by a point, the movement being much the same as that of a screw-cutting lathe. The surface being conducting and the ink an insulator, the current is interrupted whenever the point goes over a dot or line, and these interruptions, acting on similar mechanism at the receiving end, call into play a stylus or pen which reproduces the original design. Bakewell in 1850 used apparatus of the same kind to reproduce drawings on chemically prepared paper; and about thirty years later M. d'Arlincourt produced much the same results with apparatus which was tested at the General Post-Office. Mr Greville-Williams has designed a more perfect instrument, and he has at his disposal photographs cut up into the necessary dot and line; but in other respects he seems to have called into play mechanism of the same type as that previously used for the same purpose.

AT THE MAKING OF CANADA.

An article appeared in the January part of *Chambers's Journal* entitled, 'At the Making of Canada,' by Isabella Fyvie Mayo. The suggestion towards writing the article came from the perusal of a Canadian work—*In the Days of the Canada*

Company (Briggs, Toronto)—by the Misses Lizars, in which the doings of the Canadian pioneers are set down at length. Mrs Mayo, however, having been twice in Canada, was able to impart local colour to her paper from personal experience, and otherwise she utilised the fruits of wide reading and knowledge of her theme. From all these sources the matter was gathered, digested, and set down in readable form.

Exigencies of space required some slight curtailment of this article; and, unfortunately, in the deletions made by the Editor, Mrs Mayo's reference to the book *In the Days of the Canada Company* was removed. The Editor can only now express regret that this unintentional injustice was done to the Misses Lizars, and to Mrs Mayo, who had duly acknowledged her indebtedness to their volume.

LONDON TREE-GHOSTS.

THERE are many shadows in the 'stony-hearted stepmother,' which is De Quincey's phrase for London, and why not those of the vanished trees? She is a stepmother to most aspirants, yet with a fascination of her own generation which is centripetal. Tradition, legend, romance, history, and tragedy pervade her every street, so many centuries old; but the American or the exploring provincial knows a hundred times more about them than the average modern Londoner, whose ignorance of his own mighty city is only equalled by his familiarity with its modern up-to-date ephemeralisms. If that satisfies him, why should the student-Londoner do more than shrug his shoulders?

But to him who has perused the story of the mighty and ancient city — more continuous in its political and social history than any other European capital — there are innumerable ghosts in London, who pleasantly haunt him day and night, and make him never less alone than when alone. Among these — and perhaps less chronicled than any — are those of the trees. In one of his letters Lord Beaconsfield says that one grows weary at last of mountains and lakes, however grand, but that the woodland never loses its charm. So to us, who love to conjure up in our mind's eye the vanished aspect of some of the most crowded parts of the huge 'province covered with houses,' the ghosts of the woodland equally delight the memory.

London's tree-ghosts are many. They haunt some of the places where the roar and rush of traffic would seem to banish any echo of the past. Look, for instance, at St Martin's Lane—the name itself suggests a backward flight over five hundred years to the piety and rusticity which marked the common life around the little city of London; and there, despite its modern aggregate of noise and prose, the tree-ghosts loom stately to the eye that can perceive them. The pleasant country lane of the Tudor days, yet even then encroached upon by buildings, winds before us. The placid charm of the garden and vine is there, in addition to the dignity of immemorial elms. Even so late as the middle of last century the former associations were facts, though the hedgerows and these towering trees had vanished. 'Rainyday' Smith, in his *Life of Nollekens*—a storehouse of London tradition—tells us that No. 96 in the lane had been famous in that century for its ample garden, which contained vines from whose grapes a pipe of wine had been annually made for many years by the mother of the writer's informant. And in yet more crowded and prosaic Clerkenwell there is a spot, long built over, but known locally, for the same reason, as 'The Vineyard.'

Many ghosts haunt Smithfield, such as loom large in history, and whose memoirs are inextricably woven in the story of England. Of these it were the task of genius alone to adequately speak. But we may, in humble guise, choose as our theme the arboreal shades which the mind's eye can perceive where that of the body but sees gigantic meat-markets filled by jostling thousands on Saturday evenings. Here stood for centuries at the northern end immemorial elms of grimmest memories. For the elm was in our distant forefathers' days the favourite natural gibbet. The associations of the past and present are thus gloomy—save for the cheery cawing of the rooks, who love it as a nesting-place. Many an unhappy victim was hanged on those elms, the most illustrious of whom was William Wallace, shamefully done to death. Elms, however, in our London arboreal ghostland there are whose history is not tinged with tragedy. Such are those which ran in a double line from Balmes House, outside Hoxton—its site is now a street—and so made a charming entrance to the then pretty village, which, in its toiling, crowded, and squalid aspect, now owes such romance as it possesses of the present to Sir Walter Besant's magic pen, who paints it in his usual photographic fashion in his *Children of Gibeon*.

Some of those elms which adorned the estate of Sir George Whitmore—whose name survives in the road in which they stood—were blown down in a great gale in the last century, and the fact was accounted important enough to be chronicled in the periodical literature of the day.

Then west, in palatial club-land, are the shades of the elms in Pall Mall, and east in Finsbury Square those of the trees under which its citizens were wont to walk in the summer evenings in the fields which opened on the country. Still farther eastward, in Houndsditch—of which the name is sufficient to those who know their London as an antithesis—were 'fine hedgerows of elms and pleasant fields very commodious,' which Stow mentions as flourishing forty years before his date—1603. If the dryads of the elms wander round their past dwelling-places, how specially poignant must be their feelings in Houndsditch!

Wander we down Drury Lane into the Strand, discarding even such popular memories of the vanished centuries as the early career of the world-known theatre and Nell Gwynn, standing, as Pepys saw her, on May Day watching the Strand revelries, and let us look for another tree's shadowy presentment amid the sordid crowd of thickly-tenanted houses full of the pathos of toil and poverty. A quest unlikely, one would think, to be rewarded with success. Yet one of our ghosts is here, and could, were it able to emulate Tennyson's talking oak, far surpass that veteran's recollections. For just where the narrow row of houses known as Little Drury Lane commences—some of which reveal the aspect of the Stuart days as vividly as does *The Fortunes of Nigel*—stood a magnificent elm which was opposite an ancient inn known as 'The Crown.' A tree this was which had seen many generations and episodes when north of Holborn ran the fields, when Drury Lane was a fashionable locality, and my Lord Craven's drums woke its echoes from his splendid house—a tree which, like the hostelry opposite it, figured in the social London life of the day. On the other side of the Strand, dull and respectable Craven Street, without a green leaf, is haunted by similar ghosts—those of the stately row of trees which in Queen Anne's day ran downwards to the Thames, and under which the couples wandered in April's ivory moonlight to take boat on the then silvery river.

The roar and din of Fleet Street, the centre where throbs the mighty journalism which shapes the opinions and flashes news from every corner of the earth for the millions of the English-speaking race, would seem sufficient to banish any memory of boughs or leaves, or the peaceful placidity of arboreal life. Yet to those who can see it alike by day and equally busy night—for Fleet Street never sleeps—the shade of one famous tree is imperishable. In Wine Office Court—where Goldsmith lodged when Johnson, hurriedly summoned, went after sending a guinea in advance, and finding the poet arrested at his landlady's suit, but with the guinea changed and a bottle of Madeira its result, put the cork in the bottle, and took the MS. of the *Vicar of Wakefield* to sell to the publisher—was a fig-tree with a curious history. Early in the reign of George the Third it was planted by the Reverend Mr Barnes, the Lecturer of St Bude's, where Lovelace, of

> I could not love thee, dear, so much
> Loved I not honour more!

fame lies entombed. The slip was cut from a yet more ancient fig-tree growing opposite a house to which it gave the sign in Fleet Street. This fig-tree flourished in Wine Office Court till 1820, when it was struck by lightning; but it is said that from its slips many trees in various parts of the country have sprung. What a compendium of history, foreign and domestic, in those crowded years does not that vanished Fleet Street fig-tree represent! And all round the crowded purlieus of the vast Midland Railway's terminus there are many tree-ghosts fitly associated with the days of Leigh Hunt, when Somers Town was charmingly rural and the dwelling-place of many remarkable men who loved its flowers, trees, and gardens.

SWEET ROSE.

Sweet rose, awaking to the light,
Into this fair world born
A little folded bud at night,
A flower at break of morn!
Yet thou a tiny tear of dew
Within thy heart dost bear,
Though earth is glad and life is new,
And thou art sweet and fair!

Sweet rose, unfold thy heart and shed
Thy perfume wider yet;
Though soon the summer hours are fled,
Thy fate, sweet rose, forget!
With fragrance all the garden fill,
That those who pass and see
Shall deem the bright world brighter still
Because of it and thee!

Sweet rose, God made thee fair to take
Thy tiny place and part,
To soothe some spirit like to break,
To cheer some burdened heart.
Weep not for aught that fate may send,
But, ere thy day is spent,
Live out thy life unto its end,
Then die and sleep content!

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE CURSE OF MUNGI.

BY HERBERT C. MACILWAINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE November rains were late, and the earth was showing its naked ribs along the creek-frontages of the tidy Crannoch cattle-run that lay, with its six hundred miles of sound cattle-country, snugly packed away about the headwaters of the Tracy River. Donald M'Cunn, hard-bitten pioneer of the older days, now man of substance, had been well used this many a year to see his station by mid-November knee-deep in lush pasture and glowing within its boundaries like an emerald. Crannoch was far enough to the west of Queensland to grow pasture of the fattening qualities of Mitchell grass, or of maize itself for the matter of that, and yet near enough to the sea to be saved as a general thing from the full horrors of drought. Added to this, the craggy hills that flanked its eastern end served the old squatter as guardian angels. They were his mighty rain-gatherers; for when, in the spring, the thundering cloud-battalions were marshalled in from the westward, and in late summer when the ocean sent its yearly message of mercy from the east, then always the gray old hills that sentinelled Crannoch would demand their toll, and get it in the shape of rain for the old Scotsman's run. 'As green as the paddocks of Crannoch' came to be a local saw—for once a true one.

Donald M'Cunn, however, not altogether singular among his race perhaps, was more of an expert in matters theological than meteorological; and he gave thanks for Heaven's largess after his own bent. He was given to quoting, with a species of aggressive humility peculiarly his own, selected Bible texts by way of demonstrating to less favoured squatters on suitable occasions that their drought-bitten paddocks and his green ones were manifestly the handiwork of that special Providence that makes a note of the sternly pure of heart in this wicked world, and dispenses its mercies accordingly. Thus, amongst his easy-going neighbours, M'Cunn—dour, steadfast, solvent, and sanctimonious—was hardly looked upon in the light of a boon-companion.

And now Providence appeared to have broken faith with the master of Crannoch, and, unmindful of the past, had turned a hard, reproving eye upon it. There was none of your Job-like humility about M'Cunn. How should there be about a man whose fathers in the good old days had rummaged the Scriptures from end to end for congenial guiding principles in the shape of flinty and fiery texts that should bite, turn and turn about with their own stout claymores, the hearts and heads of unbelieving enemies?

No: Donald M'Cunn sat by his bare table of cypress-pine in righteous bitterness against the world and the elements that encompassed it, and was persuaded that both and all had betrayed him. The open door at his back, that framed a patch of desolation, made up of burning sand-ridge and naked glistering river gums, and the doorway in front of him, that led to the kitchen across the footworn gangway, both gaped like thirsty mouths in the thrice-parched, blistering air, and not the faintest flutter of a draught stirred between them. Now and then a high-hung, sulky cloud, more like a wreath of smoke than of water-born moisture, would drift across the sun, and, as it passed, the iron on the roof would creep and shudder in the lowered temperature as if a flight of unholy things—drought-demons, maybe—were scampering across the metal with set claws; then the cloud would pass and the demons would make a return-charge. These mocking signs had trailed across the blazing heavens in weird procession throughout the last month, and yet rain seemed farther off than ever.

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M'Cunn's elbows were planted firmly upon the table, and he held two tanned and knotted fists planted against his high cheek-bones; the sweat welled out upon him, filling the sharp furrows that patterned his forehead, rayed the corners of his stone-gray eyes, and drew two deep, hard lines of obstinacy at either end of the straight-drawn, thin-lipped mouth. A fringe of grizzled beard and a hood of erect and defiant hair framed the whole stern face. A well-thumbed Bible was at his right elbow; beneath his eyes lay a map of Crannoch and its surrounding runs; a crumpled copy of the local newspaper was on his left. Donald M'Cunn was in a black and bitter mood. A drop of dusty sweat fell with a distinct smack from the stubbly beard upon the map, and lighted on the central block of the station that neighboured Crannoch on the east. He angrily smeared the offending moisture with a big rough finger over a couple of hundred miles of country, and broke his silence, staring out vindictively across the kitchen gangway.

'You might have thocht that a God-fea-r-ring, sober man 'ud had enough to thole in seeing his cattle, the pride of his life and his years, dying for the want of nourishment, Hannah?'

A girl who lay in a cane chair behind the squatter—a woman rather, formed, as to face, body, and limbs, on stately and yet homely lines—raised her eyes from a book upon her knees and looked somewhat indifferently at her father's back, stretching both arms above her. She knit her large hands behind her head and leaned it back against them without answering.

The squatter's eyes grew harder, and he kept them accusingly on the staring sunshine without. 'You dinna answer, Hannah! Ah! more and m-o-ore I've obsairved of late that your father's troubles are little—ay, little, and growing noticeably less—to you.' There was an increasing skirl in his voice, as though a grievance and a pretext for anger were entirely seasonable to his humour.

The tall girl said, in a motherly contralto tuned by nature to carry comfort where comfort was possible, and as if a minor matter had been opened up for discussion: 'The rain'll come, father, for sure. And what's the fresh trouble?'

'The rain—hech! And lo! a prophet has come forth.' He spoke acridly, then banged the crumpled newspaper noisily with his open hand. 'And look how ye prove my worrds to me. Hev ye forgotten so soon what I read to ye out of here a shorrt hour ago? Is there not trouble full measure in that?'

'Eh?' she answered, still placidly; 'that a successor to that poor Mr Baynton is coming to work Mungi? Is it troubled you are, father, that your neighbours are coming by their own again?'

Mungi was the neighbouring run on the plan of which the squatter's sweat-drop had fallen, giving words to his wrath.

'Their own, their own!' he shouted, still not turning, and he shook his fist at the blinding sunlight outside; 'theirs—that should be mine! Have I not told you, girl, for years, that, morally and speeritually, before the Lorrd, I was robbed of that block o' lan'?' And the dry passion of earth-hunger—the bloodless lust as deep as the craving for gold or drink—scowled beneath his bushy black eyebrows as he spoke.

The girl, still leaning her head against the interwoven fingers, looked with a broad pity, not unmixed with something of large scornfulness in her big gray eyes, at her father's moist shirt and erect thatch of grizzled hair, and said nothing.

'Ay,' he went on, with gathering bitterness, 'the land that I wanted to complete the Crannoch run was taken up by stealth; it was like the worrk of a thief in the dead of night. And didna the Lorrd set the seal of His disapproval on the home at Mungi there from the day of its building? Didna the pleuro ravage his cattle; and from the day his wife died in childbirth'—the cane chair creaked as the girl moved uneasily in it, but the old man went on relentlessly—'from that day was there an hour's happiness for Baynton when the drink laid hold of him till they found him lying across his own doorstep with his'——

'Father!' She had risen and was standing behind him with a long, sunburned hand on each of his shoulders.

He went on without heeding her. 'E-c-c-h, since yon time two-an'-twenty year syne, that I hurried to the Lands Office in Brisbane and found he had been before me, and taken up the Mungi blocks, and since I stood and—— Na, na'—he raised a shaking hand—'I didna currse him; but I called on God to gi'e the both of us just measure according to our desairts before Him. I did that. And He judged between us, and sent a blight upon that house, so that not one stone'—— He broke off with a dry chuckle, remembering, apparently, that the scriptural imagery hardly applied to a house built of wooden slabs. His laugh was the laugh of a man who has known vengeance and is at work to cheat himself into the belief that the taste of it is sweet and not like ashes in the mouth.

The girl's hands had fallen to her side. 'Father,' she said, as if unwillingly, 'I—where is the humility that you urge upon other folk?'

'Humeelity!' he roared; but still he did not turn to face her. 'You dare to, you, you'—— and he closed his teeth with a snap. 'Humeelity,' he expounded, with a kind of savage mildness, 'is for them that feel the weight of the Lorrd's hand upon them. But to them that sairve Him all their days it is permitted to rejoice when they perceive that it is His pleasure to humble their enemies in the dust before them.'

Apparently the humorous aspect of this jumbling together of greed with creed on the part of the

old man was not entirely lost upon the girl, for the wryness that it brought to her face was tempered by a patient smile. Again she remained silent.

M'Cunn began to fold up his map violently, waxing the bitterer for want of open opposition. 'Mind me, Hannah, there's a blight upon that house—the currse that goes wi' ill-gotten goods. It killed the wife and child, and blasted the herrd, and drave Baynton to shed his ain blood upon his ain doorstep. An' lay this to your heart'—he squeezed a knotted fist on the folded map—'whosoever comes to Mungi, they're strangers to us, an' us to them, for the wrath of Almighty God is upon them, and we dinna want the canker to spread among us here.'

This quaint exposition of the economic aspect of spiritual matters again made Hannah mix tolerance with her frown.

'You hear?' M'Cunn said fiercely, spinning round in his seat at last, and facing her as she stood back from and above him, with her arms folded beneath the rounded softness of her breast.

Under her steady look the father wilted oddly; it was easy to see now why he had checked his impulse to turn upon her before. Donald M'Cunn in his soul feared the daughter that stood above him like a bush-goddess. The sting was gone from his anger suddenly, leaving it merely futile; and though he sought with extra vehemence to enforce his command by repeating it many times and rapping noisily on the table with his great knuckles, one could see that it rested solely with the tall girl as to whether she heeded him or not.

She said steadily: 'I hear you, father—I hear you; and I'll heed you to the letter'—she paused—'while I live beneath your roof.'

He brightened, almost humbly, as if he were a grateful suppliant instead of the hectoring parent of a moment ago. 'Eh, there now,' he fawned, 'the good lassie!'

'You heard my words, father?'

'Ay, ay, I heard you.'

'While I eat your bread'——

'Ay, ay,' he said blankly; he fingered senilely at his lean jaws, looking up furtively; and it was plain to see that strife was going on within him between tenderness and wrath. A hand he had raised towards her paused midway. The contest in M'Cunn ended in a compromise; he withdrew the hand and scratched the stubble on his cheek raspingly with a forefinger. 'Mebbe you'll see to the denner, Hannah?' he said.

Hannah went out to the kitchen, showing in her walk the strength of a savage, the free grace of glowing health, and the dignity of one of Nature's appointed queens. The old squatter, struck with a rare fit of abstraction, watched the girl go out, and sat looking long at the empty doorway; his straight lips fell apart, and the graven lines about his mouth took on a kindlier look, as though the spring that braced his jaws together had been suddenly eased. But he soon came to himself with a start, said 'Hoots,' shut his mouth as if the spring had been restored to its office, and scowled about him, uttering a deep, long-drawn 'H—m, h—m!' then rose to his feet and made to hurry from the room. But he stopped before the cane chair, where the cushion still showed the faint mould of Hannah's body, and where her book was lying open and face downwards. He stooped to peer suspiciously at the title, and, looking up to the iron roof and shaking both hands above his head like a prophet of woe, he repeated it in a half-whisper: '*Their Father's Sins.*'

THE GOLDEN KOOTENAYS IN 1898.

WHEN the Klondike gold-fever spread to the Old Country, the writer of this article was amongst the earliest upon whom the epidemic laid hold. The news of the great 'strikes' in the far North-west was sufficient to once more arouse to action the instincts of the old prospector, then living quietly in England, after many years spent upon Australian gold-fields.

In less than a fortnight the writer was crossing the Atlantic, *en route* for the new Eldorado. Coming across Canada, upon the Canadian Pacific Railway, were many mining men; and, as the result of conversations held during the long journey westward, the writer decided to winter in the Kootenays, and to continue the journey to Klondike in the spring.

The geographical position of the Yukon country is by this time well known to most people; but there are many who will not have a like knowledge of the locality of the 'Golden Kootenays.' In endeavouring to enlighten the reader upon this point, and also to bring into more deserving prominence the resources and wealth of this little-known portion of the Dominion, the writer is actuated by the desire to 'switch off,' if possible, some of the human current which is flowing Klondikewards into what will probably prove a far more profitable channel, and one in which fewer obstacles will be encountered.

Scattered over the Kootenays are many prosperous mining towns and camps, the principal of which is Rossland, in the Trail Creek mining division of Western Kootenay. We will confine our attention chiefly to this dis-

trict, as it is here that some of the most remarkable developments have been, and are, taking place.

Little more than three years ago the present site of Rossland was covered with forest, the haunt of the puma and the bear. Here and there, in the surrounding mountains, were the camps of the mining pioneers, to whose adventurous researches the present prosperity of the district is due.

Rossland is now an incorporated city of 7000 inhabitants, with churches, schools, hospital, banks, electric light, newspapers, &c.; and the energetic and successful development of the rich gold-mines in the surrounding mountains bids fair to make the city one of the most promising in British Columbia.

As the town is situated at an altitude of 3325 feet, the weather in winter is somewhat cold, but on account of the extreme dryness of the atmosphere, little discomfort is felt. The temperature seldom falls many degrees below zero, while in July and August the thermometer often reaches the nineties. There are several feet of snow in the winter, when sleighing takes the place of wheel-traffic; but once the snow becomes packed down and solid, pedestrians feel but little inconvenience. Two lines of railway serpentine their way up the mountain-sides, making Rossland their terminal point. One line runs from the United States (the boundary-line of which country is but a few miles distant), where it has connections with the great American trunk lines to all parts of the States. The other railway is connected with the great Canadian Pacific Railway system, *vid* Robson on the Columbia River, reaching Rossland through Trail, a 'smelting' town.

The population of Rossland is principally composed of Americans and Canadians, and one meets but few who actually hail from the United Kingdom. One of the most striking features of the place is the almost entire absence of rowdyism of any kind. In a Western mining town one expects to hear of shooting affrays and mob law; such, however, is not the case in Rossland. In this respect it shows a marked contrast with the American mining towns, where shooting is common and the law lenient.

Immediately surrounding the town are some of the richest gold-mines in the Kootenays, from which in the near future an immense output of gold may be expected. The following figures will give the reader some idea of the great developments which have recently taken place.

During 1897 the total output of the Kootenay mines was 8,136,696 dollars, or considerably more than the entire yield of all the lode-mines of British Columbia for the ten previous years. This yield speaks volumes, when it is considered that most of the mines are as yet only partially developed. Taking the 'Trail Creek' mining division alone, one finds that the output for last year was 150 per cent. more than the product of 1896, and 330 per cent. more than that of 1895.

The following figures will serve to show the richness of the gold-bearing ores mined round Rossland.

Taking the famous 'Le Roi' mine alone, we find that, during 1897, 57,437 tons of ore produced gold to the value of 2,125,169 dollars, and copper to the value of 344,622 dollars. This shows a value of 37 dollars per ton in gold and six dollars in copper, or a total of 43 dollars per ton.

During the year 1897, dividends to the value of 425,000 dollars were paid by this company, the shareholders in which are mostly Americans.

Until quite recently the interests held by British investors in the district were comparatively small, but it is encouraging to find that British money is beginning to flow in this direction. The writer has never in any other country witnessed developments which promised such rich and enduring returns for well-directed outlay. The element of chance, which is always more or less a factor in metalliferous mining, seems here to be reduced to a minimum, and the ever-increasing prosperity appears to be built upon a solid and enduring foundation.

The present year will probably witness some of the most remarkable and successful mineral developments the world has ever seen. These mountains and valleys are, day by day, yielding up more and more of their immense riches. It is only the miner or mineralogist who has actually visited the Kootenays who can form an adequate idea of their mineral wealth. Gold, silver, copper, and lead occur here in great fissure-veins, with quartz and iron-pyrites.

Although 'free gold' and 'placer' are found in considerable quantities, yet here in the Kootenays they are mostly found in sulphide combinations; this necessitates smelting, thus creating an industry in which are other promising openings for the capitalist, and in which a large number of people obtain employment.

Some seven miles from Rossland is the town of Trail, situated on the banks of the Columbia River. Here is a large smelter, which is connected by railway with Rossland and other mining centres. Some hundreds of men find employment here at wages ranging from two to five dollars a day. There are several other smelters in the Kootenays, and this industry bids fair to assume large proportions in the near future.

The Klondike gold excitement will greatly assist in drawing attention to this part of British Columbia, and doubtless many of the thousands who will be disappointed in the frozen north will eventually find their way to this district, where they will encounter fewer difficulties and meet with many opportunities for the profitable employment of brain and muscle.

The forests abound with game, and it is no uncommon sight to see deer and bear meat hang-

ing in the butcher's shop. Everywhere are creeks and rivers teeming with fish; in fact, a Winchester rifle and a fishing-rod furnish both good sport and are most useful for replenishing the larder.

There are many openings in the Kootenays for the speculator and the small capitalist; especially are there great possibilities for the poor man, the artisan, or the young fellow who is not too 'big' to take off his coat for three dollars a day. Employment here, as elsewhere, has to be sought; but few would arrive here without enough money in their pockets to live upon whilst seeking work. Competent miners receive from three to three and a half dollars a day, and ordinary unskilled labourers from two to three dollars a day.

If a man lives in his own 'cabin' he can live very well on half a dollar a day, so it is evident that the careful man can soon save money.

There is little or no demand for clerks or shopmen; but any one able and strong enough to do arduous manual work can soon obtain an opening at rates which will enable him to put by some money. Introductions, unless especially strong, are likely to be of little use; but the new arrival who comes furnished with enough means to look round for employment will find that he can get on very well without them. There are no openings for idlers; but for any one who is not absolutely destitute there are good chances to be met with for the seeking.

In conclusion, the writer may add that his affections are weaned from Klondike, and set upon the great possibilities of the 'Golden Kootenays.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—HOW THREE MEN HELD A TOWN IN TERROR.

IT was towards evening—a dark November evening—that we came near the little town of Biggar. The place lies on a sandy bank raised from the wide moss which extends for miles by the edge of the sluggish stream. It is a black, desolate spot, where whaups and snipe whistle in the back streets, and a lane which begins from the causeway may end in a pool of dark moss-water. But the street is marvellous broad; and there, at the tail of the autumn, is held one of the greatest fairs in the Lowlands of Scotland, whither hawkers and tinkers come in hordes, not to speak of serving-men and serving-lasses who seek hire. For three days the thing goes on, and for racket and babble it is unmatched in the country-side.

We halted before the entrance to the town, on a square of dry ground in the midst of the waterway. I know not how many the gipsies were, but with women and children they were not less in number than ninety or a hundred. They had with them a great quantity of gear of all kinds, and their animals were infinite. Forby their horses and asses, they had dogs and fowls and many tamed birds, which travelled in their company. It is a trait of these strange people that they must ever have something on which to expend their affection; and while the women have their children, the men have their pets. The most grim and quarrelsome tinker will tend some beast or bird, and share with it his last meal.

When the camp was made, the fire lit, and the evening meal prepared, the men got out their violins and bagpipes, and set themselves to enliven the night with music. There, in the clear space in front of the fire, they danced to the tunes with great glee and skill. I sat beside the captain and watched the picture, and in very truth it was a pleasing one. The men, as I have said, were for the most part lithe and tall, and they danced with grace. The gipsy women after the age of twenty grow too harsh-featured for beauty and too manly in stature for elegance. But before that age they are uniformly pretty. The free open-air life and the healthy fare make them strong in body and extraordinarily graceful in movement. Their well-formed features, their keen laughing black eyes, their rich complexions, and, above all, their masses of coal-black hair become them choicely well. So, there in the ruddy firelight, they danced to the quavering music, and peace for once in a while lay among them.

Meanwhile I sat apart with William Baillie, and talked of many things. He filled for me a pipe of tobacco, and I essayed a practice which I had often heard of before, but never made trial of. I found it very soothing, and we sat there in the bield of the tent and discoursed of our several wanderings. I heard from him wild tales of doings in the hills from the Pentlands to the Cumberland fells, for his habits took him far and wide in the country. He told all with the greatest indifference, affecting the air of an ancient Stoic, to whom all things, good and evil alike, were the same. Every now and then he would break in with a piece of moralising, which he delivered with complete gravity, but which seemed to me matter for laughter, coming as it did after some racy narrative of how he vanquished Moss Marshall at the sheiling of Kippertree or cheated the alewife at Newbigging out of her score.

On the morrow all went off to the fair save

myself, and I was left with the children and the dogs. The captain had judged it better that I should stay, since there would be folk there from around Barns and Dawyck, who might penetrate my disguise and spread the tidings. So I stayed at home and pondered over many things, notably my present predicament. I thought of all my old hopes and plans—to be a scholar and a gentleman of spirit; to look well to my lands, and have a great name in the country-side; to study and make books; maybe even to engage in parliament and State business. And what did I now? Travelling in disguise among tinkers, a branded man, with my love and my lands in danger—nay, all but lost. It was this accursed thought that made the bitterest part of my wanderings.

I was in such a mood when a servant came from a farmhouse near to get one of the gipsies to come and mend the kitchen-pot. As I was the only one left, there was nothing for it but to go. The adventure cheered me, for its whimsicality made me laugh, and laughter is the best antidote to despair. But I fared very badly, for when I tried my 'prentice hand at the pot, I was so manifestly incapable that the goodwife drove me from the place, calling me an idle sorner and a lazy vagabond, and many other well-deserved names. I returned to the camp with my ears still ringing from her cuff, but in a more wholesome temper of mind.

The greater part of the others returned at the darkening, most with well-filled pockets, though I fear it was not all come by honestly; and a special feast was prepared. That gipsy meal was of the strangest yet most excellent quality. There was a savoury soup made of all kinds of stewed game and poultry, and after that the flesh of pigs and game roasted and broiled. There was no seasoning to the food save a kind of very bitter vinegar; for these people care little for salt or any condiment.

The meal was over, and I was thinking of lying down for the night, when William Baillie came back. I noted in the firelight that his face was black with anger. I heard him speak to several of his men, and his tone was that of one who was mastering some passion. By-and-by he came to where I sat and lay down beside me.

'Do you wish to pleasure me?' he said shortly.

'Why, yes,' I answered; 'you have saved my life, and I would do all in my power to oblige you, though I fear that just now my power is little.'

'It's a' I want,' said he, leaving his more correct speech for the broad Scots of the country-side. 'Listen, and I'll tell ye what happened the day at the fair. We tinker-folk gaed aboot our business, daein' ill to nane, and behavin' like dacent, peaceable, quiet-mainnered men and women. The place was in a gey steer, for a heap o' wast-country trash was there frae the backs o' Straven and Douglasdale, and since a' the godly and reputable folk thereaways ha'e ta'en to the hills, nane but the rabble are left. So we were gaun on canny, sellin' our bits o' things and daein' our bits o' jobs, while the drucken folk were dancin' and cairryin' on at the ither end. By-and-by doun the fair came a drucken gairdener, one John Cree. I ken him weel, a fosy, black-hertit scoondrel as ever I saw. My wife, whom you ken—for it was her that lookit after ye when ye were sick—was standin' at the side when the man sees her. He comes up to her wi' his leerin', blackguirdly face, and misca's her for a tinkler and a' that was bad, as if the warst in our tribe wasna better than him.

'Mary, she stands back, and bids him get out or she wad learn him mainners.

'But he wadna take a tellin'. "Oh ho, my bawbee joe," says he, "ye 're braw and high the day. Whae are ye to despise an honest man? A wheen tinkler doxies!" And he took up a stane and struck her on the face.

'At this a' our folk were for puttin' an end to him there and then. But I keepit them back and bade them let the drucken fule be. Syne he gaed awa; but the folk o' the fair took him up, and we 've got nocht but ill-words and ill-tongue a' day. But they 'll pay for it the morn!' And the captain looked long and fiercely into the embers.

'I ha'e a plan,' said he after a little; 'and, Master Burnet, I want ye to help me. The folk o' the fair are just a wheen scum and riddlings. There are three o' us here, proper men—you and myself and my son Matthew. If ye will agree to it, we three will mount horse the morn, clear oot that fair, and frichten the folk o' Biggar for the next twalmonth.'

'What would you do?' said I.

'I ha'e three suits,' he said, 'o' guid crimson cloth, which I got frae my grandfather, and have never worn. I have three braw horses, which cam' oot o' England three year syne. If the three o' us mount and ride through the fair, there will be sic a scattering as was never heard tell o' afore i' the auld, toun. And if that gairdener-body doesna gang wud wi' fricht, my name 's no' William Baillie.'

Now, I do not know what madness prompted me to join in this freak. For certain, it was a most unbecoming thing for a man of birth to be perched on horseback in the company of two reckless tinkers, to break the king's peace and terrify his Majesty's lieges of Biggar. But a dare-devil spirit—the recoil from the morning's despondency—now held me. Besides, the romance of the thing took me captive; it was as well that a man should play all the parts he could in the world; and to my foolish mind it seemed a fine thing that one who was a man of birth and learning should not scruple to cast in his lot with the rough gipsies.

So I agreed readily enough, and soon after went to sleep with weariness, and knew nothing till the stormy dawn woke the camp.

Then the three of us dressed in the crimson suits, and monstrously fine we looked. The day was dull, cloudy, and with a threat of snow; and the massing of clouds which we had noticed the day before was now a thousandfold greater. We trotted out over the green borders of the bog to the town, where the riot and hilarity were audible. The sight of the three to any chance spectator must have been fearsome beyond the common. William Baillie, not to speak of his great height and strange dress, had long black hair, which hung far below his shoulders; and his scarlet hat and plume made him look like the devil in person. Matthew, his son, was somewhat smaller, but broad and sinewy; and he sat his horse with an admirable grace. As for myself, my face was tanned with sun and air and the gipsy dye; my hair hung loosely on my shoulders in the fashion I have always worn it; and I could sit a horse with the best of them.

When we came near the head of the street we halted and consulted. The captain bade us obey him in all, follow wherever he went, and, above all, let no word come from our mouth. Then we turned up our sleeves above the elbows, drew our swords, and rode into the town.

At the first sight of the three strange men who rode abreast, a great cry of amazement arose, and the miscellaneous rabble was hushed. Then in a voice of thunder the captain cried out that they had despised the gipsies the day before, and that now was the time of revenge. Suiting the action to the word, he held his naked sword before him, and we followed at a canter.

I have never seen so complete a rout in my life. Stalls, booths, and tables were overturned, and the crowd flew wildly in all directions. The others of the tribe, who had come to see the show, looked on from the back, and to the terrified people seemed like fresh assailants. I have never heard such a hubbub as rose from the fleeing men and screaming women. Farmers, country-folk, and ploughmen mingled with fat burgesses and the craftsmen of the town in one wild rush for safety. And yet we touched no one, but kept on our way to the foot of the street, with our drawn swords held stark upright in our hands. Then we turned and came back; and lo! the great fair was empty, and wild, fearful faces looked at us from window and lane.

Then on our second ride appeared at the church gate the minister of the parish, a valiant man, who bade us halt.

'Stop,' said he, 'you men of blood, and cease from disturbing the town, or I will have you all clapped in the stocks for a week.'

Then the captain spoke up, and told him of the wrong and insult of the day before.

At this the worthy man looked grave. 'Go back to your place,' he said, 'and it shall be seen to. I am wae that the folk of this town, who have the benefit of my ministrations, set no better example to puir heathen Egyptians. But give up the quarrel at my bidding. "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay," saith the Lord.'

'But haply, sir,' said I, 'as Augustine saith, we may be the Lord's executors.' And with this we turned and rode off, leaving the man staring in open-mouthed wonder.

STRENGTH:

SOME ENDEAVOURS TO ATTAIN AND RETAIN IT.

ANY one telling us in a satisfactory manner how to get strong and remain so would be morally certain of fame and fortune and a kind of earthly immortality. This is what all seek but very few find; and there is always so much in heredity and environment; much also in ways of living, for every day we witness persons spending fortunes in gradually ruining their health, and others fortunes in vainly trying to regain what they have lost—indeed, the millions spent in the endeavour to regain health are quite beyond human calculation. So are the remedies; for every disease, almost without exception, save the Last Enemy, has its alleviation at least, if not its cure, in these enlightened days. According to Voltaire, every one wishes to live long, and nobody wishes to be old; but few will pay the price demanded. Care killed a cat; therefore work as hard as you like, but do not worry. Never give in; battle to the last, said Sir Andrew Clark. Sir Isaac Holden, who died at the age of ninety, preached and practised open-air exercise, method, and a mild kind of vegetarianism. So did Sir Isaac Pitman, the apostle of shorthand, who was eighty-four when he died. Both had been very hard workers from youth till past middle age. So was Lord Armstrong, founder of the Elswick Works, who has had abundant hobbies and inventions always on hand; he was born in 1810, and confesses to having only indulged in a plain and wholesome diet. No man of this generation lived a more useful life than the late George Müller of Bristol, who died in his ninety-third year, yet in his youth he was threatened with consumption, and always had a weak digestion.

To return to Sir Isaac Holden. Even in later life he walked his seven or eight miles a day, in all weathers and in both town and country. At first a puny, unthriving child, he was forced to be regular and temperate. When he became book-keeper and manager at Cullingworth he stipulated with his employers that he should have two hours for open-air exercise every forenoon. This was part of his health programme. 'I know,' he said, 'innumerable cases of men who started with a constitution twice as strong as mine. They had no stomachs. I had a stomach, and was obliged to take care.'

And he did take care, and humoured his stomach in this way. He would take for breakfast one baked apple, one orange, twenty grapes, and a biscuit made from banana flour, of the virtues of which we have something to say farther on. His midday meal consisted of about three ounces of beef or mutton, with now and again a half-cupful of soup. If he took a little fish, he took so much less of meat. His diet at supper was practically a repetition of breakfast. It was a belief probably gained from Buchan's *Domestic Medicine* or Wesley's *Journal*, upon which he acted, that after the system had been built up, and the period of manhood reached, all starchy foods should be banished from the diet. Once, when complimented on the success of his methods of living, he explained: 'Some people imagine it to be my ambition to live to a great age. That is not exactly my object; but I do desire, so long as I am spared, to retain my senses, and to avoid the miseries and infirmities that so often accompany a carelessly regulated old age.'

'We eat too much,' says Dr Keith, who, in his *Plea for a Simpler Life*, seems to many the apologist for semi-starvation. When he reached seventy Oliver Wendell Holmes was as cheerful, if not quite as active, as ever, and he began with his trained doctor's mind and accurate observation to mark the on-coming of old age. In his old age Arthur Young, writer on agriculture, rose at 4 A.M. and walked till up to the neck in his garden pond!

There was some nonsense as well as wit and good sense in Charles Lamb's reply to his friend Bernard Barton, who sent him a complaining letter about his health. Lamb recommended Barton to keep himself as ignorant as the world was before Galen of the entire inner constitution of the animal man. He was to be unconscious of a midriff, and to hold kidneys, save of sheep and swine, to be an agreeable fiction. 'For,' he said, 'once fix the seat of your disorder, and your fancies flux into it like so many bad humours.' Curiously enough this is the conclusion come to by a writer in the *Daily News* on 'How to Live Long.' We are there told that they are likely to live longest who are too much engrossed with subjects of interest to greatly concern themselves with their own personal mechanism. With physiology taught at every Board school such a state of mind is impossible, even were it desirable. The hypochondriac still consults and bores every friend he has regarding his ailments, and this very attitude of mind becomes an ailment in itself. He reads many doctors' books, and discovers symptoms of fresh troubles, especially if he is of a nervous temperament. He becomes a walking advertisement of cures which do not cure. Like the Cornish shopkeeper who sold a certain cure for coughs, and possessed a chronic cough himself, they cannot reply like him, when twitted with the remark, 'Physician, cure thyself,' that 'In me you behold a terrible example of the danger of delay: I left it too long before I took the medicine. See that you don't.'

Without going so far as a recent writer in the *Spectator*, who quotes a medical man's private utterance, that three-fourths of medicine was guess-work, we note that there has been within recent years a decided onslaught by both doctor and patient on the taking of drugs. Dr Smiles, who was a medical man before he was a book-maker, said years ago, in his first book on *Physical Education*, that the surest way to ensure health was to adopt the natural means to preserve it, by pure air, exercise, and a healthy supply of food. Children were then the victims, he thought, of a mania for medicine, and not infrequently destroyed by its too frequent use. The doctor should be a *preservator* of health rather than one who cures self-induced diseases. This has often been said since in other forms, as on 'The Use and Abuse of Medicine,' by a physician, in this *Journal*, May 5, 1849.

There is no use of running amuck against medicine, however, which is invaluable in its own place. But, like law, it is best to be independent of it, and by diet, temperance, and exercise to render it unnecessary. The remark has more than once been made: 'What untold good is done by the shiploads of oranges imported and consumed!' The same is true of apples and many other common fruits, which supplement solid food and act as correctives in keeping the system healthy. The lentil in all its forms is a strengthening and life-sustaining food. Mr H. M. Stanley has more than once acknowledged that he owes his life to banana meal. But, as imported from the West Indies, and sold at one shilling and sixpence a pound in this country, there is only a limited demand for it. 'If only,' says Mr Stanley in his *Darkest Africa*, 'the virtues of the flour were publicly known, it is not to be doubted but it would be largely consumed in Europe. During my two attacks of gastritis, a light gruel of this, mixed with milk, was the only matter that could be digested.' A letter from Mrs Stanley to the agent for the banana meal in Edinburgh relates how it had again pulled him through in June 1896.

We fancy that a good cook is sometimes as

worthy of canonisation as some of the dirty saints of antiquity, who isolated themselves from their fellow-men and did little to make the world go round. Cookery and domestic economy are rightly every-day subjects in our Board schools. Next generation should be less wasteful, and be able more widely and wisely to adapt food to the requirements of work and constitution.

Dr Thomas Oliver, physician to the Royal Infirmary, Newcastle, and Professor of Physiology in the University of Durham, some time ago read a paper at Budapest on 'The Best Diet of Toil.' He regrets, as so many have done, that tea and bread and butter have ousted milk and oatmeal porridge almost entirely from the diet of the people. He condemns the wives of many of the workers in the textile industries of Lancashire and Yorkshire as being ignorant of good cookery. Too much meat is eaten, and many nutritious vegetable food-stuffs, such as lentils, are not half-utilised. Irregular feeding of coal-miners, owing to a weekly shift of hours, leads to flatulent dyspepsia; many artisans induce this also by bolting their food. He has had practical demonstration of this in the infirmary in a *post-mortem* after a fatal accident.

Dr Oliver reminds us that the oils and fats stand first on the list as force-producers, and that these are followed by butter, cheese, oatmeal, flour, peasemeal, arrowroot, yolk of egg, sugar, bread, lean beef, potatoes, milk, and green vegetables. He gives sugar a high place as a help to the increase of muscular power—from six to thirty-nine per cent. in some instances. Sugar added to any diet greatly increases power of work and general resistance to fatigue; and he gives the testimony of Harley as to the absence of risk of diabetes. Sir Thomas Brassey found that the best navvies were teetotalers, and that where three hundred of them had to widen a gauge, and had to effect the change quickly, working night and day, a diet of oatmeal gruel was found most effective for keeping up their energy.

Dr Rabagliati of Leeds, in his recently issued book on *Air, Food, and Exercise* (1897), sets down colds, bronchitis, and cancer as the cumulative effects of excessive consumption of starchy foods, a conclusion which seems startling at first, but which is certainly worthy of serious consideration. He recommends, as Dr Keith and others have done, beginning the day with from half-a-pint to a pint of hot water an hour before breakfast. In his observation and experience, the most common and fatal habit is to eat food too often. He recommends five hours at least between meals, and if possible only two meals a day. Many men in this are a law unto themselves; and Victor Hugo, when working before breakfast, took a cup of black coffee and a raw egg, which kept up his strength without unduly withdrawing the blood from the brain.

This leads us to say something about exercise, which in the case of the busy and engrossed professional man is sometimes neglected until too late. Cycling suits some people admirably. Mr T. P. O'Connor said lately that it had made a new man of him. Golf has worked wonders with others, and every one has a favourite form of exercise. A result of exercise and good health is that it breeds cheerfulness, which is radiated upon all around. An extraordinary case of cure from nervous breakdown is that related by an American gentleman, Mr Theodore H. Mead, in his *Health without Medicine*, issued by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. He suffered from sleeplessness, shortness of breath, and two different sorts of headache. By a series of most original exercises, too elaborate to describe here, in his own chamber, and by cold bathing, he was restored to perfect health.

Count Sebastian F——, of Leghorn, has also issued a little pamphlet in which he declares that he feels quite young although in his seventy-first year. This 'apostle of physical education,' as he styles himself, describes in rhyme his daily routine of exercises. Before dressing in the morning he grooms his skin with stiff brushes until it glows. Next he hangs from a bar, drawing himself up and down ten times; then he raises himself several times by the right and left hand alone. His further evolutions, as far as we can understand him, seem to be his sitting like a miner, then raising himself repeatedly, and afterwards hopping to strengthen the sinews of the calf of the leg and thigh. Next he swings ten times between two chairs placed back to back, then he has club exercise, a race round the room, a jump over a stool, followed by a cold sponge-bath, which finishes this strange programme. He now returns to bed, takes a light breakfast, and afterwards dresses and saunters out. We are afraid some lazy people would count ten or twenty years of life dear at this price.

Perhaps the caution which Mr F. Marion Crawford, the novelist, has furnished is needed here. According to his experience, evening is the time to read, and night the time to sleep. A literary man, he believes, should take exercise, but no more than is necessary for health. 'It is vastly better,' he says, 'for the brain to rest too little than to practise athletics too much. Hard rowing, excessive walking, and running exhaust the brain as much as the body. I speak with knowledge, for I have done more physical work than most men in my time, and I do not believe it ever did me any good.' Athletics, he believes further, have been overdone in our day.

Eugene Sandow's secret of strength is now pretty much of an open secret to those who have seen his wonderful performances and read his books or the articles of the ubiquitous interviewer. *Exercise is as necessary as food* is one of his golden rules, and one he has acted upon. He lays down no hard-and-fast rules as to diet,

so long as his pupils are temperate and eat what agrees with them. He walks into his cold bath, although bathed in perspiration from some of his feats, and is not careful to dry himself much afterwards. The heat in the body soon does that when there is plenty of reaction. It might be rash in his pupils, however, to imitate him in this.

Until his tenth year, he tells us, he never knew what strength was. A visit along with his father to the sculpture galleries of Rome and Florence awakened within him an admiration of the splendidly developed sculptured figures of the athletes of old. When he returned to Königsberg it was his ambition to grow strong like them. He attended a gymnasium, and at eighteen studied anatomy. It was then he devised his system of developing the body by giving every muscle a separate movement, and he only devoted about fifteen minutes each day to his exercises. At twenty-one he had decidedly increased in strength. In 1889 he heard of the challenge which Samson was making at the Royal Aquarium, London, of £100 to the first person who should rival the feats of Cyclops, and £1000 to any one who could beat his own. Sandow came, saw, and conquered, and this was the beginning of his career as a public performer in this country and America.

Constant and persistent exercise, therefore, of every muscle in the body is Sandow's open secret, and wherever he has performed, a crop of persons using his 'Exerciser' has sprung up. Not every one may become an athlete under his system; but where there is a healthy basis to work upon, his training seems to work wonders, and his School of Physical Culture has been crowded with pupils. To those who have perseverance and originality enough, a wonderful amount of muscular vigour and good health thus seems possible; yet many find Doctors Diet, Quiet, and Merryman still the best of physicians.

A THUG'S CONSCIENCE.

By F. W. Evans.

'YOU lads have a fine time of it nowadays, with your machine-guns and a commissariat that knows canned meat from castor-oil.'

It was an Indian veteran who spoke—Colonel Carrill—to whom Myers and I, returned from Dacoit-hunting in Burma, had been relating our exploits.

'Fifty years ago fighting was fighting,' he went on, 'but now'——

We smiled the smile of the young and up-to-date. What did he know of the vagaries of the modern savage: of the Dacoit who came in the night noiselessly and parted life and death with an ugly and unnecessarily large stab in the breast?

The colonel read our thoughts.

'Dacoits may be a stealthier foe,' he said, 'but for undiluted vagabondism and downright villainy give me the Thugs.'

'They must have been bad,' I ventured.

'At the very best; and yet I found a little grain of virtue in one,' said the veteran. 'Shall I tell you a yarn? It will be like a page of ancient history now, but I don't think it has been told before; and really Hosein Ali was a picturesque scoundrel who deserved record—and hanging.

'It was in the autumn of '34,' proceeded the colonel, 'I went out from Hyderabad under Major Groves northward across the Godavery after Thugs. The authorities were getting their eyes wide open at last, and a great effort was being made to exterminate the villains. After a week or so of reconnoitring and inquiry we separated. Groves sent me off on my own account with a troop of about thirty sepoys and a couple of non-coms. We had no success until Hosein Ali fell into our hands. He was taken, not exactly red-handed, but just after the act, with the proofs of guilt thick upon him and the spoil in his possession. Yet he denied with all the stubbornness of innocence.

'"I know nothing of what you say, sahib. I am from beyond the Kristna."

'I looked long and fixedly at the man. He was a fine specimen of a fine race. Tall, and straight as a bamboo; comely of feature and limb, with a handsome and well-kept beard and moustache, and black eyes which glowed with indignation and a hint of defiance, he looked anything but the scoundrel he was. If I had not been so absolutely certain of his guilt, I must have doubted that one of so gallant a bearing could be that worst of all criminals, a Thug.

'"What are you doing here, then?" I asked him. "What is your trade, your occupation? How did you come by these pearls?"

'"If I answer the sahib at all," he replied, "it is that he may be satisfied and let me go on my journey in peace. I am on travel honestly to my sister's wedding, and the stones are a wedding gift."

'The words came glibly off his tongue; but just as my eyes left his I saw the defiant expression change for a second to a furtive glance, which seemed to me to say, "Is he fool enough to believe it?"

'"I don't believe a word," said I, replying to his glance; "you are a Thug and a murderer, and deserve hanging a hundred times; but — make

yourself useful: tell me your companions, show me their haunts, take me to the graves of your victims, and your life may be spared."

'"I know nothing of what you say, sahib," he repeated doggedly.

'"Take him away," I commanded, "and in ten minutes' time hang him."

'Of course this was pure bounce, but he knew no better. I uttered the sentence sharply and rose to leave the hut. As I turned my back I heard a scuffle, and, looking quickly round, was just in time to ward the prisoner's hands from my throat. Taking the sepoys by surprise, he had with great energy dashed them aside and sprung at me.

'In another moment the men had him down; and, though he struggled desperately, he was bound and dragged to his feet as I resumed my seat.

'"None but the guilty would have behaved so," I said sternly—I knew no better in those days. "You have sealed your doom!"

'The man took a deep breath—he was still panting from the struggle—and shouted with an excess of strength and enthusiasm:

'"*Jey Bhowanee.*"

'It was the war-cry of Thuggee—the invocation to the goddess. If anything more was needed to convict him, it was provided in the extraordinary change in his appearance. All the signs of vice and cupidity which I had looked for in vain at first were now most prominent in the angry, passion-distorted face.

'After short consideration I sent him back to confinement. It was plain that we had made a capture of the first importance. The circumstances under which he had been taken, the demeanour and bearing of the man, his strength of will and virility, marked him as more than ordinarily dangerous. Such a man would, without doubt, be the leader, or at least a very prominent member, of any gang with which he was connected, and would possess just the sort of information we wanted. On the other hand, just these qualities in virtue of which his information would be so valuable would in all probability prevent us from acquiring it. Informers are supposed to be built of different material.

'However, I determined to try him, and as a first step I had him informed that unless he consented to give the information we wanted, he would certainly be hanged in the morning. As an extra argument we built a gallows opposite the window of his cell.

'At first this only excited his derision. For an hour or more he kept up a stream of ribald and obscene jests, varied with vindictive and comprehensive curses which made the sepoy guard alternately laugh and shake their fists in righteous anger.

'The small hours of morning, however, proved too much for him. I was wakened early and told he wanted to speak.

'"Tell him he can say all he wants under the rope," was my reply. I thought a little more fear of death would make his tongue all the readier.

'When the hour came the man was led out. Nothing remained of the scorn and defiance of the previous day; a night of passion and fear had broken him up.

'As he caught sight of me he called out: "I will tell all, Sahib Bahadur." One of the sepoys, previously instructed, began to busy himself with the rope.

'"All!" I said; "nothing kept back?"

'"Nothing," he answered eagerly. "All I have done, and my companions."

'"And their names, all of them?"

'"Yes."

'"And help us to take them by all means and strategies in your power?"

'He hesitated at this; but a glance at the man who held the rope, and who had now made a pretty noose in it, was enough.

'"I will, sahib," he muttered. "My life will be saved?"

'"On condition that you carry out your promise to the letter, I will do my best to save it."

'A table was brought, my native clerk prepared his writing materials, and there, within a yard of the gibbet, the prisoner told a tale of murder and robbery appalling in its extent, sickening in its cold-bloodedness and deliberation. To this he added a list of some thirty or forty accomplices, and, with a remarkable effort of memory, described the position of the rude graves of over one hundred victims.

'The same day we set out to investigate, and the following evening reached one of the indicated spots. There we found buried proof of the reality of one part of the Thug's confession, and, in that, a guarantee for the truth of the rest.

'A couple of weeks of activity passed. Thanks to Hosein, who had been shaven and otherwise disguised, we not only collected ample proof of the crimes committed, but succeeded in securing many of the culprits, who were taken to the nearest court and tried. By a judicious setting of caste against caste we managed to cause recriminations and retaliations amongst the prisoners, which led to their convicting each other, and so avoided the necessity of producing Hosein Ali as a witness—a course which would have been fatal to his usefulness.

'So far the informer had amply fulfilled his contract. He had, indeed, displayed a zeal which made me at times very doubtful of his sincerity. No government officer could have been more anxious to run the culprits to earth, no one more fruitful in devices to entrap them. I found out at last that this thoroughness was characteristic of the man in all things.

'One day I told him I thought he might count on getting off cheap, his services had been so valuable and so willingly given. I added a hope that he would lead a different life when the business was all over.

'"What business, sahib?" he asked.

'"When Thuggee is suppressed," I replied.

'"Thuggee!" He made a wide gesture with his arms as though to indicate all India, and added, with a little smile that had a grain of pride in it: '"We shall be old men, sahib."

'I was but twenty-three then, and incredulous; but he was right. I was gray when I came home, and I left Thugs behind me.

'Well, the further the work of suppression advanced, the more difficult it became. The Thugs had enjoyed impunity so long that many of the bands had become careless and were taken with comparative ease; but as the news of their capture spread, and the fate which met them became known, the villains grew more wary and difficult of approach.

'We had, of course, spies and scouts out in all directions. The inhabitants of the villages were even too eager to give us information, and often the accounts were so conflicting that I was at a loss. In these difficulties Hosein was invaluable. He smelt out the true and reliable, and knew exactly what the Thugs in this or that dilemma would do or attempt.

'About a month after Hosein's capture we got on the heels of a band which, by the signs, numbered about forty members. Instead of following them up, we crossed the river along the banks of which they were marching, and, hurrying on, got in advance of them. We knew they would have to cross later, and hoped to ambush them. The bank on our side of the river was covered with a thick and broad belt of jungle, beyond which was a chain of hills whose lower slopes were well wooded. In the shade of these trees we rested for the noon. In the early afternoon one of our scouts came in with news. About a mile in front of us he had seen a party of natives, whose manner seemed to him suspicious, entering a grove of trees. The possibility that this was a detachment of the band we were after at once occurred to me. We were on our feet at once, and pushing forward with all circumspection, almost succeeded in surrounding the grove without detection. At the last moment we were seen. We charged in, but, to our surprise, met with no resistance. Instead, indeed, of a band of determined and defiant robbers, we broke in on what seemed to be a party of travelling merchants in the deepest distress. The air was full of low lamentations. Pushing my way into the group, I saw the cause of the trouble. A body lay stretched out in the unmistakable attitude of death, covered reverently with a linen cloth. Catching sight of me, one of the mourners spoke.

'"Shookr Khoda! Now shall the wicked suffer."

'"What is wrong?" I inquired.

'"Thugs!" was the reply. "Our brother left us this morning in a fit of anger to continue his journey alone. Here we overtake him at noon, dead, and the villains are gone."

'I plied the men with questions as to the direction taken by the robbers. "Eastward," they said. They had not seen them, but, from various signs, were confident. This was contrary to all our ideas as to their route, and I was considering how to rearrange our plans, when I heard Hosein Ali's voice whispering behind me: "My lord must not look round or show surprise. This body is still warm. The man is but just dead, and they who mourn have killed him. They are Thugs," he added.

'I was too bewildered at first to speak, but, pulling myself together, partly grasped the situation.

'Turning to the spokesman of the party, I did my best to convince him that I was completely taken in; and, assuring him that we should most certainly pursue the culprits, left him, ostensibly to make preparations to that end.

'"Now, what is this?" I asked Hosein.

'"They are Thugs," he repeated, "an advanced guard who came across this traveller unexpectedly. They had just strangled him as we rushed in. This is an old dodge."

'"What is?"

'"This pretence of finding the man dead, and mourning."

'Old as it was, I was all but taken in, and but for Hosein the villains would have got away and sent me on a wild-goose chase.

'In view of this, it was somewhat humbly I asked Hosein what was best to be done.

'"Let these all be seized and bound without noise," he said, with his usual decision; "the rest will come across after dark, and we will take them also."

'It was no easy matter to carry out this plan. The Thugs were prone to suspicion, and, once alarmed, would fight desperately. However, by setting part of them to furnish my clerk with an account of the affair—an account which was afterwards highly esteemed as a specimen of impromptu lying—and plying the others with questions as to the direction taken by the alleged assassins, we managed to lull suspicion and divide the party into groups. Then, at a given signal, we threw them and tied them securely, to their intense amazement and disgust.

'We did not move from the grove till daylight began to die out. Hosein had the whole detachment busy for some hours cutting a number of short bamboo sticks and boring holes in their ends, through which short lengths of cord were run. He had a way of holding his tongue until questioned, and, moreover, liked to have his plans matured before being called on to explain them; so I let him proceed unquestioned until I saw he was ready.

'"What are these things for?" I then asked him.

'"Food for the Thugs, sir," he replied. "When they taste these they are silent."

'Then I perceived that the mysterious articles were gags.

'"They will come across the ford to-night," con-

tinued Hosein. "We will be in waiting, and as they land one by one, seize them and stop their voices."

'"How can you be sure they will cross?" said I.

'"Shall I not tempt them?" he answered. "Shall I not light a fire and send a cry across the water as these would have done if God had not delivered them into our hands?"

'"How many of them are there?"

'"I should say from thirty to forty."

'"And we must leave a guard with the prisoners. We shall have our hands full," I said cautiously.

'"I know this ford so well," responded Hosein; "only one man can land at a time. If the sahib will permit, I will stand by the bank and assist them out singly. It will be dark to-night, and there will be rain. Some of your men must leave their coats and dress like Thugs; and as I hand over the first of the robbers two of them shall seize him, fill his mouth with the wood, and tie him up so that he makes neither sound nor motion. In like manner with the others. The jungle and the rain will help us."

'It was a simple, daring scheme. It seemed one moment to be absolutely impracticable, and the next to have no real defect. Its very audacity was its strength. Of my two sepoy sergeants, to whom I explained the idea, one was certainly dubious: but he was always somewhat jealous of Hosein; the other was an optimist of the first class, and would just as cheerfully have tackled the job in broad daylight with half the force. In the end I consented. It would be a great feather in our caps if it succeeded.

'When the time came we moved noiselessly down to the ford, leaving six of our party with the prisoners in the grove. The night had settled in wet and starless. The jungle thickened towards the river. I had no little difficulty in closely following Hosein, who guided us. He ducked the low branches and squirmed through the thick undergrowth like a cat. A score of chattering creatures scurried away at our disturbing footsteps. A swift hare ran right across our guide's path, at which he stood stock-still and trembled.

'"The worst of omens," he whispered; "it means failure and death."

'"To Thugs?" I queried.

'"Yes."

'"Then push on," I replied; "it means failure and death to your friends across the river."

'He was heartened at once, and went on. My first indistinct view of the ford renewed my previous distrust of Hosein's good faith. It seemed the last place one would select for a passage. The banks were ten or twelve feet high, and rose sheer out of the water. By looking closely, however, I made out a large, flat rock standing about five feet out of the stream and close to the bank, forming a natural if somewhat difficult step. The bank was only attainable by first climbing the rock. All my distrust vanished: Hosein's plan fitted the place like the bark on a tree.

'Our dispositions were quickly made. The signal-fire was lit, and, after the proper interval, extinguished; and we lay down in silence to wait for the next move. The smell of the Indian night was an oppression; the rain was bringing out a hundred heavy fragrances from the plants, and a steamy cold moisture seemed to cover us as we lay. As the minutes passed and the noise of our approach ceased, the voices in the jungle were again manifest.

'At last we saw the answering fire. Hosein let himself down to the stepping-stone and stood erect. At the same moment the shriek of a jackal close at hand made me jump to my feet. From across the river the cry was repeated, and then I knew it was the second signal.

'As I stood I saw how hazardous Hosein's position was. He had only a narrow and wet foothold, and at the first glimmer of suspicion might be dragged off and murdered before any one could get to his assistance. I advanced a step with the view of bettering the arrangement, but Hosein, hearing the sound, turned, raising his hands warningly with a whispered "Choop!" and I lay down again. A minute or two of extreme tension followed, and then, above the whipping sound of the rain on the river, I could just hear the careful splashing of the waders. Soon the head of the first one came dimly into sight, a black moving spot on the dark water, and behind it, in Indian file, other blots still more indistinct. As the leader neared the bank Hosein said a couple of words in "Moor," which elicited a low reply. I then saw him stoop and draw the man on to the rock beside him. It was an exciting moment, and I know I trembled—solely, I hope, from over-anxiety.

'The Thug gave himself a shake, and grasping the bank, climbed up. He reached the little group of disguised sepoys; there was a slight scuffle, and then all was quiet. The first one was secured.

'Six or seven more followed, and were secured with scarcely more noise than a scurrying rat would cause. As each one attained an upright position on the bank, he was gagged, overpowered, and laid out in the jungle helplessly bound. There was an anxious pause after the twelfth man, and from the rock below I heard a lot of whispering. Just as I was thinking it advisable to risk asking the reason, I saw Hosein stoop, draw up a large bundle, and throw it up on to the bank.

'The Thugs were passing us their booty!

'The remainder of the band brought each a similar parcel. I had crept to the assistance of my men, whose exertions to secure the robbers noiselessly were beginning to tell on them. As we approached the end one or two squeals escaped, but fortune favoured us and no alarm was given. Hosein's endurance was marvellous. One after another he helped the victims out of

the water and passed them up, and always with a sufficient interval. When, once or twice, we had more than the usual difficulty in convincing one of the captives of the wisdom of silence, he detained the next a while before landing him. Still, even he relaxed a trifle in the end. By some means the last man but one to cross took alarm as he reached the bank, and yelled out a warning. He was quickly pulled down and secured, but his successor, just about to reach up his hand to Hosein, hesitated and retreated. I heard a big splash, and Hosein disappeared. He had jumped in after the man, and engaged in a struggle which we could hear but only dimly see. As there was no need for further concealment, I climbed down the bank and slipped into the water, followed by one of my men. Hosein had apparently overpowered his man, and was forcing him towards the bank. As we approached, the Thug uttered a furious sentence in a dialect which I did not understand, and the next moment he was free and hurrying away. Hosein, for the first time to my knowledge, seemed dumbfounded and without resource. The sepoy and I dashed after the escaping Thug and held him. He was an elderly but exceedingly powerful man, who fought tooth and nail, and was only secured after the sepoy had hit him across the head with the hilt of his bayonet.

'With this we had them all: thirty-three murderers and twenty bales of spoil—a fine haul.

'We spent the remainder of the night in the grove where we had surprised the first lot, and early next day pushed on to Tearee, where I expected to find a court sitting.

'Following our usual precaution, Hosein travelled with the rear-guard, so that the prisoners should not see more of him than was necessary, although I more than suspected that he had been recognised by the old Thug. Something had changed him, anyhow. He was strangely thoughtful, even morose; and when he did speak, it was, for the first time, of his wife and child. It was plain that he was passionately fond of both, and his great concern was that they might not learn what his occupation had been.

'Arrived at our destination, we found the court already sitting, so that our prisoners had not long to wait. In a couple of days the case against them was presented. The proofs of their guilt were overwhelming, and, as they thought more of defiance than defence, they were soon convicted and sentenced—fifteen of them, including the old man who had so nearly escaped, to be hanged, the rest to transportation to Penang.

'The following morning was fixed for the execution. Three hackeries conveyed the doomed men to the gibbets. They kept, or tried to keep, up their courage by the coarsest ribaldry and by jeering at their escort.

'As they stood in the centre of the clearing before ascending the platform, Hosein Ali created a sensation by slipping forward and kneeling humbly and contritely before the old Thug. The latter, with an indescribable accent of scorn, uttered a couple of words and spat derisively on the informer.

'The next moment the culprits had mounted the gallows. As each man stepped up he took the rope in his hands and tested it by bearing on it with all his weight. Satisfied of this, the fifteen men almost simultaneously thrust their heads through the nooses, and drawing the knots tight, jumped off the platform with a last cry of "Victory to Bhowanee!"

'The hangman's touch would have robbed them of caste.

'The excitement of this scene was not over when a fresh sensation was caused by the discovery of a man lying a short distance from the gallows with a bayonet through his heart, having killed himself by falling on the blade.

'It was Hosein Ali!

'"What is the meaning of this?" I cried.

'One of the bystanders turned towards the still swinging bodies of the Thugs, and pointing to the old man, said:

'"That was his father!"

CURIOSITIES OF EARLY INSURANCE.

THE insuring of property is a practice so common as to be one of the daily features of modern business life, and the pushing canvasser is not likely to let us drop into forgetfulness of its advantages. So thoroughly is insurance recognised as one of the leading principles in carrying on trade or holding property that one might naturally suppose it had taken its rise out of those commercial necessities which the nineteenth century has made more imperative on every one than they ever were before. The principle, however, is not so new; it has been known and in common use for at least four or five centuries. Some writers, indeed, have maintained that marine insurance was practised by the Romans, and quote passages from the Roman historians to prove their assertion; but the instances given do not warrant the inference—they are rather cases where the one party to a transaction stipulates for compensation from the other in case of loss. The origin of real insurance, as it is now understood, must apparently be sought for in the annals of medieval commerce, and instances of it can be quoted from at least the early part of the fourteenth century. Spaniards, Italians, and Flemings

have been variously credited with the discovery; but it is still doubtful to which of them the honour belongs.

Although marine insurance was thus a regular practice of these trading nations from the fourteenth century onwards, it is remarkable that insurance against fire is not heard of until the beginning of the seventeenth century. In 1609 a plan of fire insurance was proposed by some one to the Duke of Oldenburg, who was advised to insure the houses of all his subjects, in return for a yearly payment of a sum proportionate to their value. The duke, however, had the feeling (still shared by many on the question of life insurance) that it was a 'tempting of Providence,' for which, and other reasons, he declined the proposal.

It was the Great Fire of London that first made fire insurance a regular institution. The immense loss caused by this disaster opened the eyes of business men to the necessity for a remedy, and from 1669 to 1681 various schemes of insurance were laid before the Court of Common Council; but in the latter year a private company took the initiative, and the court soon abandoned the slight attempt it made to issue insurance policies. The growth and multiplication of such companies since that time, more especially during the present century, is a natural result of the increase of wealth and of public appreciation of the benefits of insurance. It may be noticed, however, that the working of these early societies differed from the method now in use, and approached more closely to the ancient form which we are about to describe.

Centuries before the wise citizens of London recognised the value of fire insurance there existed a most interesting form of it, and that not in any of the great commercial nations of the Middle Ages, but in a remote island of the Atlantic—in Iceland. This fact, remarkable as it is in itself, will not seem so surprising to those who are acquainted with the ancient condition of that country, which has for several hundred years played but a small part in European history. Its first colonists, in the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth centuries, were among the most enterprising of Norway's sons; and for the next three centuries their new home rivalled the mother-country in most respects, and far excelled it in mental activity. The old poetry of Norway died out about the year 1000 A.D., and from that date, so long as there were skalds at the court of the Norwegian kings, they were Icelanders. At the same time they were careful farmers, daring seamen, and enterprising traders. They traded regularly with all the neighbouring countries, and thought little of an overland journey to Constantinople, where many of them served in the bodyguard of the Byzantine Emperor. At home, next to the necessary care of their herds and flocks, they were above all devoted to poetry, history, and law. To be skilled in the latter was a sure title to respect at a time when law-books were still unknown, and codes were carried in the head of the 'Lawman,' or declared by the 'Law-speaker' at the meetings of the Althing, or yearly assembly. In the thirteenth century these laws of use and wont came to be written down, not officially, it would seem, as happened in other countries, but by persons interested in legal studies, and they are now preserved in a collection commonly known as *Grá-gás*, or gray-goose (a name of doubtful origin), which is used as a general name for the laws of Iceland prior to its union with Norway in 1262.

It is in this collection of laws that the interesting item of compensation for loss by fire occurs, a section which is quoted by the editor of an Icelandic journal of last year, in the first of a series of articles on the ancient civilisation of Iceland. The editor, Dr Valtyr Gudmundsson, is one of the best authorities on this subject, and uses the quotation as a text to point out to his countrymen the superior foresight of their ancestors in this respect. The modern Icelander has not yet realised the value of insurance, as shown by the fact that one of the foremost yeomen in the country had his farm burned down three times in succession without its being insured. It was otherwise in the old days, as Dr Valtyr points out. In the time of the old republic, the golden age of Iceland, every yeoman-farmer was by law compelled to be a member of a mutual insurance society. The method by which compensation for loss by fire was made is thus explained in *Grá-gás*, and is a striking proof of the thoroughly practical views of the old Icelanders:

'There are three houses in every man's dwelling for which compensation may be obtained in event of their being burned down.' (In Icelandic dwellings each room was a separate building, and so is called a 'house.') 'One is the women's sitting-room, another the common sitting-room, and the third the pantry where the women prepare the food. If a man has both a sitting-room and a hall, then at the spring assembly he shall choose whether he will rather have the sitting-room or the hall insured. If there is a church or chapel on any man's farm, then that is the fourth house liable for compensation, where it exists. If any of these houses afore-mentioned is burned down, the owner shall summon five of his neighbours, and get them to estimate the damage that has been done. They shall estimate the damage done to the house itself, and also that done to clothes and other valuables burned along with it; but only such clothes and valuables as the owner requires for daily use shall be reckoned for compensation. If a church is burned, there shall be reckoned along with it for compensation all the hangings, the choir, and the best bell that has been destroyed, if there were more than one, and all the furniture required for daily use; the same thing shall be done in the case of chapels.'

When the damage had been valued by the neighbours, as above provided, one-half of the loss had

to be borne by the yeoman himself, and the other half was made good by all the other yeomen in the district. From each of these a certain amount was levied in proportion to the value of his property, and if this were not paid within a specified time it could be seized by law. At the same time it was provided that no one could be called upon to pay as his share more than one per cent. of his whole property, and it was not compulsory to compensate the same person for loss by fire more than three times.

This, it will be seen, was a procedure lying between regular insurance and State compensation. There was no real premium; but neither was there any necessity for it, because there was a sufficient funded stock in the whole property of the district. The method was, indeed, very similar to that of the first London companies, which called upon their members to pay their shares only when a fire actually occurred. There was here no company requiring to make a profit out of the insurance, nor was there any temptation to wilful fire-raising, because only the most necessary articles were insured, and even in their case half of the loss fell on the owner himself. The trouble of collecting the separate payments in each case was no doubt a drawback, as it would prevent the unfortunate yeoman from making a new start at once. It shows, however, a practical grasp of things that provision was thus made to prevent one who was perhaps a man of wealth and influence from suddenly losing a large part of his property, and with it his power. The influence of the great yeomen was a power for good in the Icelandic republic, and it would have been actually dangerous to the peace of a district if any such sudden revolution of fortune took place, and the wealthy man of one day was the beggar of the next. Such a change, however, might happen not only through losing his house by fire, but still more easily and disastrously by the loss of his live-stock. The Icelander's greatest wealth on land lay in his cattle (not so much in sheep then as now), and it was quite as necessary to be secured against loss from that quarter as from the burning of his house. Accordingly the law also provided compensation for the loss of cattle by disease, but with similar precautions against its abuse as in the case of fire.

'Compensation shall be given,' says *Grá-gás*, 'if the pest attacks a man's cattle, so that a fourth part or more of his stock die by it; then the district shall make good the loss. He shall summon five of his neighbours within two weeks after the pest ceases, and get them to estimate his loss. He shall state his loss to them, and show them the flesh and hides of the cattle that have died. Then he shall take an oath to them that his loss is as he has stated, or greater. He shall then declare in assembly how much his loss has been valued at, and the yeomen shall compensate him for half of it.'

As in the previous case, the amount paid by each person was not to exceed one per cent. of his whole property, even although more than one person was entitled to compensation. 'If several men suffer loss in one season they shall be all compensated equally until the one per cent. has been paid. If the amount thus raised does not cover half the loss of each, then each of them shall receive so much less compensation in proportion as his loss is less.' By this limitation the inhabitants of a district were secured against excessive burdens, for in one year it might happen that the number of sufferers would be so large as to cause serious embarrassment if each had to be paid his full share. At the same time it would greatly increase the total loss to the individual, and in event of a widespread disease would be found a very inadequate provision. This is, perhaps, the weakest part of a scheme otherwise well contrived; witness the precaution against fraud by requiring that the flesh and hides of the dead cattle should be produced to the valuators.

These laws, which are peculiar to Iceland and not found in any of the other Scandinavian codes, show an amount of forethought and good-fellowship that is very striking. In this nineteenth century we have got the length of providing compensation for the farmer in cases of cattle disease, but rather by way of reconciling him to preventive measures than of helping him to get over his loss. In the case of damage by fire his only protection lies in the insurance company, to which he pays money without certainty of any return beyond the feeling of security it may afford him; or, if he does happen to find it a fortunate investment, he may yet incur the suspicions of his more uncharitable neighbours. There the Icelanders were a little wiser, treating it not as a matter of business, but as a measure for the welfare of the community, and to them, apparently, we must assign the credit of the first organised scheme to provide against losses of this kind. 'History repeats itself,' and many an excellent institution that seems to bear the true nineteenth century stamp upon it has flourished in unsuspected times and places.

SUMMER.

Now Summer comes, on golden wing,
From sunny lands across the sea;
And wavelets, dancing joyously,
Their tinkling song of gladness sing.
O, dark the Winter lay, and drear,
Upon the lonely Northland isles;
But Ocean's face is wreathed in smiles,
And life and hope again are here.
So, heart, the lights and shades will fall
And checker all the climbing way,
And Hope will chant her roundelay,
And Life anew thrill to her call;
And men will move, with faces set,
Towards the lonely heights afar
Where lightens, like the morning star,
The Cross on Heaven's minaret.

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.

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IN DARKEST TOKIO.

THOSE who have gathered their impressions of Japan from writers of the Sir Edwin Arnold type would imagine the country to be a land of eternal sunshine, where want and care were unknown, and where the people led simple lives, free from the evils of both luxury and want. Even among many who have lived for years in Japan, it has been the conventional view that, if wages are low, living and shelter are so cheap that there is nowhere to be seen such terrible destitution as is visible in Western cities. The truth is that foreigners seldom take the trouble to investigate the conditions under which the lowest class exists—it can hardly be described as living—in the larger Japanese cities. They do not know the shifts and struggles in which thousands are engaged in such towns as Tokio and Osaka in order to keep body and consciousness together. Industrialism, we have been told, is responsible for much of the destitution in the great towns of the West, as it produces a condition of things under which the poor grow poorer and the rich richer. But in Japan industrialism, with its tendency to aggregate the workers in factories, in which capital can more easily exploit labour, is comparatively a new thing. In some respects and in certain localities it may have intensified the struggle for existence, but it certainly did not create the state of destitution under which large masses of the town populations live.

The problem of poverty has not hitherto attracted much attention in Japan, where, as in other Oriental countries, it has been looked upon as a necessary evil. As in Palestine, 'The poor ye have always with you' summed up the situation to-day and for all time; and no Japanese philosopher has even suggested that it would be a solution if the rich sold all that they had and gave the proceeds to the poor. Again, the fact that there has been no system of national relief to the destitute, no poor-rate, no institutions similar to our workhouses, and few, if any, charity organisations, has doubtless also had its effect in preventing any discussion of the problem. But the introduction of Western literature and Western ideas into the country is beginning to attract attention to the subject; and within the last few months a remarkable series of articles has been contributed to the *Kokumin Shimbun*, a vernacular journal of considerable influence, dealing with the conditions under which so many thousands live and die in such a city as Tokio. The chapters have recently been collected and published by *The Eastern World*, an English weekly published in Yokohama, and they form remarkable reading.

Emulating the methods of some English journalists, Mr Matsubara Iwagoro, the author, clothed himself in the most ragged and shabby of garments, and went down into the poorest districts of Tokio, working, eating, and sleeping as those about him did, in order to thoroughly realise the conditions under which their existence was passed. Life in the capital of the empire he found to be supported by tens of thousands simply on the leavings of their more fortunate brethren, while shelter from the elements was obtained in erections that were little more than kennels. In many parts of Tokio a few thin boards, having a frontage of about nine feet, and roofed with some cracked tiles, constitute the houses of the poor. The timber is old and broken, the floors scarcely raised above the ground, and the posts barely substantial enough to keep the houses upright. In a place called Samegahashi these low one-story houses adjoin each other like the compartments of a railway train. In another district, known as Mannen-cho, matters are still worse; while a collection of several hundred houses in a third district, known as Shin-ami-cho, show a degree of dirt and squalor that defies description. The alleys are a swamp of foul water; dead rats lie festering in the sun; the public latrines—to give them a more decent name than they deserve—are left to take care of themselves; heaps of old clogs, spoiled rice, and decaying fish make the air pestiferous; the houses are ruinous hovels, with tattered straw-mats supplying the

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place of broken tiles; and, to sum up, says the investigator, 'the place looks like a fort in the wilderness that has been riddled by shot and shell.'

Such houses have landlords, and those who live, sleep, eat, work, and bring up families in them have to pay rent like other people. Rents are collected daily and in advance, for otherwise the landlord would never get his due, as of course those who inhabit such hovels simply live from hand to mouth. There are degrees of 'desirableness' even in these lower deeps. For houses of the 'best' class, having one room of four and a half *mats* (a *mat* is six feet by three, the dimensions of Japanese rooms being always thus calculated), the rent is four *sen* a day—that is, one penny in English values; but these are comparatively of a superior class. In the *nagaya* (long houses under one roof, divided into compartments) a dwelling occupies only three *mats*, placed side by side, so that with such a restricted space all household work is perforce done outside. For such a room the rent charged is two or three farthings per day. But there are still lower depths to which unfortunate wretches may sink, and these have to be content with houses whose accommodation may be gauged from the fact that the rent exacted is from one and a half to one and three-quarter farthing per day. These places are ruinous hovels which are never repaired, and 'resemble the caves or hiding-places of wild beasts;' nevertheless, horrible and wretched as is the accommodation, one hovel will sometimes shelter two or more families.

What occupation, it will be asked, do the people follow who are driven to such extremities as this? Mr Matsubara says that the inhabitants of these places are small hawkers, rag-men, second-hand clothes dealers, decayed jinrikisha-men, coolies who drag heavy loads from distant villages for eight farthings a journey, shampooers (many of whom are blind), charm-doctors, perambulating story-tellers, and cross-road lecturers (or 'reciters,' as they would be called in England), together with men and women belonging to what may be called the lowest grade of the criminal classes; though these are few in number compared to those whose only crime is poverty. The furniture of the houses is of a character with the rickety buildings. The thick straw-mats, laid on the rough boards of Japanese floors, are broken and torn, and the straw protrudes in frayed tufts; but on them a family of four or five persons will sit, sleep, eat and drink, and work. Yet there is always room for the little *Butsudan*, or Buddhist shrine, at which the family pray. 'The gods,' says the Japanese writer, 'have forsaken the poor; but the poor—one scarcely understands why—still cling to the gods.' The bedding is simply a heap of rags; and when times are particularly hard even this becomes a luxury. The *hibachi* over which food is cooked—when it can be procured—is battered and broken, and the family kettle is in a similar plight. Such, together with a paper umbrella and a few much-worn clogs, comprise what may be dignified by the name of furniture in these hovels; and it is under such conditions that tens of thousands live in Tokio.

It is impossible for such people to buy clean rice in quantity sufficient to satisfy hunger, and so remnants of food thrown away by houses of the better class are systematically collected from door to door by men who scrape a subsistence out of the business, and the damaged or soiled rice is dried and sold at very low prices under the name of *hoshii*. Thus the leavings of rice at the Military College are collected and sold to the poor at six or seven *rin* a pound (ten *rin* equal one farthing). In the same way remnants of fish and pickled or boiled vegetables are collected and sold by measure. The entrails of large fish can be purchased cheap, and there are shops where small portions of shark and tunny-fish can be procured at prices that will suit the means of the poor wretches who live each day from hand to mouth. Those who earn as much as ten *yen* (twenty shillings) a month spend about one-half in food, whilst the other half goes for house-rent, clothing, bedding, household utensils, and the various daily necessities. But there are few of the class here particularly dealt with whose earnings reach ten *yen* a month.

However destitute their condition, the poor have harpies that batten on their misfortunes. There are many small money-lenders in the poor quarters of Tokio, and lenders of articles that the poor need but cannot afford to buy, whose business is a very profitable one. The pawnbroker, says the author, does not refuse anything that has cost above ten *sen*, and lends money on it. He will make advances on bedding, mosquito-nets, rice-tubs, iron kettles, paper umbrellas, brasiers, pails, clogs, sandals, plants in flower-pots—even cats and canaries have been known to be pawned, as well as *ihai*, the wooden tablets on which the posthumous name of a dead person is written or carved. As, however, bedding, umbrellas, old kettles, &c., are not first-class security, pawnbrokers charge double and treble the usual interest on goods of that character. The Japanese government regulations recognise an interest of two and a half *sen* per *yen* a month (or two and a half farthings per two shillings); but there are few whose pledges reach the value of a *yen*, the customary values ranging from ten to fifty *sen*; and the rate of interest on these small loans often reaches eight per cent. a month—that is, within a fraction of cent. per cent. per annum.

The busiest financiers in the poor quarters of Tokio, next to the pawnbrokers, are the *hinashi*—lenders of money to be paid back in daily instalments. One can borrow one *yen* and repay three *sen* per day for forty days, or borrow eighty *sen* and repay two *sen* per day for fifty days. The rate of interest is, however, the same—that is, at

the rate of a hundred and eighty-two per cent. per annum. In addition to this, the borrower must pay the lender five *sen* for his trouble, and one *sen* for the stamp on the promissory note; so that, as in other countries and with larger amounts, the borrower never receives the full amount of his loan.

Such is a glimpse into the conditions of existence under which some tens of thousands pass their lives in Tokio. Nor is this destitution confined to the capital; for every large town in the kingdom, the open ports not excepted, can supply parallels closely approximating to the conditions prevailing in the principal city of the empire. At present the forces which, out of sheer desperation, make for disorder are comparatively quiescent in Japan, the strength to be found in combination not being realised. Mr Matsubara, however, looks forward to a time when the 'great hungry beast' that lurks in the secluded places of Tokio will learn its strength, and realise that 'it need no longer hunger and suffer to provide luxury and ease for its keepers. . . . Then,' he declares in a burst of passionate rhetoric, 'the unseen coils will begin to tighten, and the beast will find that it can crush, that the bars of the cage that confine it are mere stage property, painted paper to which it has given its face-value. Then a soul will be born unto the beast, a soul of passion whose fire will devour its rags and its filth, its very self, and the glorious, immortal soul that rises from the ashes will clothe itself with a new body of light that will give food and warmth to all alike; and the roar of the beast will become a song of thanksgiving and praise that will find a joyful echo in the far corners of the land. As yet, however, the beast is blind—as blind as its keepers.'

This passage is characteristically Japanese—vague denunciation and spirited declamation, without a single practical suggestion. But the problem which these glimpses of life in Tokio disclose is one which the Japanese government will be compelled to face sooner or later. Already there are signs that the coolie class is beginning to understand its strength. For example, attacks are frequently made on rice-dealers who are believed to be keeping up the price of rice for speculative purposes; and the police, a handful of whom could a few years ago overawe a mob of a thousand, now find it increasingly difficult to preserve order or subdue a riot. A few weeks ago a mob completely wrecked the premises of a tobacconist in Tokio because some prizes he promised to those who purchased his cigarettes were not forthcoming; and the police were completely powerless, the riot lasting for several hours before it was quelled, and not a single man being arrested. It is estimated that there are at least sixty thousand powerful coolies in the capital of Japan who would at any time be ready to follow a leader who promised them an improvement of their condition, and to this number there must be added at least as many more of inferior physique who would be ready to assist. The Japanese government is at present occupied with problems of military expansion to the exclusion of almost everything else; but it is very certain that, unless some effort is made to grapple with the problem of poverty, Japan, in face of the new ideas and new aspirations which are being voiced in its press, has serious troubles looming ahead.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—OF THE FIGHT IN THE MOSS OF BIGGAR.

WHEN we came to the camping-place it was almost deserted. The people had all gone to the fair, and nothing was to be seen save the baggage and the children. The morning had grown wilder, and a thin snow was falling—the earnest of a storm. The mist was drawing closer and creeping over the boglands. I minded an old saying of Tam Todd's, 'Rouk's snaw's wraith,' and I looked for a wild storm with gladness, for it would keep the dragoon gentry at home and prohibit their ill-doing.

But just in front, at the border of the fog and at the extremity of the dry land, the captain saw something which made him draw up his horse sharply and stare. Then he turned to Matthew, and I saw that his face was flushed. 'Ride a' your pith, man,' he said, 'ride like the wind to the toun, and bid our folk hurry back. Nae words, and be off.' And the obedient son galloped away to do his bidding.

He gripped me by the arm and pulled me to his side. 'Ye've guid een,' he says. 'D'ye see that ower by the laigh trees?'

I looked, and looked again, and saw nothing.

'Maybe no',' he said; 'ye ha'ena gipsy een; but in half-an-'oor we'll a' ken what it means. It's the Ruthvens wi' the Yerl o' Hell. I ken by their red-strippit breeks and their lang scythe-sticks. Ye maun ken that for lang we've had a bluid-feud wi' that clan, for the Baillies are aye gentrice, and ha'e nae trokins wi' sic blaggard tinklers. We've focht them yince and twice and aye gotten the better, and noo I hear that little Will Ruthven—that's him that they ca' the Yerl o' Hell for his deevilry—has sworn to fecht us till there's no' a Baillie left to keep up the

name. And noo they've come. Faith, there'll be guid bluid spilt afore they wratches learn their lesson.'

The news struck me with vast astonishment and a little dismay. I had often longed to see a battle, and now I was to be gratified. But what a battle!—a fight between two bloodthirsty gipsy clans, both as wild as peat-reek, and armed with no more becoming weapons than bludgeons, cutlasses, and scythe-blades. More, the event would place me in a hard position. I could not fight. It would be too absurd for words that I should be mixed up in their *mêlée*. But the man at my side expected me to aid him. I owed my life to him, and with these folk gratitude is reckoned one of the first of the virtues. To refuse William Baillie my help would be to offer him the deepest unkindness. Yet I dismissed the thought at once as preposterous. I could no more join in the fight than I could engage in a pothouse or stable brawl. There was nothing for it but to keep back and watch the thing as a silent spectator.

In a little I began to see the band. It would number, as I guessed, some hundred and ten, with women and children. The captain, as he looked, grew fierce with excitement. His dark eyes blazed, and his brow and cheeks were crimson. Ever and anon he looked anxiously in the direction of the town, waiting for the help which was to come. As the foe came nearer he began to point me out the leaders. 'There's Muckle Will,' he cried—'him wi' the lang bare shanks, like the trams o' a cairt. He's the strongest and langest man frae the Forth to Berwick. And there's Kennedy himsel'—that sonsy licht-coloured man. They say he's the best wi' the sma'-sword in a' Nithsdale; but, faith, he has me to reckon wi' the day. And there's that bluidy de'il, Jean Ruthven, whae wad fecht ony man in braid Scotland for a pund o' 'oo. She's as guid as a man, and, they say, has been the death o' mair folk than the Yerl himsel'. But here come our ain men. Come on, Rob and Wat; and you, Mathy, gang wide to the richt wi' some. It's a great day *this*. Nae wee cock-fecht, but a muckle, lang, deidly battle.' And the man's face was filled with fierce joy.

Meanwhile both the forces had taken up their position opposing one another, and such a babel of tinker yells arose that I was deafened. Each side had their war-cry, and in addition the women and children screamed the most horrible curses and insults against the enemy. Yet the battle was not arrayed in haphazard fashion, but rather with some show of military skill. The stronger and bigger men of the clan, with the captain himself, were in the middle. On the right and left were their sons, with a more mixed force; and below all, the women were drawn up like harpies, looking well-nigh as fierce and formidable as the men.

'You'll come to the front wi' me, Maister Burnet,' said the captain. 'Ye're a guid man o' your hands, and we'll need a' we can get i' the middle.'

'No,' said I. 'I cannot.'

'Why?' he asked, looking at me darkly.

'Tut! this is mere foolery. You would not have me meddling in such a fray?'

'You think we're no' worthy for you to fecht wi',' he said quietly—'we, that are as guid as the best gentlemen i' the land, and have saved your life for ye, Master John Burnet? Weel, let it be. I didna think ye wad ha'e dune it.' Then the tinker blood came out. 'Maybe you're feared,' said he, with an ugly smile.

I turned away and made no answer; indeed, I could trust myself to make none. I was bitterly angry and unhappy. All my misfortunes had drawn to a point in that moment. I had lost everything. A fatal mischance seemed to pursue me. Now I had mortally offended the man who had saved my life, and my outlook was drear enough.

I had been looking the other way for a second, and when I turned again the fray had begun. The Earl, with a cutlass, had engaged the captain, and the wings, if one may call them by so fine a word, had met and mingled in confusion. But still, it was not a general *mêlée*, but rather a duel between the two principal combatants. The little man with the short sword showed wondrous agility, and leaped and twisted like a tumbler at a fair. As for Baillie, he had nought to do but keep him at a distance, for he was both better armed and better skilled. As he fought he let his eye wander to the others and directed them with his voice. 'Come up, Mathy lad,' he would cry. 'Stand weel into them, and dinna fear the lasses.' Then, as he saw one of his own side creeping behind the Earl to strike a back blow, he roared with anger and bade them keep off. 'Let the man be,' he cried. 'Is't no' enough to ha'e to fecht wi' blaggards that ye maun be blaggards yoursel'?'

But in a little the crowd closed round them and they had less room for play. Then began a grim and deadly fight. The townspeople, at the word of the tinkers fighting, had left the fair and come out in a crowd to witness it. It was a sight such as a man may scarce see twice in his lifetime. The mist rolled low and thick, and in the dim light the wild, dark faces and whirling weapons seemed almost monstrous. Now that the death had begun there was little shouting; nothing was heard save the rattle of the cutlasses and a sort of sighing as blows were given and received.

At first the battle was fought in a little space, and both sides stood compact. But soon it widened, and the wings straggled out almost to the edge of the bog-water. The timid onlookers fled as from the plague, and I, in my station

in the back, was in doubts whether I should bide still or not. But in front of me were the girls and children, and I thought, if I could do nought else, I might bide still and see to them. For the horns of the Ruthvens' company (which was far the larger) threatened to enclose the Baillies and cut off their retreat. Meantime the mist had come down still closer, and had given that decent covering which one desires in a bloody fray. I could scarce see the front ranks of our opponents, and all I could make out of my friends was the captain's bright sword glinting as he raised it to the cut.

But that soon happened which I had feared; for the Ruthvens, enclosing our wings, had all but surrounded us, since the captain had put the weaker there and left all the more valiant for the centre. Almost before I knew I saw one and another great gipsy rush around and make towards the girls who had not joined the battle. In that moment I saw the bravest actions which it has ever been my lot to see; for these slim, dark-haired maids drew knives and stood before their assailants as stout-hearted as any soldiers of the king's guard. The children raised a great cry and huddled close to one another. One evil-looking fellow flung a knife and pierced a girl's arm. . . . It was too much for me. All my good resolutions went to the wind, and I forgot my pride in my anger. With a choking cry I drew my sword and rushed for him.

After that I know not well what happened. I was borne back by numbers; then I forced my way forward; then back I fell again. At first I fought calmly, and more from a perverted feeling of duty than any lust of battle. Then I saw all around me a crowd of fierce faces and gleaming knives, and I remember nought save that I hurled myself onward sword in hand, hewing and slashing like a madman. The wild moss-trooping blood which I had heired from generations of robber lords stood me in good stead. A reckless joy of fight took me. I must have seemed more frantic than the gipsies themselves.

At last, I know not how, I found my way to the very front rank. I had been down often, and blood was flowing freely from little flesh-wounds, but as yet I was unscathed. There I saw William Baillie laying about him manfully, though sore wounded in the shoulder. When he saw me he gave me a cry of welcome. 'Come on,' he cried; 'I kenned ye wad think better o't. We've muckle need o' a guid man the noo.' And he spoke truth, for anything more fierce and awesome than the enemy I have never seen. The Earl of Hell, a great, fair-haired man, who, with no weapon but a broken cutlass, had cleared all around him, I strove to engage alone. I thrust at him once and again, and could get no nearer for the swing of his mighty arms. Then the press behind, caused, I suppose, by the Ruthvens at the back, drove me forward, and there was nothing for it but to grapple with him. Our weapons were forced from our hands in the throng, and with desperate energy we clutched one another. I leaped and gripped him by the neck; and the next instant we were both down, and a great suffocating wave of men pressed over us. I felt my breath stop, and yet I kept my grip and drew him closer. All was blackness around, and even as I clutched I felt a sharp thrill of agony through my frame, which seemed to tear the life from my heart; and I was lost to all.

FILM PHOTOGRAPHY.

By T. C. Hepworth.



N every art, if we endeavour to trace its history, we find certain improvements introduced at different times, each of which marks an important forward step, sometimes amounting to quite a revolution in practice. Certainly is this the case in the art of photography, which has during the past sixty years advanced with such leaps and bounds that the pioneer workers would hardly recognise, in the modern method of picture-making, anything pertaining to the practice of camera work as introduced by Daguerre and his partner Niépce in 1837. Those first pictures, called daguerreotypes, of which examples are seen occasionally in the possession of elder folk, were taken on silvered plates, the surface exposed to the action of the light in the camera serving for the actual and only picture—negative and positive in one. Multiplication was impossible, unless by extra sittings before the camera; and as those sittings had, by reason of the slowness of the action of the chemicals, to be prolonged to a most extraordinary extent, repetition was a matter which needed consideration.

For fourteen years the daguerreotype—which, it must be admitted, gave delicate and beautiful results—held its own, when it was entirely superseded by the wet-collodion method. In this process a negative on glass was produced in the camera, and from that negative any number of positive copies on paper could be obtained. Portraits by the dozen then became a feature of the photographer's business, and many men made small

fortunes at taking pictures by the new method. Thirty years elapse, and the wet process—except for special purposes—was overthrown in favour of dry plates—that is to say, glass plates covered with a compound sensitive to light, composed of the necessary silver salts suspended in gelatine. The manufacture of these plates now forms a big industry, and there are many factories all over the country which supply them to photographers, professional as well as amateur.

It has long been acknowledged that glass is not the ideal substance for the support of the photographic image. In the first place, it is terribly brittle, and many are the valuable negatives which have testified to the fact; and, in the next place, it is heavy—two grave faults in a substance which has to go through much handling and carriage from one place to another. On the other hand, it can be readily cleaned from every impurity—an important point when we have delicate chemicals to deal with; and—what is of more moment to a photographer—it is beautifully smooth, flat, and transparent. The latter quality is more important than all, because in the operation of printing from a negative the light has to go through its more transparent portions, and unless the support itself was penetrable by light it would be useless for the purpose. Paper and other substances have been tried as substitutes for glass for negative-making, but have never come into general use. So that we may say that glass, with its undoubted imperfections with regard to weight and brittleness, has been regarded, until recently, as the best substance which photography could adopt as a support for negative images. And for the use of professional photographers in the studio, where weight need not be a matter of consideration, and where practised fingers give little opportunity for breakage, it is still the best material, and likely to remain so for a long time to come.

But with the amateur worker it is very different. Few travellers make their way along untrodden paths without taking with them a witness of their doings in the shape of a photographic camera. Every ounce of extra weight is with them a serious matter, especially in mountainous countries, and few could burden themselves with the necessary apparatus for taking pictures if it included several pounds' weight of glass. Happily, glass plates can now be dispensed with, and celluloid films, little thicker than the paper upon which these words are printed, take their place. The two most valuable properties of celluloid as a support for the photographic image are its lightness and its flexibility. Comparing it with glass plates of the usual thickness adopted by photographers, we soon see how it is that tourists, who naturally wish to reduce their impedimenta to the narrowest limits, give it the preference. Taking a packet of a dozen plates measuring 5 by 4 inches, we find that they turn the scale at 22½ ounces, nearly; whereas a strip of celluloid to bear twelve pictures of precisely the same size weighs only 2½ ounces. A tourist going abroad for, say, a fortnight will want at least a gross of plates, or their equivalent in films; in the former case he will have a burden of more than ten pounds and a half, while the films necessary for taking the same number of pictures will weigh only one-fifth of that amount.

The other property of celluloid—its flexibility—has had almost as much to do with its adoption by photographers as its light weight, and has to a great extent revolutionised the form of photographic apparatus. The common kind of camera, until recently, was a box with an accordion-like bellows extension, so that it could be opened out for the purpose of focussing the picture. The sensitive glass plates were held in separate wooden cases, called double-backs, two plates in each, which were made to slide into the camera at the back, and the drawing of a shutter in front of the case exposed the plate within to the action of the lens. It was usual for each camera to be sold with three of these double backs, holding altogether six plates; and when these plates had been exposed to the lens the operator could do no more work until, under the protection of red light, he had removed them and put fresh plates in their places. Now, compare this somewhat crude method of procedure with the more modern system, which the introduction of celluloid has made possible. The glass plates are abolished, and with them their containing cases or double-backs. In their stead the photographer carries a roll of celluloid film long enough to accommodate a dozen pictures. This celluloid ribbon is held on a reel or spool, and backed by black paper throughout its length. The ribbon of paper is prolonged for several inches beyond the celluloid ribbon with which it is associated, so that if we were to unroll one of these spools we should see nothing but black paper to begin with. The reason for this arrangement is that the spool can be placed in the camera or removed from it in full daylight, so that the operator can change a used spool for a fresh one without having recourse to a dark room—that is to say, having taken twelve pictures, he can change his spool and start afresh with material for twelve more, and twelve again after that should he see fit, provided that he has the necessary 'refills' in his pocket.

And now a word about the mechanism by which this ribbon of celluloid, made sensitive to light, is made to show itself to the lens in successive sections. As we have seen, the strip of celluloid is held on a reel or spool in association with a ribbon of black paper which projects far beyond the celluloid. This black paper is figured on the back—at equal intervals—1, 2, 3, 4, &c.; and the figures can be read through a tiny red window let into the back of the camera when the spool has been put in

its place. This is easily done by removing part of the instrument, when the fastening of the black paper on the spool is cut through and the paper drawn out, so that it passes over guiding-rods, and finally to a receiving-spool, which has in connection with it a winch by which it can be turned, the handle of which is outside the camera. Supposing, then, that we have put the spool in position, we close the camera, turn the winch-handle until we see the figure 1 through the little red window, and then we shall know that all is in readiness for taking our first picture. We present the camera towards the desired object, press the button, and an audible click tells us that the picture has been taken. We then, for precaution's sake, make a note of the subject, time of day, quality of the light, or any other matter which may be of value for future reference, turn the winch-handle until the figure 2 makes its appearance behind the little red window, and we are then ready for a second shot.

It will thus be seen that this modern form of camera consists of a box containing two rollers, between which a ribbon of sensitive material can be passed, after the fashion of a panorama. Each section of this ribbon comes in turn under the influence of the lens in front of it, and is impressed by light action so as to produce an embryo negative image. A wonderful amount of ingenuity has been expended in simplifying the many details of this system of photography; and the instrument itself, under the name 'kodak,' is really a triumph of mechanical skill.

Not the least useful feature of film photography is that the sensitive material can be sent through the post without the least risk of injury, so that the tourist photographer, so long as he keeps in touch with civilisation, need only carry with him sufficient material for a few days' consumption. A telegram to the nearest town will quickly bring him another spool or two of film, and he can again go on his way rejoicing. It must be noted, too, that the traveller can send his exposed films, by the same medium, to his dealers, who will undertake the development and the printing of pictures from them. To the busy man—the war correspondent of a newspaper, for example—this is a boon indeed.

Celluloid — a mixture of camphor and gun-cotton, with some suitable solvent—was invented many years ago, and, as a substitute for ivory—in this case mixed with a white pigment—has been used for billiard-balls, combs, knife and fork handles, washable collars and cuffs, and many other purposes. It was, indeed, proposed as a substitute for the brittle glass plates employed in photography thirty years ago, and it would no doubt have come into use had it not been found that the collodion then used as a support for the image acted upon the new material. Now, however, that collodion plates have been almost entirely superseded by those coated with a gelatine emulsion, celluloid has once more come to the fore, and careful experiment has produced a material which, whilst being as clear as glass, is flexible and about one-fifth its weight. The chemicals used in photography have no effect upon the material, so that, while the thin, transparent kind of celluloid is used as an image-bearer, a thicker and opaque kind is employed for making dishes in which the film can be developed.

A word about this development. As is well known, the photographic plate or film which has been exposed to light action bears no visible record of the circumstance. The alteration which has been effected does not reveal itself until a developing liquid has been applied to the surface, an operation which must be conducted in a room lighted only by a ruby window or lamp with a red glass. This developer, which can be procured in the form of powder, to be mixed with a stated quantity of water, is poured into a basin, and the ribbon of exposed celluloid, removed from its spool, is drawn through it backwards and forwards. Presently the image appears—or perhaps it would be more correct to speak of them in the plural, for at least twelve little negatives will be found on the ribbon. These images gradually get more pronounced, and the developing fluid is allowed to act until they seem to be almost too black for recognition. The film is subsequently fixed, washed, and dried, and the negative pictures can then be separated from one another with scissors, and can be printed from by any photographic method which may be preferred. It would be beyond our purpose to give details of operations which can be found in any text-book, and are generally supplied by dealers in photographic materials.

And let it be observed that the photographic tyro should carefully study a text-book if he aims at doing good work. He would also do well, if he has no knowledge of drawing or pictorial composition, to turn his attention in that direction as well. There are thousands of amateur photographers who turn out good work, so far as technical excellence is concerned, and yet they seldom produce a satisfactory picture for want of artistic knowledge and feeling. One must learn how to recognise that happy conjunction of subject and light and shade which goes to make up a picture, and not to be led away by the charm of colour—which in photography has unfortunately to be neglected. The optician, the mechanician, and the chemist have combined to furnish us with photographic apparatus which has been brought to a wonderful pitch of perfection, but it will not work automatically. And although we have only to press a button to put the wonderful machine into action, we must learn when to press it, and take care that the subjects presented to its notice are such as will make *pictures* as well as photographs.

THE CURSE OF MUNGI.

CHAPTER II.

'I'LL be home by dark, Daddymy.' It was seldom the old pet-name that as a baby she had given her father rose to Hannah's lips; but when it did she spoke it like all her words, unstudiedly. M'Cunn watched her as she touched the horse with her heel and ambled away from the veranda, she and her beloved grey, from her broad forehead to his dainty hoofs a single-minded pair in wholesome litheness. The old squatter rubbed his grizzled mat of hair and uttered a world of meaning, wherein, however, a grudging pride was uppermost, in a single 'Hech!' as the girl disappeared amongst the low sandalwoods, leaving a trail of saffron-coloured dust behind her.

She rode, with her saddle, a round ten stone and a half, and stood in her stockinged feet clear five feet seven of ripe, sweet-breathing womanhood.

Hannah was the pride and the despair of the district—the pride, because she was born a horsewoman and bred a pattern housewife, and because the look of her face and the sound of her voice were like shade and cool streams in a thirst-ridden land; the despair, because she seemed to those who sought her love as unapproachable as if they had hoped, by reaching out a hand, to touch the horizon. And yet it was not that she was remote from the common things; for every one that knew her claimed her as a comrade, and, utterly regardless of age or sex, she flew to those in trouble. She never retaliated upon a slight, for none was ever offered to her; her silence was a reproach, and the look in her eyes a reproof that killed discourtesy before its utterance; at sight of her the meaner passions slunk away and hid themselves. She was of the women who stand in moral stature shoulder-high above the walls of caste: the burden of woman's purity, that is so hot and heavy a load sometimes, is carried by such as Hannah M'Cunn as lightly as the warm health in their limbs and the crown of hair upon their heads.

The yellow sun cast a lengthening shadow before her that stretched and shrank grotesquely on the dusty track as the grey went at a free canter to the eastward. The warm air singing in her ears, the free movement, and the wide earth about her conspired together to set her in tune with her conditions, and to reduce the memory of her father's bitterness to the dimensions of the lesser things that must be borne, and might be cured, with patience.

Before the grey had put a mile of road between her and the Crannoch homestead Hannah was singing to herself in large, sweet chest-tones an impromptu melody set to the rhythm of the horse's hoof-beats. It was her way—unknown to any one, since she herself was unaware of it, and only sang to solitude—to set to music in her throat the things unutterable on her tongue. Speech was denied her on any but tangible things; though a wandering man of letters who had drifted through Crannoch once vowed there was more poetry, if less verse, in her remarks about a batch of yeast-bread or the milkers' calves than lay bound in books beneath the roof of the British Museum. This man was very sick, however, and in search of peace from the cough that racked him day and night. He found his peace soon after, on a western cattle-run, beneath six feet of black soil. These mellow improvisations of Hannah's fitted, as air fits the body, the something finer than a thought that was in her as she sang them. It was her way to breathe them out at odd moments: it might be of a winter's night when the woeful cry of a wild dog rose into the unfathomable stillness; or when from the milking-yard of a morning she watched the last of the stars fade into the blue, and the highest tree-top kindle into tawny gold as it spied the sun; or maybe in the splendour of evening, when she was alone in the house, as she shaded her eyes with a hand and looked along the track that came winding out of the east, up from the sea, for a horseman, a stranger.

Thus she rode now, suiting the idle notions that rose in her now and again to her murmured cadences. She was in the middle of a dirge-like strain of lament for the drought-stricken earth about her, and of pity for the wasting herds upon it, when the track she rode upon rounded out of a clump of timber, and the ruined paddock-fence and fireless, gaping, lost-looking homestead of Mungi lay before her. She drew rein and stopped her singing; the grey stood up dead still and made a shuddering sound in his nostrils. 'There's a blight upon the place:' the words of her father rose to mind, and suddenly fear knocked at the girl's heart, for surely the place looked bleak and stricken, with its gapped fences, its house-door sagging on parted hinges, its broken roof-tree, and its dark window-openings staring like dead eyes out of the bleached walls.

The grey began to lift his feet in quick time as if the earth burned him, and made to swerve away and gallop a mile of earth between himself and the unholy ground of Mungi. But the eyes of the girl clung to the forsaken house, and she held the horse's head towards it. She knew as little why she stayed as what had brought her there alone; but she made the horse face it as though in compelling him she thus conquered her own unworthy fear that had spread to him.

As she sat, the lower half of the open doorway was hidden from her by a bush; and, driven by some impulse of curious dread, she worked the unwilling horse along the outside of the broken fence.

The grey plunged and tore fiercely at the bit; and, as the impeding bush slid away, he flung himself round in defiance of Hannah's strong hands upon the bridle, and stood, facing from the house, shaking in every nerve, and with the sweat oozing out and staining his white shoulder. For one moment Hannah was helpless, and her heart stood still in her body; for, as the horse had swung about, she had seen from the corner of an eye that the doorway was not empty; there was Something on the threshold; and at that instant, too, the sound of a voice had reached her ears: it came from amongst the deserted walls.

The cry was repeated, and the horse made to bolt from it; but Hannah held him now, for at the repetition of the sound the woman in her had risen up, stronger than fear, to answer it. It was the voice of a creature in distress. She jumped to the ground, pulled the horse about, and hitched the bridle over a post in the fence. She knew her grey from foalhood, and was aware that, though twenty thousand red-hot steam-rollers should thunder past him, he was too much of a gentleman to run back and break his bridle. Then she rubbed his nose for his comfort and her own, and stepped through a gap in the fence, and went steadily up to the house.

The body of a man was on the threshold of Mungi, and once—just once—the girl's knees gave beneath her when, as she drew nearer, she saw about the throat streaks and splotches of crimson. The body lay with the head inside the door; one leg was stretched out and the other updrawn. It was thus, she knew, that twenty years ago poor Baynton's corpse had been found: it was just such a Thing as this, lying just there and just so, that on many a night in her childhood and since had made horror in her dreams. But nevertheless big-hearted Hannah, though for an instant the tree-tops swam before her, went on unfalteringly.

It was the body of a young man who was quietly sleeping that lay in the doorway of Mungi. The red about his neck was owing to the colour that was stamped upon an enormous new cotton handkerchief that lay loosely across his throat. Hannah lifted it gently; and, letting it hang from her fingers, she looked down at the unconscious figure, that half-covered, as it lay, a faint, black, ragged stain upon the boards beneath it.

It was believed in the neighbourhood, with the devoutness of credulity that is lavished only upon the things that are not, that on certain nights between moonrise and morning the uneasy spirit of Baynton was to be seen drawing water from the creek and toiling in a cold, ineffectual fury to wipe out that dim stain. Hannah remembered at once the restless ghost and the wailing cry that had come to her from this sleeper on the blood-stained floor, and reached out trembling fingers to wake him. As she stooped the sleeper's head rolled, and again that curious sound came from between his lips. Hearing it thus at close quarters, the girl withdrew her hand, and sitting down very softly beside the sleeping man, she devoted herself to keeping off the flies from his arms and face with the gigantic cotton handkerchief, while now and then deep, noiseless laughter welled up in her throat.

It was a long-drawn 'Damn!' with a falling, mild inflection to it which entirely robbed it of all offensiveness to the girl's ears, that had been uttered by the sleeper, and had moved Hannah to sit down beside him with her fears for the hideous disturbance of his slumbers suddenly withdrawn.

He was clean-shaven and short-haired, and his long, lean, shapely body and limbs were hidden in a bulgy, unwrinkled broad-checked flannel shirt and milk-white moleskin trousers fresh from the store. The clothing, in its extravagant newness, proclaimed aloud to Hannah precisely what it was put on to hide. She knew this for a city-bred Englishman who had somehow broken down hopelessly in his first new-chum endeavour to pass himself off, to himself, as the tried bush-hand; and it seemed possible that, from the borders of dreamland, he was railing in a gentlemanly way at some humiliation that had befallen him.

The spasms of laughter in Hannah's throat died down, giving place to a slower, deeper movement as her eyes wandered over the stranger's face and neck, so very crimson where the sun had touched them, so fine and fresh-looking elsewhere, and over his sinewy, long-fingered hands that lay at his side with their soft palms uppermost, and showing a big blister where the bridle had chafed the left forefinger. Having chased away the flies, she sank her chin in the palm of her hand that held the stranger's handkerchief, and with closed lips broke softly into a new and unpremeditated melody as she looked across the deserted paddock.

She turned her head presently, so that cheek and temple were supported in her hand, to find the stranger, who had not moved, looking dreamily at her face. She returned his look without moving, during a pause that seemed to her not measurable by time.

'Please go on,' he said.

'Go on where?' she asked in her big chest-notes, and soothingly, in the manner of a nurse to a patient. 'Home?'

'No, no, no; go on singing.'

'But I wasn't singing.'

'Oh, I say, I may look like a bushman'—Hannah moaned slightly—'but if you weren't humming a sort of *pot-pourri*—though I hate the word—of *Warum*—Schumann's, you know, with a dash of Chopin at his dreamiest thrown in—may I—may I never tell the difference between major and minor any more.'

Hannah remembered the scorching afternoon sun, and concluded it had set his mind wandering;

but she was a born tender of the sick, and she preserved her calmness unstirred except by pity. 'Perhaps you're right,' she said submissively. She had received the impression, nevertheless, that his remarks had been compounded of a somewhat delirious mixture in which she had detected the name of a distant township called Taroom, a babble of foreign tongues, and a hint of cookery recipes.

He drew in his straightened leg, wincing and groaning slightly as he did so, and sat up clasping his slim fingers about his knees, and bringing his long, nervous, sun-branded face within a foot of her own. 'Well,' he said deferentially but firmly, 'I *do* claim to know a little about these things; and when I get my piano in here'—he rolled his head comprehensively backward towards the long-forsaken rooms, and Hannah pitied him from her soul—'I hope you'll let me show that I do.'

To big-hearted Hannah that clinched the matter. This poor soul needed her care; and where that was needed she gave of it, putting away all thought of other things, full measure. 'Indeed I will that, when the piano comes,' she said; and with a deft movement she put her hands about his neck and knotted the wonderful handkerchief round his throat.

The young man looked down amazed at the long, cool hands at his neck, and as the girl's breath at the same time spread fresh and warm over his face, his own hands rose up as if to lay hold of hers. Before he had touched them, however, he looked into her eyes, and as he did so his fingers quietly settled themselves out again on the floor behind him, supporting him where he sat.

Hannah gently pressed the knotted handkerchief into its place at his throat, and folding her fingers in her lap, proceeded to take pitying charge of him.

'Tell me,' she said, 'where do you come from?'

'Dundoor,' he answered, his voice flat with wonder.

She was sure now that his wits were sun-muddled. 'Dear, dear,' she said, with an all-enfolding sympathy in her eyes, 'from ten miles away. Look there. And where's your swag?'

'My?'——

'You're new come out, I can see; and you're on the wallaby, I expect. Where have you left your drum?' (that is, swag: roll of blanket).

He throttled a shout of delighted laughter, and answered with deep solemnity: 'It *is* my first season; you are quite right there. But I'm *not* after big game. As for the drum, I never rose above fiddle and piano in the executive branches of the art.'

She sounded a melodious 'Ah!' above her bewilderment at his wanderings. But she persevered. 'Come,' she said, with a shade of peremptoriness, 'look at the long shadows of the timber; it's near sundown; I hear the jackasses. Where are your blankets?' She tried to gather her steady eyebrows into a frown.

'I have none,' he said abjectly. 'As for the donkey'——

'Maybe they're nearer than you think,' she cut in, now firmly set in her benevolent despotism. 'And your tucker, and billy, and things?'

'For such essentials I have to rely for the present upon financially invoking the hospitality of Dundoor caravansaries.'

'And where do you expect to camp to-night?'

'The words "My rest a—log" occurred to me with peculiar force.'

'Nay.' She put an arm round his neck and patted him softly between the shoulders. He looked suddenly frail and tired, she thought, and her eyes dimmed in response to a dewiness in his. She caught one of his hands and stood up. 'Listen to me,' she said firmly, and shook the hand with a tender decisiveness.

'For ever and ever, if you like,' he said dreamily, leaning his head contentedly against the doorpost.

'Do you *remember* how you left Dundoor?'

'Oh, perfectly. Half the town turned out to see me off—I don't know why, unless it was that I tried to get up on the right-hand side of the horse, and failed signally.'

'The *horse*?'

'Yes. A thing the colour of weak treacle, the bally brute!'

'A yellow bay, maybe,' she corrected gently; 'and bawley, not bally.'

'Oh!'

'And where is he now?'

'Well, judging from his pace during the last sight I had of him—he looked upside down, by the way—I should say he's about fifty miles off, unless somebody's stopped him.'

'Fifty m—— Upside down?' she said slowly.

'Of course that's only a rough statement. And I was standing on my head at the time, you see.'

'He slung you? Where?'

'Slung? Oh, ay. Here, at the back door. Yes. He seemed to smell something queer about this place; and I got out along his neck—it was rash of me, I admit—to see what it was, and to reason with him, if possible, when he—well, he seemed to dissolve from beneath me in the manner of an earthquake, and I—— To be quite frank, after that inverted impression of him, I don't seem to remember much till—till you came.'

She had knelt down beside him. 'Dear, d-e-a-r,' she murmured again, and laid a hand on his knee. 'Now, why didn't you tell me that at first? And are you hurt, poor lad?'

'I—a—didn't seem to want to hurry the interview. And I'm not hurt, only stiff. I'm sure; yes, quite certain.' He dwelt upon the last words, stroking her hand on his knee for emphasis.

'Well, we'll see,' she said, taking final charge

of the situation. 'Dundoor's ten, and my home's only five miles. You're coming with me.'

His readiness forsook him, and he stammered something inaudible, to which she paid no heed.

'It's likely enough,' she said, getting up and fixing at her hat and hair for the journey, 'that you've heard of me in Dundoor. Maybe you know my name?'

He looked elaborately puzzled. 'Possibly I have.' He gazed profoundly up at her, then brightened. 'To be sure; it's Juno.'

She was coiling up a long, loose strand of hair that had become half-unfastened, and had two hair-pins between her perfect teeth. She looked down at him and shook her head.

He watched the nimble fingers intently. 'Of course not. It's Diana.'

'There,' she said triumphantly, patting the hair into its place. 'I knew you'd heard it. That's very near. It's Hannah.'

'To be sure, it's Hannah.'

'Now, Hannah—what?'

'Hannah—Han-n-ah'——

'Hannah M'—M'——'

'Of course, Hannah M'Joy.'

'No.'

'Hannah M'Peace.'

'No.'

'Hannah M'Lo'—— He coughed. 'Hannah M'Sun.'

'Or the next thing—Hannah M'Cunn. You couldn't be long in Dundoor without hearing of Donald M'Cunn of Crannoch. Now we're ready. Come along.' She held out a hand to help him to rise.

He appeared to be smitten with a sudden weariness and pain, and neglecting the hand, he dragged himself to his feet by clinging to the doorpost, groaning a little.

'The poor body,' she moaned. 'Are you that sore? Here;' and she passed a strong, soft arm about him. 'Oh, I can bear the weight of you,' as he leant away from her and hobbled towards the veranda-edge.

'I am only stiff from lying down. I was—ah! —thinking that perhaps your—your'——

'My what?'

'The—owner of Crannock—might be surprised if I came—uninvited'——

'Is it my father? Donald M'Cunn?' and stalwart Hannah braced her arm against the weight that suddenly descended upon it. 'Ah! you'll have heard he's a hard man, maybe. He's no' that hard. And if he's the master of Crannoch, why, I'm—I'm Hannah M'Cunn.' And jumping down herself, she fairly lifted the slim stranger off the high veranda and set him on the ground beside her.

The grey woke out of a doze and nickered to his mistress as she came slowly towards him, supporting the young man. 'You'll have to ride side-saddle,' she said, with the reins looped on the grey's neck, and holding the stirrup. 'Up with you. I'll lead him.'

The stranger drew back alertly, considering how he had leant upon Hannah just now. 'Oh no, please. And leave you to walk?'

Hannah had already her doubts as to what extent, if any, his intelligence was impaired by the sun; but, as nurse and doctor, she felt that she was still supreme. 'Come,' she said, 'here beside me;' and he went. 'Put your hand on the mane, by mine, and face the horse. That's it. Lift your foot—no—no'—she gave her deep-bosomed laugh and showed her magnificent teeth —'the other one. Now, on "three"—jump.' And the injured man found himself in the saddle, clutching wildly at the horns. She settled him there, and led off the obedient grey.

The twilight had fallen suddenly about them, still and warm, softening the harshness of the arid earth and the naked stiffness of the trees. The young man looked amazedly round and behind him as he was led away. The empty house seemed swallowed by its overarching woods, and he fixed his eyes on the girl's back as she swung vigorously along the dim road, going level with the horse's head.

HOME-LIFE AND THE MICROSCOPE.

IT is one of those dreary London days, when the eyes smart and burn with the nauseous yellow fog, and the steady, drizzling rain seems to soak into one's very heart. There is a myth fondly cherished on Parisian boulevards that on such days the Englishman goes out to murder his mother-in-law, or to commit suicide, or both.

Hurrying home along one of the west-end streets, I came upon a crowd of about four hundred people standing patiently in the fog, tightly packed together, with the drizzle soaking steadily into the compact mass. They were waiting for the doors of a music-hall to open; waiting in all this discomfort—for what?

The fog and the rain were enough to make the most cheerfully disposed gloomy; but there was something more doleful than fog and rain in this wet, steaming crowd. It seemed to me, a humble student of the world around me, a saddening fact that so many men and women in fairly good circumstances should be so poverty-stricken in the power to amuse themselves in their own homes that they were content to endure so much discomfort in order to enjoy a

little forgetfulness of the cares and trials of life. It has been for some years past clear to me that one of the greatest lessons the average Englishman has to learn is how to amuse himself. The moment John Bull leaves off work in the office, the mart, or the workshop, he either has to get some one to amuse him, or he loafs, grumbles, worries, or gets into mischief.

The saddest thing of all in this want of resourcefulness in the art of amusement is its influence on home-life. When the habit of seeking the pleasures of life outside the home is once contracted, home ceases to exist; it is transformed into a mere eating and sleeping place. The incapacity to amuse one's self and the craving to be amused by others create a sort of drunkenness that leads men and women into living unnatural and unwholesome lives of feverish excitement, unrest, and *ennui*. Happy indeed is the home where husband, wife, and children find the greatest pleasures of life within its four walls. Unfortunately there are only too many of our fellow-creatures to whom home is a hollow mockery; but, in pleading that home should be made the hub of the universe, and not a mere refectory and dormitory, I am thinking of those who have homes that might be made the centre of life's pleasures, but who do not seem to possess the art of accomplishing this.

One of the surest means of bringing real happiness into one's own life and the lives of others is to foster some hobby that can be carried on in the home. Here, in this little room that we call my 'den,' how many happy hours have we spent! Against the walls are some shelves of books that it would be gross flattery to call a library; but how we have enjoyed reading them, and how useful they are to refer to! Free public libraries are excellent things; but, oh, the joy, the comfort, and delight of having a few books always within reach, one's very own; each with its own romance of capture from an unlikely bookstall and triumphant carriage home! All around is a queer medley of things, and hidden in this cupboard behind me are a hundred delights in glass bottles, dishes, and trays. Everything in this room is in that perfect state of untidiness and disorder in which one knows exactly where to pounce upon anything that one wants. They have 'a clear-up' here sometimes, with the most awful results—an orderly chaos wherein nothing can be found.

As I was rather depressed by the fog, the rain, and that crowd of damp people, I thought we would come up here and gaze into the beautiful scenery of that hidden world which has so many times thrilled us and humbled us with its strange glories. Reverently I unlock the cabinet, and with tender, gentle hands take the microscope from its nest and place it upon the table. It is not a costly instrument. I purchased it second-hand from an honest dealer whom I have cause to bless. Many working-men whom I know could purchase a similar instrument if they refrained from 'backing all the winners' for six months. I have always found that the highest pleasures of life are the least expensive. In a public park, within a stone's-throw of this house, when the shadows lengthen and the public-houses begin to fill, you can hear the thrushes singing for nothing—there is not even a collection—although, as a religious service, I know few things to equal the even-song of these Cockney thrushes.

But the microscope is on the table. Some people spend fancy sums of money on specially-made, elaborate microscopic lamps. I use an ordinary little paraffin lamp, which also does service in my dark-room lantern—for know that on occasion I am guilty of taking photographs of my beloved Dame Nature, as well as looking at her through an artfully constructed series of lenses which reveal to our eyes many of her marvellous secrets. The lamp is lighted; the microscope is in position; the little mirror is adjusted so that the 'field' is well illuminated. I have attached the polariscope, because I want to show Joan (that is my three-quarters) and Doddles (that is our offspring) some examples of crystallisation which they have never yet seen.

Here, on the mantelshelf, are some watch-glasses turned concave side uppermost. I place in this first watch-glass a few feathery flakes of pyrogallic acid and cover them with a little water. The 'pyro' is quickly dissolved, and I now take up a tiny drop of the water on the head of a domestic pin and transfer the drop to a slip of warm glass, which I place on the stage of the microscope.

For a minute or two I am engaged in getting the drop of water into its proper place, immediately under the objective—a somewhat formidable word, but merely the name of the lens nearest to the object under examination. I fix my right eye to the eyepiece, but can see nothing but a bright disc of light. I move the glass slip on the stage, first to the right, then to the left, then up and down; suddenly the bright disc of light is darkened. The drop of water has come between the ray of light from the mirror and the objective. Gently I push down the focussing-tube until I can plainly see the drop of water; then, by turning the screw of the fine adjustment, I make the drop still more plainly visible. A slight touch of the glass slip and I have brought the edge of the drop just within the field.

Joan now takes the chair and looks down the tube. 'Now, tell me what you see,' I say, with the self-complacent air of a millionaire who asks his visitor for a candid opinion upon a glass of the finest wine in his cellar.

Joan glances up at me reproachfully. 'Why,

there's nothing there!' she exclaims in an injured tone.

'Oh, isn't there?' I reply loftily. 'You look again. Watch that thin shadow by the bright streak on the left.'

I have scarcely uttered the words when a prolonged 'Oh!' bursts from Joan's lips.

'Ah!' I exclaim, with a chuckle. 'I thought you couldn't see anything! What is it like now —tell me?'

'Oh, don't speak to me, Darby dear! Do let me enjoy it!'

That's the worst of Joan. She always behaves on these occasions like the children at a magic-lantern entertainment. Not until some hours afterwards can you obtain from her an intelligent account of what she has seen. When she and Doddles have satisfied themselves, I again take a drop from the watch-glass and place it in position.

I look into the microscope, and see there a disc of light, with a brilliant line along the left-hand side. This line is the edge of the drop of water; all the other part of the disc is covered by the drop. Presently I see some tiny bronze spikes jutting out from one point at the edge; these gradually, as they grow every moment larger, assume the form of feathers, spreading out from the central point of their birth like a fan. But what a gorgeous fan it is! Queen Mab herself might cherish it as the most precious gem in her trousseau; with such a thing of beauty Titania might have cooled the brow of the translated Bottom. No Eastern artist or handicraftsman ever conceived a combination of colour so brilliant, so dazzling, and yet so harmonious and fascinating. The feathers forming this fan of Nature's own making are composed of myriads of fine filaments, luminous as the wings of fireflies. The infinite variety of colours is beyond description. In vain I try to count them. After noting gold, bronze, purple, emerald-green, silver, violet, carmine, amethyst, brown, orange, I give up the attempt in despair. Before this particular fan has completed its growth, other fans commence forming from different points all round the edge of the drop; the serrated edges, as they approach one another, send out spear-like shoots, which eventually glide side by side like miniature glaciers, until in another minute the whole of the drop is covered.

Here, in another watch-glass, I have dissolved a tiny morsel of nitrate of uranium. I place a drop of the water upon a warmed glass-slide, and examine it through the microscope. This time there are no feathery, fan-like shapes; the molecules form into crystals in quite a different manner from that of the molecules of the pyrogallic acid. The first sign of crystallisation is a dark speck in the centre of the drop; slowly around this speck the molecules begin to cluster as the water evaporates, forming themselves into beautiful silver fern-leaves, some having an emerald-green sheen along their centres. Some of the leaves form along stems; some cluster together in the shape of star-fish; others take geometric forms in squares and angles, as though some Lilliputian human fingers had arranged them. At various parts of the drop the crystals are forming in strange key-like shapes of gold, bronze, and mother-of-pearl. The colours are so brilliant that the eye is at last fatigued, and regretfully I leave the view.

Doddles undertakes the part of observer. He kneels in my lap, places his eye at the eyepiece, and, as usual, proceeds to romance. One always has to allow a considerable personal equation for Doddles. At seven years of age the imagination is liable to run riot, and the marvellous things that Doddles sees in the microscope would supply Mr Andrew Lang with materials for many a fairy-tale to fit fairy books of any colour.

From the shelf where I keep my photographic chemicals I take down a little bottle of bromide of ammonium, dissolve a few grains of the white powder in a little water, and then place a pin-drop under the objective. In this instance crystallisation seems to take place much more rapidly. Little spikes appear all round the edge of the drop, pointing towards the centre; they are the tips of long, narrow silver fern-leaves with perfectly straight stems. The whole of the drop is soon covered with this lovely network, each frond sparkling like a diamond; but unfortunately its beauty is of short duration. The light, symmetrical forms become heavy and clumsy-looking, many of the fronds break off, the brilliancy dies away like a fading sunset, and the final formation is dull and leaden. Sometimes this particular salt crystallises in quite a startling manner. I have seen first one long, straight leaf form along the top of the drop, then one on each side, and then one at the bottom, forming a perfect rectangle; then another rectangle formed in the same way within the first, then another within the second, and so on until the whole space was filled up.

It would take many long evenings to exhaust the pleasures to be derived from even such a small stock of salts as I happen to possess. No one who has not observed this marvellous process of crystallisation can imagine what a fascinating study it is. Why do so many crystals assume these graceful, leaf-like forms? If all this loveliness is contained in one tiny drop of water not larger than a small pin-head, how small a part can we ever know of the inconceivable abundance of Nature's hidden beauties! All these fairy-like scenes that we can raise at will would never have been seen or imagined by man had it not been for the invention of the microscope. What other wondrous scenes are there being enacted in every second of time within us and around us which the eye of man has never seen nor his intellect imagined! Will the accident of

circumstances or the ingenuity of man some day place within our grasp some new means of observation which will lay bare to us some new worlds of which we have hitherto not dreamed?

Is there any necessity to turn one's back on home, to rush into the vortex of town gaiety, in order to find pleasure, excitement, and romance? I trow not.

OUR DEATH'S-HEAD.

THE remarkable and beautiful Death's-Head moth is the largest of our moths and butterflies, often measuring no less than six inches from tip to tip when the wings are fully expanded. It has a broad, thick body, a large head, and a short tongue; and carries on the back strange markings resembling a human skull, from which it derives its popular name. The fore-wings are blackish gray, mottled with red and yellow, and the hind ones of a rich brown-yellow barred with black.

The caterpillar is equally handsome, about five inches long, and generally of a green or yellow colour, with numerous small black dots, and seven oblique violet stripes on each side; and near the end of the body it possesses a small rough horn. When at rest it is fond of assuming a most curious sphinx-like posture. During July and August it is busy in potato fields, greedily eating away at the leaves; but a little perseverance is needed to capture it, notwithstanding its great size, since it feeds at night, and remains concealed low down on the stem throughout the day. It, however, takes kindly to other plants, as the nettle, the dog-wood, common jasmine, the deadly and the woody nightshade. About the middle of August usually it becomes full-fed, and retires into the ground to undergo its transformations; and by the end of August and in September appears on the wing.

Both its superior dimensions and the peculiar marking of a human skull on the thorax render this moth sufficiently remarkable; but what is still more striking and unique about it is its voice, or the power of uttering a shrill, plaintive, and mournful squeak, like the squeak of a mouse. Some moths readily produce it whenever touched or disturbed, but nothing will induce others to make it at all. Even the earlier stages of the insect have been proved to possess this strange power. The chrysalis has been heard to squeak shortly before the appearance of the adult form; and the caterpillar makes an odd grating or crackling noise when irritated, that may be compared to the snap that accompanies an electric spark; and it sometimes is repeated in rapid succession, like the winding up of a watch. Cottagers describe the caterpillar as biting its teeth at you. Doubtless the sound serves it as a means of defence, and arises from a jerky movement of the large, hard jaws over each other.

We can hardly wonder that a creature endowed with so many startling characteristics should be an object of superstitious alarm to ignorant country folk. That it is nocturnal in habit, flying only in the morning and evening twilight, serves but to heighten the unfounded fear. When it occurs in immense abundance, as it sometimes does in different parts of Europe, the people are seized with alarm, believing it to be a harbinger of war, pestilence, and death. It goes by the names of Death's-Head Phantom and Wandering Death's-Bird in German Poland. An odd notion prevails in the Isle of France that it is dangerous; that the dust cast from its wings in flying through a room will blind you if it happens to fall in the eyes. Even in some places in England there is a common saying that it is in collusion with witches.

Whether it sucks food from flowers or not is not quite clear; its tongue appears to be too short for the purpose. But it appreciates honey—of that there can be no doubt; and it is well-known to enter beehives when it gets a chance. These huge moths have been found trying to gain access to the hives, having evidently been attracted by the odour of the honey. It is not easy to understand how a creature without offensive weapons and unprotected by any hard covering can either resist or survive the attacks of the indignant bees; but it has been observed that the hostility of the bees is disarmed by the stridulous voice of the moth, in a manner similar to their control by the voice of their queen. Instances are known in which the moth has been found dead within a hive, the bees being unable to eject so bulky an insect, having embalmed it completely in wax.

Sometimes it makes itself tiresome in this way to beekeepers, but is never likely to become so plentiful as to do much harm in this country. Modern-shaped beehives keep it out, and when old-fashioned hives are used, one can easily prevent the entrance of the moth by covering the opening into the hive with wire grating having apertures fine enough to admit nothing larger than the proper inmates. According to some continental beekeepers, the bees, apparently aware of the intrusion, take the remedy, so to speak, in their own hands. When put in the old-style hives, they erect a kind of fortification at their door, through which it is impossible for the Death's-Head to pass.

As a moth, the Death's-Head is excessively sluggish, and can hardly be roused in the day-time, even by pinching and throwing it into the air, to flutter the shortest distance. On the other hand, few insects are so powerful or indefatigable on the wing at night. Often it flies on board ships at sea, hundreds of miles from land. A few years ago a specimen was taken in their boat by fishermen in

the North Sea, about a hundred miles east of May Island. When squeezed it has been noticed to be able to emit an odour that may be compared to that of jasmine or musk.

This moth has a wide distribution. It is found over the whole of Europe and large portions of Africa and Western Asia, but does not appear to occur in America. It seems to have been taken everywhere in the United Kingdom, including the Orkney and Shetland Isles. For all this, probably its native home is the subtropics. In colder countries, as in Europe and with us, its appearance is irregular and uncertain, occurring only casually and at long intervals, or is only common in favourable years. Taking these facts into consideration, and from the fact of it being captured in mid-ocean, naturalists conclude that, generally speaking, it is rather a wanderer in than a denizen of Britain.

In one little corner of our country, however, in the warmer portions of the east and south-eastern counties, as in Kent, the moth is claimed to be constant, or found almost every year. These spots, then, we may regard as our nurseries of the moths; and we may suppose that they love to forsake the place of their birth in summer, and roam about over the rest of the country. When the moths are unusually abundant with us, then we may believe that the home supply has been largely increased by the arrival of immigrants from the Continent.

We have seen that the moth emerges in the autumn—in September. It is, however, somewhat irregular in this respect; and though September seems to be the great month for it on the wing, it also appears in October, occasionally as late as November, and probably hibernates. Else it lies in the pupa state through the winter, not turning to moth until the subsequent late spring or summer.

As regards the caterpillars, the same uncertainty prevails. You may find them almost full-fed as early as the end of June and as late as October; but July and August seem certainly the great months for the appearance of this stage. It is these caterpillars that, under favourable conditions, produce the adults in September. Thus we come to realise this fact in the development of the Death's-Head moth: that the pupa stage may last only a few weeks, as in the case just mentioned, or may extend over many months, when the emergence of the perfect moth is delayed until the following year.

To rear this moth, the best way is to try and obtain the caterpillar. The pupæ are frequently found in the potato fields, when the potatoes are dug up in the autumn, but, from delicacy of skin, they are very frequently injured, and after such disturbance often die ere they become perfect. The cause of death may be the absence of their natural conditions. Under these, they bury themselves to a depth of eight to ten inches, forming a large oval chamber of the soil and a gummy secretion, smoothing it very carefully inside, and thus obtain a more even temperature and amount of moisture. Some people keep hibernating pupæ in a warm room, or even near a fire, always covered with moss or other porous material, which is kept constantly damp; or they may be placed in bran or fine sawdust. But perhaps, after all, it is simplest and best merely to protect them well from cold and leave them undisturbed.

Yet there is no denying that in this country this strange and beautiful moth is much less frequently met with than its larva; and as it so often dies before completing its transformations, one may count one's self lucky to acquire an indigenous specimen of the perfect insect.

RAINFALL.



OF all the meteorological elements, rainfall is that of which a knowledge is of most importance to landsmen. Though the science of meteorology is not yet sufficiently advanced to enable us to predict with much certainty the rain of to-morrow, still sufficient knowledge of its yearly and seasonal variations, and of its local distribution, has been gained to be of great service in the carrying out of the large waterworks schemes which are now considered necessary for most of our great manufacturing towns. For this knowledge we in Great Britain are largely indebted to the persevering labours of Mr G. J. Symons, F.R.S., who, from a small beginning in 1860, has now succeeded in organising a voluntary staff of nearly 3000 observers scattered over the kingdom. Mr Symons publishes a yearly volume, entitled *British Rainfall*, giving details of the rainfall at upwards of 3000 stations in the British Isles. With the help of these a rainfall-map may be constructed, from which one may see at a glance the variation in the local distribution of rainfall. Beginning with the eastern counties, we find the lowest rainfall, under 25 inches a year, occurs over an area extending from the Humber to Cambridge; the next zone, 25 to 30 inches a year, extending all down the east coast from Edinburgh to Surrey, and stretching as far inland as the Severn. Proceeding westward and to more hilly parts, the rainfall gradually increases, reaching 50 inches a year over large areas in the west of Scotland, the Lake District, Wales, and Dartmoor, and rising to 80 inches in the neighbourhood of the Trossachs, while in the Lake District a small area can boast of a rainfall up to 100 inches a year. This small area includes the most rainy part of England, the

average fall at Seathwaite being 137 inches a year; while the Stye, about a mile distant, has an average fall of 170 inches, with a maximum in 1872 of 244 inches. Such falls as these are seldom exceeded in temperate climates; but at Cherrapunji, a station in the Khasi Hills, in Assam, the average over twenty years amounts to no less than 493 inches. In 'rainless' Egypt, on the other hand, the average at Alexandria is 8 inches and at Cairo 1½ inch a year. In most of our large waterworks schemes advantage has been taken of the heavy rainfalls and high altitudes of the west for the supply of towns in drier and lower districts. The Thirlemere district, from which Manchester now obtains the greater part of its water, has an average rainfall of about 90 inches a year. At Lake Vyrnwy, which supplies Liverpool, the rainfall is upwards of 70 inches a year; and in the Elan valley, in Mid-Wales, which is now being appropriated for Birmingham, the annual rainfall amounts to 68 inches.

In Ireland we have a rainfall of under 30 inches over a small area from Dublin to the Shannon, increasing to 40 inches in Donegal; while in the south-west a large area, extending from Tipperary to Valencia, has a rainfall of over 50 inches a year. It will be seen that, generally speaking, the rainfall increases as we pass from east to west and from lowlands to highlands. On comparing the rain of wet and dry seasons with that of the average of a number of years, the following rules have been established for stations in Great Britain:

1. The wettest year will have a fall of nearly half as much again as the mean.

2. The driest year will have one-third less than the mean.

3. The average of the driest two consecutive years will be one-quarter less than the mean.

4. The average of the driest three consecutive years will be one-fifth less than the mean.

Our knowledge of rainfall is not confined to its yearly variations alone, but particulars may be had of the monthly, daily, and even hourly fall at several stations. The wettest time of the year is not the same in all parts of the country. In the Midlands, for instance, February, March, and April are the driest months, and July, August, and October the wettest, the average of the wet months being half as much again as that of the dry ones. At Seathwaite, April to June are the dry months, with an average of 7 to 8 inches each; while October to January are the wet months, with an average of 14 to 16 inches each.

When we turn to daily rainfall, we find that returns from tropical countries show much heavier falls than our own. At Hong-kong, for instance, with an average rainfall of 88 inches, upwards of 27 inches have been known to fall in twenty-four hours; while at Seathwaite, with a much heavier yearly fall—137 inches—the wettest day on record had slightly over 8 inches. One of the greatest rainstorms known is that which caused such destruction at Brisbane in 1893. The storm lasted for four days, beginning with 10 inches on the first day, followed by 20 inches on the second, 35 on the third, and finishing up with 10 inches on the last day. In the Khasi Hills, which appears to be the wettest region in the world, 30 inches a day has been recorded for five successive days.

For hourly falls the storm previously mentioned at Hong-kong shows some 'heavy scoring,' close upon 3 inches an hour being recorded for four consecutive hours. This is, however, quite eclipsed in California, where, according to a recent publication of the Weather Bureau of the United States Department of Agriculture, 11 inches have fallen within an hour. Or taking shorter periods, English thunderstorms show some surprising figures. During a storm in London in 1878, for instance, half-an-inch was twice recorded as having fallen in five minutes. Such storms are, however, both very local and of rare occurrence.

FLAMBOROUGH HEAD.

WHERE the stormy tempests blow, and the cold tides ebb and flow
O'er the rocks that far below make cruel bed,
There, grim and bare and grand, does the sea-lapped landmark stand
That, world-over, sailors know as Flamborough Head.

Oh! the summer days are long, and the hearts of men are strong,
And there's none may seek the living with the dead;
For many a fisher brave finds with winter gales a grave
In the stormy sea that lashes Flamborough Head.

When the murky night draws in, and the haven's yet to win,
And the waters roar like lions ere they're fed,
Then a light shines far and wide o'er the seething, surging tide
From the lighthouse standing guard off Flamborough Head.

Though the hamlet seems to sleep there are those that vigil keep,
And many an eye that brims with tears unshed;
There is sorrow on the sea, and a bitter weird they dree
Who tearless mourn the lost off Flamborough Head.

When the North Sea lies at rest, and the boats upon its breast
By the gentle breeze that fans it on are sped,
Ere the sky turns blue to green, speed you forth to 'King' and 'Queen'—
The wondrous sea-washed rocks off Flamborough Head.

But the fishers tell their tales of the wild October gales,
Of the minute-guns the bravest well may dread:
Of the sadness of farewell when the cry rides o'er the swell,
'Man the lifeboat!' and they launch her off the Head.

They are men of noble deeds, they are folk of simple needs,
And to danger and to toil their hands are wed;
And they ask no kinder fate than to serve and stand and wait,
And in God's good time to die off Flamborough Head.

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A RAILWAY INTO CLOUDLAND.

By George Gale Thomas.

TIME was when the traveller who would ascend the higher Swiss valleys had either to trust to 'Shanks his mare' or drive a hard bargain with the crafty mountain innkeeper for a plodding saddle-horse and a man to lead the same. Picking his way painfully up rough bridle-paths, he had to divide his attention unequally between keeping his balance over the lurches of the faithful beast and the delights of the scenery gradually unfolding to his gaze in the ascent, and the appreciation of the scenery generally suffered considerably from the inequalities of the road. Then, as the number of travellers increased, the enterprising Swiss began to cater for their patrons by making roads up the more frequented valleys; the *diligence* was installed, and twice a week in the season went rumbling up and down with its little cargo of mountaineers.

To-day Switzerland has become in very truth 'the playground of Europe,' and its tourists are counted by tens of thousands yearly. The old cumbrous methods no longer suffice, and the Swiss, ever equal to the occasion if money is to be made, have laid out considerable sums in the construction of mountain railways, whose tiny tracks wind their sinuous way up many an upland valley from the Oberland on the one side to the Valais on the other.

No longer does the stream of carriage traffic find its way over the Pass of the Brünig. The road is deserted even in the height of the season, and an ever-increasing army of travellers crowds the little train creeping over the steep ridge. Instead of a six-mile tramp up the road from Interlaken to the little village of St Beatenberg, perched on the precipitous edge of the Guggisgrat, one can ascend in a little car from the bank of the blue Lake of Thun.

To be sure, the nervous traveller has a *mauvais quart d'heure* as he anxiously watches the wire-cable which alone stands between him and eternity; but nevertheless this little railway has made one of the most delightful villages of the Alps accessible to all.

Not content with achievements such as these, the Swiss have made railways up the Rigi and Pilatus to heights of six and seven thousand feet respectively, and other smaller heights like the Stanserhorn, the Burgenstock, and the Schynige Platte; while the little railway up to the heights of Mürren gives one the thrilling experience of ascending a gradient of one in four. Last year, too, was finished the railway up the Rothhorn, which holds the present record as the highest railway in Switzerland.

The success of these ventures has only encouraged the Swiss to higher flights of enterprise, and the latest plan is one the audacity of which far exceeds all previous attempts. This is none other than to carry a railway to the very summit of the Jungfrau, a height of 13,670 feet, only two thousand short of the height of Mont Blanc itself—a railway into the very topmost pinnacles of the Alps, up above the clouds. '*C'est trop, c'est trop de l'audace,*' said a Swiss to me, standing in the valley below; and the impertinence of the attempt—if one may use the expression—comes home to the traveller looking up to those awful heights, now hidden in cloudland, now gleaming white and gold in the sun far above the world of life.

The result to be achieved was tempting in the last degree. Who would not be ready, if it were possible, to take a train journey to the top of the Jungfrau, and enjoy the delights of being at a height hitherto only accessible to a few hardy mountaineers after long and arduous toil, without counting the heavy expense of employing the necessary guides? Here was a golden harvest to be reaped if Nature could be vanquished. Only a millionaire was wanted, and the promoters were fortunate in finding in M. Guyot-Sellat one who combined an enterprising brain with the longest purse in Switzerland; and, under his fostering care, the work was commenced last summer.

Hitherto mountain engineering had been limited

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to levelling tracks on reasonably accessible paths and devising special systems of cog-wheels with which to pull up the steep gradients and to regulate the speed of the descent. But the presence of a glacier or of snow-drifts above the snow-line had been thought to be an insurmountable barrier to mechanical progress; and from a height of 9000 feet upwards the mountain was in the region of eternal snow. How, then, to prevent the line being swept away, as fast as made, by the constant avalanches on the upper snow-fields? or how to carry it over the endless crevasses of a slowly-descending glacier? Impossible! There was but one way—to go underground; and this was the plan adopted.

The starting-point chosen for the railway is itself some 7000 feet above the level of the sea, leaving nearly 7000 feet still to be surmounted. Setting out from the fertile plain of Interlaken, the little train of the Bernese Oberland railway is taken for a toilsome ascent of seven miles up the valley, until Grindelwald is reached after an hour and a half. Here the train of the Wengern Alp railway turns aside up the great valley and crawls painfully higher and higher to the ridge of the Little Scheidegg. At this picturesque spot, in an amphitheatre of great mountains, the Jungfrau railway commences. The line runs first on open ground, gradually ascending on the slopes of the great snow-capped Eiger. To the right is the steep side of the Jungfrau, seamed with the track of the avalanches that thunder down its side every half-hour on the hot summer days. As we ascend higher, the deep valley of Lauterbrunnen appears in sight beyond the Wengern Alp; while above it is perched the little hamlet of Mürren, hanging on the very brink of the precipice.

At length we reach the edge of the Eiger glacier, where the first station is already being made. It had been originally intended to carry the open track somewhat farther on to the foot of the great rock of the Rothstock; but it was found that the constant falls of rock from the steep sides rendered it too dangerous; so from this point the line is to run underground, beneath the Eiger glacier, to the station of Mönchjoch, at a height of 10,500 feet, thence continuing along the side of the Mönch to the station of the Jungfraujoch (11,100 feet), where the Jungfrau itself is directly attacked.

The first gallery at the side of the glacier was commenced last summer. The hardness of the rock necessitated the use of powerful explosives. A newly invented explosive—lithotrit—was tried. It has the advantage of being perfectly harmless if brought into contact with flame in an unconfined space, and it is claimed by its inventor that it acts better than dynamite when confined, and is unaffected by changes of temperature, while at the same time costing only half the price.

Slowly and painfully the shafts are sunk to enable the tunnels to be struck out below in either direction, and at the end of the summer these were being pushed rapidly on to permit as many workmen as possible to have room to work underground through the winter. Some three hundred are employed—Italians, as is usual on all railway works in Switzerland—and they are sheltered in two barrack-houses some half a mile apart.

As I entered the first house from the outer air, I stepped into a world of darkness, where the air was close and stifling. Down each side was a row of berths divided by boards—each berth for two men. Here and there an unkempt son of the South was lying under a sort of horse-cloth blanket. At the end of the barrack the smiling *magasinero* led the way into the larder, stored as for a siege; for after the end of September the little railway up from Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen works no longer, owing to the winter snows. From that time on until the end of May these men are to be up on the mountain-side, cut off from the living world, exiles in a world of snows magnificent to see, but cold and inclement in the last degree. In the day they are boring away in the tunnels, and at evening return to the barrack near to pass the night. Dreariest of existences!

At intervals the tunnels will have galleries giving access to the upper world, and at each of these will be built the inevitable restaurant, with a balcony for the view. As each stage is completed passengers will be run on to the point of vantage; and the undertaking will thus be made to pay its way step by step as it goes, and an immediate return will be obtained on the capital.

Already a million francs have been expended, and it is expected that five or six millions—say about £250,000—will be spent in all. In this way, even should unexpected circumstances prevent the farther progress of the railway at any given point, a profitable return will be assured to the enterprising owners; for there will always be an enormous number of people only too ready to take advantage of the opportunity of getting, without risk or fatigue, to these high altitudes to breathe the exhilarating air and rest a while among the eternal snows.

There will be nothing unpleasant in the underground journey, as the propelling power will be electricity. Works are being constructed for the utilisation of some of the immense water-power of Lauterbrunnen for transmission up the mountain; and the familiar rack-and-pinion system of cog-wheels to run in the middle of the track will be employed for the trains.

Four years will be taken for the work, so that the year 1900 should witness its completion. The last portion of the tunnel will run into the very heart of the mountain, whence the passengers will mount by a lift for nearly three hundred feet to the summit of the Jungfrau—to enjoy

one of the noblest views in the whole world. What shall we say of this invasion of the silence of the eternal snows—of this trespass upon one of the few things that still remain sacred to us?

There is no doubt that the project, if successful, will serve many a useful purpose. It will open to all the world the wondrous beauties of the view from that magnificent height, and give the weakest the opportunity of breathing an invigorating air to which they would never have had the strength to climb. For medical purposes it will enable a useful study of the causes and prevention of mountain-sickness to be made, and will confer a boon by systematic meteorological observations on the summit, which will warn climbers in all parts of the country of coming changes, and thus materially lessen the danger of expeditions.

On such a vast area as this single mountain, the outlets of the railway to the upper air will be hardly distinguishable, and except at those points, and at the actual summit, the mountain will be left practically as silent and untrodden as ever; while for those who want to be even more alone with Nature, there still remain enough peaks to give the most energetic climber a wider playground than he can ever fully explore. Yet one cannot but feel a sincere, if sentimental, regret for this noble giantess of the Alps, who has stood proudly in her loneliness from all time, admitting to her vast silences none but the bolder spirits of the ages, and delivering up her secrets only to the worthy few who have wooed through storm and stress, braving the dangers of the treacherous snow and the hidden crevasse, and daring the perils of the roaring avalanche and blinding snow-drift.

Have any dared to treat her without respect—they have been swept away into nameless graves in her icy bosom. But now she is to succumb to this daring attack, and admit to her inner secrets the crowding tourist and the personally-conducted tripper, or any one who will care to spend forty francs on a return railway-ticket, while the clear air of the topmost height is disturbed by importunate voices demanding from the waiters '*Lager Bier mit Cigarren.*'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXXV.—SMITWOOD.

THAT I am alive to this day and fit to write this tale I owe to William Baillie. He saw me fall and the press close over me, and though hard beset himself, he made one effort for my salvation. 'Mathy,' he cried, 'and Tam and Andra, look after your man and get him up,' and then once more he was at death-grips. They obeyed his bidding as well as they might, and made a little ring in the centre around me, defending me with their weapons. Then they entwined us and lifted me, senseless as I was, to the light and air. As for Kennedy, he was heavy and florid, and his life had gone from him at the first overthrow.

I do not know well how I was got from the fray. I think I should have been killed had not the Ruthvens, whose best men were wounded, given way a little after. Their trick of surrounding the enemy by spreading wide their wings was not wise, and met with sorry success; for it left their middle so weak that when Kennedy and the valiant Earl had been mastered there remained no resistance. So, when my friends made haste to push with me to the back, they found their path none so hard. And after all that there was nothing but confusion and rout; the one side fleeing with their wounded, the other making no effort to pursue, but remaining to rest and heal their hurts.

As I have said, I was unconscious for some time, and when I revived I was given a sleeping draught of the gipsies' own making. It put me into a profound slumber, so that I slept for the rest of the day and night, and well on to the next morning. When I awoke I was in a rough cart, drawn by two little horses, in the centre of the troop, who were hurrying westward. I felt my body with care, and found that I was whole and well. A noise still hummed in my head, and my eyes were not very clear, as, indeed, was natural after the fray of the day before. But I had no sore hurt, only little flesh scratches, which twinged at the time, but would soon be healed.

But if this was my case, it was not that of the rest of the band. The battle had been like all such gipsy fights—very terrible and bloody, but with no great roll of dead. Indeed, on our side we had not lost a man; and of the enemy Kennedy alone had died, who, being a big man and full-blooded, had been suffocated in his fall by the throng above him. It was just by little that I had escaped the same fate, for we two at the time had been in death-grips; and had I not been thin and hardy of frame I should have perished there and then. But the wounds were so terrible on both sides that it scarce seemed possible that many could ever recover. Yet I heard in after-days that not one died as a result of that day's encounter. Even the Earl of Hell and his daughter Jean recovered from their wounds and wandered through the country for many years. But the sight of the folk around me on the march was very terrible. One man limped along with a great gash on his thigh, in which I could have placed my open hand. Another had three fingers shorn

off, and carried his maimed and bandaged arm piteously. Still a third lay in the cart with a breast wound which gaped at every breath, and seemed certain ere long to bring death. Yet of such strength and hardihood were these extraordinary people that they made light of such wounds, and swore they would be healed in three weeks' time. Perhaps this tenacity of life is due in some part to their excellent doctoring, for it is certain that these folk have great skill in medicaments, and with herb-concoctions and I know not what else will often perform wondrous cures. I have my own case as an instance—where first I was restored from a high fever by their skill, and second from a fit of suffocation far more deadly.

The storms of the day before had passed, and a light frost set in which made the air clear and sharp and the country-side plain even to the distances. We were passing under the great mass of Tintock, a high hump-backed hill which rises sheer from the level land and stands like a mighty sentinel o'er the upper Clyde valley. We travelled slow, for the wounded were not fit to bear much speed, and many of the folk walked, to suffer the horses to be yoked to the carts. After a little I espied the captain walking at the side, with his shoulder and cheeks bandaged, but as erect and haughty as ever. Seeing that I was awake, he came over beside me and asked very kindly after my health. His tenderness toward me was as great as if I had been his son or nearest blood-kin. When I told him that I was well and would get down and walk beside him, he said that that would be a most unbecoming thing, and would never do, but that he would have a horse brought me from the back. So a horse was brought—an excellent black, with white on its fetlocks—and I mounted, and, despite some little stiffness, found it much to my liking.

Baillie told of the end of the battle and all the details of its course. He was in the highest spirits; for, though his folk were sore wounded, they had yet beaten their foes and sent them off in a worse plight than themselves. Above all he was full of a childish vanity in his own prowess. 'Saw you that muckle hullion Kennedy, Master Burnet? I gied him some gey licks, but I never could win near eneuch to him for his muckle airm. You grippit him weel, and he'll no bother us mair. His ain folk'll keep quiet eneuch aboot the affair, I'll warrant, so we may look to hear naething mair about it. I'm thinkin', tae, that the Yerl'll no' seek to come back my gate again. I tried to mak' him fecht like a gentleman, but faith, he wadna dae't. He just keepit cuttin' at my shanks till I was fair wild, and telled some o' our ain folk to tak' the legs frae the body wi' a scythe-stick. I ha'ena seen a fecht like it since that at the Romanno Brig fifteen years syne, atween the Faas and the Shawes, when they were gaun frae Haddington to Harestane. Oor folk wad ha'e been in't if they hadna comed up ower late and just seen the end o't.'

'And will you have no further trouble about the matter?' I asked. 'If the justice gets word of it will you not suffer?'

'Na, na,' he said, with conviction; 'nae fear. Thae things dinna come to the lugs o' the law. We didna dae ony hairm except to oorsels, and there's nane o' us killed save Kennedy, whae deed a naitural death, so there can be nae word aboot that. Forbye, how's the law to grip us?' And he turned on me a face full of roguish mirth which looked oddly between the bandages. 'If they heard we were at Biggar Moss yae day and cam' after us, afore the morn we wad be in the Douglas muirs or the Ettrick hills. We're kittle cattle to fash wi'. We gang slow for ordinar', but when aucht presses we can flee like a flock o' stirlin's.'

'Then where are you going?' I asked.

'Whaur but to Lanerick,' he said. 'There's a fair comes on there Monday three days, and the muir is grand beddin'. I didna ask your will on the maitter, for I kenned a' places the noo were muckle the same to ye, provided they were safe and no' ower far away frae the wast country.'

'That's true enough,' I said, thinking sadly of Marjory and my miserable plight. I had not told Baillie anything of my story, for I did not care to commit it to such ears. But I was glad that we travelled in this airt, for I had still in my heart a wild hope that by some fortunate chance I should be in time to save my love.

About midday we came to Lanark Moor, where the baggage and shelties, as well as most of the women and children, were left behind to find an encampment. As for us, we pushed on to the town to see what was doing and hear some news of the country-side. I had no fear of detection, for in my new guise I passed for the veriest gipsy in the land. I was still clothed in my suit of crimson, but the fight had left it torn in many places, and all smirched with mire and bog-water. Also, my face was not only stained with the captain's dye, but the storms and dust of the encounter had deepened its colour to the likeness of an Ethiop. I had not a rag left of gentility, save maybe the sword which still swung at my side. In this fashion I rode by Baillie's elbow in a mood neither glad nor sad, but sunk in a sort of dogged carelessness. The entrance to the town was down a steep path from the moor, for the place is built above the gorge of the Clyde, yet somewhat lower than the surrounding moorlands. Far on all sides I had a view of the wide landscape, from the rugged high hills of Tweeddale and the upper Clyde to the lowlands in the west, which stretch to Glasgow and the sea.

But when we came to the town there was a great to-do, men running about briskly and talking to one another, old women and young gossiping at house and close doors, and the upper

windows filled with heads. There was a curious, anxious hum throughout the air, as if some great news had come, or was coming ere long. I forgot for a moment my position, and leaned from the saddle to ask the cause at a man who stood talking to a woman at the causeway-side. He looked at me rudely. 'What for d'ye want to ken, ye black-faced tinkler? D'ye think it'll maitter muckle to you what king there is when you're hangit?' But the woman was more gracious, and deigned to give me some sort of answer. 'There's word o' news,' she said. 'We kenna yet what it is, and some think ae thing and some anither, but a' are agreed that it'll mak' a gey stramash i' the land. A man cam' ridin' here an hour syne, and has been closeted wi' the Provost ever since. Honest man, his heid'll be fair turned if there's onything wrang, for he's better at sellin' tatties than reddin' the disorders o' the State.' And then the man by her side bade her hold her peace, and I rode on without hearing more.

By-and-by we came to the market-place, where stands the ancient cross of Lanerick, whereat all proclamations are made for the Westlands. Straight down from it one looks on the steep braes of Kirkfieldbank and the bridge which the Romans built over the river; and even there the murmur of the great falls in Clyde comes to a man's ear. The place was thronged with people standing in excited groups, and the expression on each face was one of expectancy. Folk had come in from the country round as on some errand of inquiry, and the coats of a few of the soldiery were to be discerned among the rest. But I had no fear of them, for they were of the Lowlands regiment, and had no knowledge of me. The sight of us, and of myself in especial —for Baillie had changed his garb—caused some little stir in the crowd and many inquisitive looks.

The captain came up to me. 'There's dooms little to be done here,' he cried; 'the place is in sic a fever. I canna think what's gaun to happen. We may as weel gang back to the muirs and wait till things quiet doun.'

'I know not either,' said I; and yet all the time I knew I was lying, for I had some faint guess at the approach of great tidings, and my heart was beating wildly.

Suddenly the crowd parted at the farther end, and a man on a wearied grey horse rode up toward the cross. He held a bundle of papers in his hand, and his face was red with hurry and excitement. 'News,' he cried hoarsely— 'great news—the greatest and the best that the land has heard for many a day.' And as the people surged round in a mighty press he waved them back, and dismounted from his horse. Then slowly and painfully he ascended the steps of the cross and leaned for a second against the shaft to regain his breath. Then he stood forward, and cried out in a loud voice that all in the market-place might hear: 'I have ridden post-haste from Edinbro' with the word, for it came only this morn. James Stuart has fled from the throne, and William of Orange has landed in the south, and is on his way to London. The bloody house has fallen, and the troubling of Israel is at an end.'

At that word there went through the people that sound which I shall never forget as long as I live—the sigh of gratitude for a great deliverance. It was like a passing of a wind through a forest, and more terrible to hear than all the alarms of war. And then there followed a mighty shout, so loud and long that the roofs trembled, and men tossed bonnets in air, and cried aloud and wept, and ran hither and thither like madmen. At last the black cloud of the persecution had lifted from their land, and they were free to go and tell their kinsmen in hiding that all danger was gone for ever.

As for myself, what shall I say? My first feeling was one of utter joy. Once more I was free to go whither I liked and call my lands my own. Now I could overmaster my cousin and set out to the saving of my lass. Indeed, I, who am a king's man through and through, and who sorrowed in after-days for this very event, am ashamed to say that my only feeling at the moment was one of irrepressible gladness. No one who has not for many months been under the shadow of death can tell the blessedness of the release. But even as I joyed I thought of Marjory, and the thought recalled me to my duty.

'Have you a fast horse?' I said to the captain.

He looked at me in amazement, for the tidings were nothing to him, and in my face he must have read something of my tale.

'You mean'—— he said.

'Yes, yes,' said I; 'it means that I am now safe, and free to save another. I must be off hot-foot. Will you lend me a horse?'

'Take mine,' said he; 'it's at your service; and take my guidwill wi' ye;' and he dismounted and held out his hand.

I mounted and took his hand in one parting grip. 'God bless you, William Baillie, for an honest man and a gentleman;' and I was off without another word.

I passed over the road I had come, and had no time to reflect on the difference in my condition from two hours agone, when, abject and miserable, I had plodded along it. Now all my head was in a whirl and my heart in a storm of throbbing. The horse's motion was too slow to keep pace with my thoughts and my desires; and I found me posting on ahead of myself, eager to be at my goal. In such wild fashion I rode over the low haughlands of Clyde, and forded the river at a deep place where it flowed still and treacherous among reeds, never heeding, but swimming my horse across, though

I had enough to do to land on the other side. Then on through the benty moorlands of Douglas-side, and past the great wood of the Douglas Castle. My whole nature was centred in one great desire of meeting, and yet even in my longing I had a deadly suspicion that all might not be well—that I had come too late.

Then I saw the trees, and the old house of Smitwood lying solemn among its meadows. I quickened my horse to fresh exertion. Like a whirlwind he went up the avenue, making the soft turf fly beneath his heels. Then with a start I drew him up at the door, and cried loudly for admittance.

Master Veitch came out with a startled face, and looked upon me with surprise.

'Is Marjory within?' I cried. 'Marjory!—quick, tell me!'

'Marjory,' he replied, and fell back with a white face. 'Do you seek Marjory? She left here two days agone to go to you, when you sent for her. Your servant Nicol went after her.'

'O my God,' I cried, 'I am too late!' and I leaned against my horse in despair.

THREE YEARS OF THE NEW DEATH-DUTIES.

FOUR years have passed since Sir William Harcourt brought in his Budget of 1894, and the new death-duties have now been in force for three complete financial years. Opinions have differed, and for a time probably will continue to differ, as to the mischievous or beneficial effect of the Finance Act; but all are agreed that the statute which regulates the payment of about one-tenth of the annual revenue of the country was the greatest piece of legislation of the day, and entitles its author to rank as a Budget-maker with Sir Robert Peel and Mr Gladstone.

The act, it may be recalled, was the result of agitation. A section of the community had long clamoured for some readjustment of the burden of taxation, for a new and fertile principle of levying duties; and Sir William Harcourt's Budget was therefore not entirely due to a lean year. 'If I had had a surplus instead of a deficit,' he stated in parliament, 'I would still have attempted to deal with the death-duties.' At the same time it was the natural concomitant of a deficit on the imperial balance-sheet for the year and of increased expenditure on the navy. For long national expenditure had been increasing by leaps and bounds, till in twenty years it had expanded nearly £24,000,000, and in a period of comparative peace had reached (if we include grants to local taxation) the astounding annual total of £103,000,000. To find the money was the first object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; to reform the incidence of taxation, and avert the dangers of a socialistic attack upon individual property by a fair diminution of taxes on the comparatively poor, and a fair increase of taxes on accumulated wealth, were his next aims. Determined to adhere to the sound maxim of all good housekeeping, imperial or domestic, 'Pay as you go,' Sir William Harcourt found himself compelled to provide for an estimated deficit in the coming year of £4,500,000, and £1,000,000 he obtained from the readjustment of the death-duties—a readjustment which he expected ultimately would yield an increase of revenue of from £3,500,000 to £4,000,000.

All kinds of dismal prophecies dogged the passage of the bill through parliament. Aggregation of heritable property with personalty and 'settled' property into one estate, the payment of duty upon the principal value of that estate, and at a graduated rate increasing with the largeness of the sum—these distinctive features of the new taxation were named the 'accumulated horrors' of the act, and the death of agriculture, the pauperisation of the landowners, and the flight of capital from the country were predicted results. The following deliberate opinion of a London solicitor of great experience, expressed during the progress of the bill, is typical of the fears as to its evil effects then current. 'Speaking,' he said, 'from an experience of over fifty years, I believe that the proposed increase of death-duties will lead to great evasion, and consequently will be of doubtful advantage to the revenue. I have found an increasing desire, especially on the part of foreign merchants and others who have made money in this country, to escape these duties either by settlements or by transfer of property to their children under arrangements of various kinds. Further, people will be 'cute enough to discover that by investing their money in inscribed or other securities in America and elsewhere they will escape the probate-duty, and if they reinvest the income without bringing it to this country will also escape income-tax. I have known securities to the amount of millions sent out of this country in anticipation of death in order to escape duty. The present state of the law operates very hardly and causes much discontent in the case of capitalists resident abroad and not English subjects, who, as is often the case, have left large sums with leading mercantile and other houses in London and elsewhere. When they die the probate-duty now payable is very onerous. If it is increased the result may probably be the withdrawal of considerable capital from this country.'

The working of the act for three complete finan-

cial years has proved the fears of its opposers to have been unfounded so far as regards any detrimental effects on the revenue through evasion. On the contrary, since the act came into operation the Chancellor of Her Majesty's Exchequer has ceased to juggle with annual deficits, and once more conforming to Lord Sherbrooke's famous definition, may again truthfully be called 'an animal for the production of surpluses.' The growth of national prosperity has had its share in adding to those surpluses; but the fatness of the national purse is largely owing to the increase of the death-duties, which has exceeded all expectation. The part of the act relating to the death-duties came into operation on the expiration of the first day of August 1894, in the middle of a financial year, and the experience of the second half of the year 1894–95 was insufficient to give any clear indication of the financial effects of the changes which it introduced. The increased revenue from all the death-duties during that period was £1,138,000, and it is estimated that £960,000 of that sum was attributable to the new act. The financial year 1895–96 was the first complete year during which the statute was in force; the net gain to the Exchequer was £2,885,000 as compared with 1894–95, and £4,023,000 as compared with 1893–94, the last year before the passing of the act. Thus, in eighteen months, instead of in several years, there were realised the anticipations of Sir William Harcourt that the ultimate net gain to the revenue from the provisions of the act would be about four millions. In July 1896 the Finance Act 1896 came into operation. It contained certain clauses relating to the death-duties the objects of which were not to depart from the principles of the act of 1894, but to remove some cases of hardship which had become manifest in the working of the original act. Owing to the alleviations introduced by those clauses, the death-duties fell slightly for the year 1896–97, yielding £13,963,000, as compared with £14,088,605 in the previous year; they nevertheless exceeded the Chancellor of the Exchequer's estimate for the year. In 1897–98 the yield has been £15,328,000, an increase of £1,365,000, and £1,400,000 above the estimate.

These figures show that the fears of evasion were greatly exaggerated. Increased evasion there certainly has been; it is proved by the experience of solicitors, and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue also have found evidence of it in the statistics of the last three years. 'It is a safe generalisation,' they remark in one of their reports, 'that every increase in the rate of a tax is followed by some decrease in the amount of the property or the articles subject to it. The results of the Finance Act 1894 will certainly not constitute an exception to this most universal of fiscal experiences. But there is as yet no evidence to show that the new estate-duty is being avoided to a greater extent than was anticipated or allowed for at the time when it was imposed.'

One drawback of the new duties is the difficulty of estimating what they will yield in any one year. Under the former system a nearly uniform rate was levied on all estates, and the total value of estates liable to duty in a single year might be estimated beforehand with tolerable accuracy. But the system of graduation has introduced quite a new element, and has made a forecast very unreliable; for the amount of duty exigible depends now not only on the collective amount of estates, but also on the size of each. To go for an illustration to the last financial year ending April 1898, duty was paid in that year on the estates of nine millionaires valued in all at £15,750,000. The estate-duty alone on these amounted to £1,260,000, or more than one-twelfth of the entire revenue from death-duties of the year; and they no doubt yielded also a substantial sum in the shape of legacy and succession duties. But if it had chanced that the above sum of £15,750,000 had been equally divided among sixteen hundred people instead of among nine, the revenue would have benefited only to the extent of £472,500, the loss of £787,500 being due to the rate of duty that would have been leviable, millionaires paying eight per cent., while persons whose estates are worth nearly £10,000 pay only three per cent. Millionaires can hardly be expected to oblige the Chancellor of the Exchequer by dying at a uniform rate year after year; and thus, to quote the words of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, 'the deaths of a very few men on the one side of the line or on the other make a difference of hundreds of thousands of pounds in the receipts of the revenue during any particular year.' The fluctuations of the death-duties promise to be as full of surprises as Death himself; and blessed in the eyes of the revenue is the death of a millionaire.

Attempts at evasion have taken various forms; some have been successful, others have not. The commonest mode has been the transfer by a man while still in life of the whole or a considerable portion of his property to his children or other relatives. This method, however, is not unattended with risks; and there have been cases in which the favoured son unexpectedly predeceased his father, who found himself compelled to pay the very duties he had been over-anxious that his son should escape. Death, again, has intervened and taken away the parent within a year of the transfer, and so frustrated the hopes of evasion, which do not become certainties until twelve months have elapsed. The transfer must be absolute, with no reservations other than mental, as Earl Grey has found to his cost. In 1885, nine years before the Finance Act was passed, the late Earl Grey made over his estates to his nephew, the present Earl, subject to a rent-charge and a power of revocation. In 1894, ten days before his death, the late Earl released the rent-charge and the power of revocation; but notwithstanding this, estate-duty has been found due upon the whole estate conveyed, the

law regarding the transaction of 1885 as no real divestiture by the late owner. The deed which embodied it bristled with covenants and limitations, and the later deed of 1894 was rendered ineffectual by the death of the Earl within twelve months of its date. Most evidently the net of the Inland Revenue is spread very wide; its meshes are small; and it will require all the adroitness and acumen of solicitors even of fifty years' experience effectually to assist in the evasion of the death-duties by settlements of property under suitable arrangements. The attempt, however, is being made, especially in cases in which the duties would absorb three or four years' income, and there have even been instances of entail proprietors resigning their interest in their estate ('propelling' is the technical word) in favour of the next heir of entail.

The sums that have been paid in estate-duty on single estates are startling, a millionaire being mulcted in estate-duty alone to the extent of £80,000; while, if his estate descends to others than children, another £40,000 at least may be claimed for succession-duty. In Scotland the estates that have paid the largest duties are those of the late Earl of Moray and the late Duke of Hamilton. In England they have been matched recently by the estate of the late Sir Isaac Holden, and in other cases considerably surpassed. One curious effect of the Finance Act is that the gift of a poor man may be more valuable than that of a rich; for by it all legacy and succession duties were abolished in the case of estates under £1000 in value. Thus a legacy of £500 from a rich man may subject the recipient to payment of £50 of duty if he be a stranger in blood to the donee, while the same legacy from one who dies worth less than £1000 is free of duty.

Probably the only section of the community who consider the Finance Act an unmixed blessing are the managers and agents of life insurance companies. Very shortly after the introduction of the bill into parliament the idea occurred to insurance managers, who are feeling the pressure of keen competition, and who are ever on the outlook for new business, that in the Finance Act lay an unworked mine of insurance wealth. For, if a man's estate was liable on his death to duties amounting to £1000, surely the best way to provide for that liability was to insure his life for that sum. A large section of the public being in a state of panic, tempting advertisements were issued by most of the life insurance companies throughout the country; and that the bait took is evinced by the fact that the balance-sheet of every important life insurance company shows in the succeeding year a substantial increase in the amount of premiums paid. Royalty led the way, the Princess Royal, the Duke of Connaught, Princess Beatrice, and others all insuring for large sums—in some cases for as large policies as the insurance companies were prepared to grant. The Duke of Edinburgh's proposals to insure were, however, not accepted, his 'life' being, from the insurance point of view, it appears, not a promising or reassuring one. Insurance may advantageously be combined with an absolute transfer of property by a father to a son, the son insuring his life to cover the risk of his predecease. In such a case the premium would be much less than were the father to insure his own life, retaining his property himself.

It is very doubtful whether solicitors have profited by the statute. Certainly to Scotch lawyers, owing to the unfamiliar language in which the act is couched, its intricacies have caused a wear of brain-tissue incommensurate to any fees they may hope to obtain. A younger generation, nurtured on its provisions, may take kindlier to the fare; but the present race has had to unlearn too much to look upon its innovations with any favour. To no section of the community has it caused more trouble than to Inland Revenue officials. To them fell the task of preparing schedules explanatory of the provisions of the act and forms upon which accounts of the duties might be given up. This involved an immense amount of labour and endless revisions, and for some months the difficulty of getting accounts passed and the consequent delay caused no little inconvenience and irritation. The wheels of routine are now once more working smoothly, and the fact that there have been few judicial decisions on the act, and none in Scotland, is eloquent testimony to the skilful draughtsmanship of its framers.

THE CURSE OF MUNGI.

CHAPTER III.

GIVEN, a young man, mainly of yeoman stock, portionless, and born by some freak of a meddlesome Providence to a heritage merely of bodily sloth, commercial incapacity, and a spiritual fervour of restlessness that unite together to raise in him a curious longing called artistic ambition; and let this vain activity pitch him head-foremost into a place called London, which he discovers is for him, at the start of what he fatuously calls his career, a mere pandemonium and place of torture. Let him ripen there, or rot, whichever it is, for many months in a sour fourth-floor attic, tasting the bitterness of solitude at broad noon amid the tumultuous throbbing of that inner chamber of

the world's heart known as Fleet Street, and finding that the same thoroughfare at half-past two on a November morning, when the fog has chilled the marrow in him, and there is only one policeman in sight, is thronged with brilliant, impalpable, friendly presences—his Ideas. Then let him run home, and sit above blank sheets of paper, oblivious of meal-hours, till the dim twilight closes round him. And let him, while thus vaguely pursuing his folly, be told one day by the doctor in a dim and vast consulting-room, while the ponderous furniture seems to waltz solemnly round and round him, that those wheezings in his chest, and other mutterings of a rebellious economy, if left unstilled by fresh air and wholesome living, mean—the doctor forecasts the consequences as gently as may be, but with unmistakable clearness. And let the young man go dizzily out, and home, pawing blindly for support at mirage-like house-fronts and railings, and hungering for the unattainable in the form of sunlight clear of city smoke, and a house-free horizon, and sleep like death, with a passion of heart-hunger beside which the physical craving of the castaway is mere satiety. And let thereupon the fickle Providence, through its chosen instruments of death, a letter, a lawyer, and the rights of property, once more take this man up by neck and heels and pitch him half-round the world along the road of his desires. Given all that, with Hannah M'Cunn—ample in ignorance, mute as the stars concerning spiritual things, with the depths in her unstirred—by appointment of the same inscrutable Agency, to meet him, the heir of curse-ridden Mungi, at the end of his journey, and sing him into wakefulness with the song of her silence: and you have, flung together from the ends of the earth, the two poles of misunderstanding. You have them, too, in a setting most suitable for the working out of a very tragedy of misconception; putting forth in the dark, on a dusty five-mile bush-track, with a murder-haunted ruin at one end of it, and a Scotchman, nursing his bitter wrath against the unknown stranger, at the other.

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Donald M'Cunn once more sat at his hot pine-table. It was dark and late, and the doors and windows gaped as before; the night was choking hot, and the laden air thrilled maddeningly to the strident chirping of a multitude of locusts. Thoughts of the drought upon his lands; the rage that burned in him when he sought for spiritual comfort and for resignation; fear of the big daughter that had stood before him a little while ago like a mild, accusing angel; his quenchless hatred of the possessor of God-forsaken Mungi; and the aching hunger that all the while was in his ears, listening for the sound of the hoof-beats of his daughter's horse: these and the like uncomfortable musings had flogged the old squatter till he sat and clutched his head, because a fear had laid hold upon him of the things his hands might do and the words his tongue might utter if he set them free.

He heard the steady flupp-flupp of a horse's feet in the powdery earth, and ran out, seeming not glad, somehow, that his daughter had come safe home again.

Hannah, walking level with the horse's shoulder, with her hand upon his neck, was leading, or being led by, the grey, and dimly to be seen there sat a man riding woman-fashion in the woman's saddle. She stopped the horse five paces from the veranda, where M'Cunn stood tilted curiously forward, with his enormous hands hanging loosely at his sides.

'Who is this man?' he said; and at the sound of his voice Hannah went, not towards him, but nearer to the stranger.

'I—I forgot to ask his name—we—we were talking of other things, father; but he's a stranger, and he's hurt, and I brought him here for rest and food.' There was a fluttering in her voice that was new to Donald M'Cunn, and as he heard it the evil things that had threatened him in the dark entered into full possession of him.

'Ah!' he snarled; 'then I'll ask the gentleman that rides a-horseback while my daughter walks to repair the omeession and tell me what he's called.'

'Certainly,' the stranger said coldly and quietly. 'I'll answer the remark about riding and walking when there are no ladies present, Mr M'Cunn. My name is Baynton.'

Hannah stood away a step from the horse; M'Cunn laid hold of a veranda-post with both hands on a level with his face. The man who called himself Baynton looked from one to the other as if stupefied.

'Come away, Hannah; come away,' M'Cunn said in a dry half-whisper. 'And you — you, Baynton, accursèd of God, get away from before my face lest the Lorrd make me the instrument of His wrath towards you.'

The harsh song of the locusts filled up the pause that fell upon the three people, not one of whom could see in the starlit, sweltering dimness what was in the other's face. M'Cunn, with his hands still clutching the post, glared at his enemy. Although, when it sounded alone, the continuous brassy whirring of the locusts seemed deafening, like the sustained clashing of cymbals, yet the cringing of the saddle as Baynton drew himself sharply up, and even the sound of the girl's hands as they fell limp against her skirts, struck out as clearly against the uneasy buzzing of the insects as chalk-marks on a blackboard. The kind little grey horse champed sleepily on his bit and prepared to doze pending the removal of his saddle.

'Father,' said the girl, ashamed, 'the man's hurt and hungry. You'll never refuse him'——

'There's neither bite nor bed beneath my roof for the spoilers of my lan' and herrds.'

Mr M'Cunn's assiduous study of certain portions of the Scriptures, added to a native and cultured talent for an archaic and orthodox style of abuse of his enemies, rendered him, there could be no question about it, a dangerous opponent in acrimonious debate. Unfortunately for himself, though, at this supreme moment, with everything in his favour — standing armed on his own battlements, as it were, before a helpless rival, and with a twenty years' rage biting like scalding acid on his tongue—he was encountering, for the first time in his life, more than his match.

The stranger rose joyously to the occasion. He took off his huge brand-new sombrero with a politeness which at that time and place had something tragic in it, and turning to Hannah, said very deferentially: 'May I ask you to retire just a moment, Miss M'Cunn, while I settle a little matter of business with your father before I take my leave?'

'No, no,' she said, sobbing or laughing, it was hard to tell which; then, coming suddenly close to him, she whispered quickly up at him: 'Do what you must, but I'll not leave you. Lad, I'm frightened for you, somehow.'

Baynton nodded, and dropping his airy manner, he addressed himself clearly and cuttingly to the squatter: 'Donald M'Cunn, I am your neighbour. I and mine have done you no ill; I'm hungry, tired, and sore, and I ask you for your hospitality.'

'And I,' said the old man, with angry hardness, 'reefuse it to you and yours for evermore, and I bid you get out of my sight. Ay, and that quickly,' he added ferociously, waving his arms in the direction of Mungi.

'I'm going,' said the stranger coolly, 'presently. But I warn you, M'Cunn,' he said sternly, 'that if you send me away hungry, the blight that you —*you*, do you hear?'—he pointed a long finger at the old man's chest — 'brought down upon the house at Mungi shall descend upon your head; and the God that you have blasphemed against all your days shall visit you with the cruelty that you have meted out to others, and leave you at the last naked and alone.'

Hannah, trembling and bewildered, put up her hands. M'Cunn laid hold of the post again. This assault upon him, with his own weapons, coming swiftly out of the heat and loneliness of the night, and while he was already curiously wrought upon by his solitary brooding in the dark house, overwhelmed him utterly. His breathing came hard and sluggishly as he stared at the stranger.

'Now,' said Baynton quietly, 'am I to go?'

'Ay,' M'Cunn answered, like one repeating a formula, 'you are to go.'

'No,' Hannah said, and caught Baynton's wrist in both hands; 'no, no, no!'

The voices came out tense, clear-drawn, and echoless against the thin, distressing tumult of the locusts.

M'Cunn tightened his grip on the wooden post as he watched her and heard the break in her deep voice.

'Come he-ere, Hannah,' he said, but meaninglessly; and Hannah did not move.

'It strikes me, M'Cunn,' the stranger said gently, looking down into Hannah's upturned face, 'that the house of Crannoch is already beginning to fall about your ears. Just think for a moment. Have you a friend in the world? No. You had a wife as good as gold, and you set your heel upon her heart. You have a daughter whose shoe-strings you are not fit to unloose, and she has left your home for ever, except you relent, to live in the house called Mungi; and the curses you laid upon that house are coming home to roost on your own roof-tree.'

He looked up. The veranda was empty, for early in this last deliberate discourse of Baynton's, M'Cunn had gone quietly on his stockinged feet inside the house. The breath hissed between his shut teeth, and his eyes, even in the darkness of the house—the night, unnoticed by them all, had closed down gradually in deeper and deeper blackness—shone full and strangely. M'Cunn, who moved like a man walking in his sleep, took down an old, well-kept revolver from the wall and raised the hammer noiselessly. Then, standing well back in the room, he took a steady aim at the man upon the grey horse as he stooped above Hannah. To the eye of the bushman in the house, trained to the night-watching of cattle, the group outside was excellently clear. M'Cunn, who from a galloping horse could kill a scrub bull in full career, saw even a faint but sufficing glint cast along the barrel from the new-chum's white moleskins. He felt the fine-set trigger with the finger of a marksman.

As Baynton looked up he saw nothing but empty darkness in the doorway; and why it was that Hannah suddenly dragged him from the saddle and set him on the ground, while she drew herself up to her full height, though shaking in every nerve, between him and the house, neither of them to this day can tell.

It was before Hannah had unceremoniously dragged Baynton to the ground that M'Cunn, with his eye along the barrel of the revolver, heard a sound like the falling of a grain of seed here and there on the iron overhead; and the noises spread quickly till the whole roof was whispering sweetly to the fall of a steady rain. The old squatter heaved a big breath, and looked up and then about him curiously. He brought the revolver close to his eyes and felt it gingerly in the dark. Perceiving that the hammer was raised, he lowered it carefully; and as he hung the weapon up again in its place he muttered to himself a warning, grateful, comprehensive 'H-m—

h-m.' Then he went out upon the veranda, and crossing it, stepped down and stood with arms akimbo, looking up so that the rain fell upon his face. He wheeled suddenly on the other two, standing five paces off.

'The rain,' he said fervently, like a man praying. 'Losh! The r-r-ain. Hannah!' he said blithely, 'yer saddle, lass;' and as Hannah did not move, he came over and took off the saddle and bridle from the grey himself. The two others made room for him silently.

M'Cunn set down the saddle against the house and came forward to the edge of the veranda. 'Come ben,' he said hospitably; 'come ben oot o' the wat.' And the two came slowly, with hanging heads, into shelter.

'The two runs,' M'Cunn continued, as though it were a thing he had been insisting upon for years, 'of Crannoch an' Mungi joined to one another will mak' the finest cattle-station in the deestrict. They will that. Hannah, we might have a light, an' a bit of supper for yourself and —and Mr Baynton.'

When the light was brought the two men—both of whom, since the sound of the rain had broken in upon their conversation, seemed as if dazed and drunken with fatigue—looked long at one another from beneath bent eyebrows; then, moved by a common impulse, they shook hands without a word.

M'Cunn threw his open hands apart as if making the stranger free of his house and all that was in it, saying, 'I'll to my bed; my eyes are heavy.' He shuffled away, but pulled up by the door, with his eyes upon the revolver hanging on the wall, then moved on, shaking his head slowly between uplifted hands, and saying devoutly to himself, 'Lorrd, Lorrd; the rain, the rr-a-in.'

. . . . . .

The Providence that seemed to lay the snares of misunderstanding so thick about the feet of the man and woman who met on the blood-stained threshold of Mungi from such wide-sundered worlds of experience must after all have been busy with other work, to other ends.

Baynton woke up from a dreamless sleep of the kind he had thought was nowhere for him on the living side of death, to find himself in thick darkness, but at peace, stretched on the veranda of the Crannoch homestead. The rain still sang its long 'hush' on the iron and fell in chattering runnels from the grooves upon the ground below; and woven among the sounds there was a woman's voice, singing a lullaby. Baynton reached up and held a hand that lay on his temple.

'Have I slept long, Hannah?'

'Not long, I think. I do not know.'

'And have you sat there all the time—awake, and singing?'

'I have been here, awake, I think. Was I singing?'

'Are you sorry, Hannah? It was sudden and strange. And the weather before the rain came?' She tugged at her hand, but he drew it down to his neck. 'Was I too—too violent to your father?'

'You did right. But how did you learn it all?'

'All what?'

'About his hardness, and my mother, and—and me.'

'When I told you of it first, you said you weren't singing to yourself, Hannah?'

'I didn't know it.'

'And you thought I was crazy. Come now.'

She snuggled her hand against his neck.

'There,' he said. 'It was like the singing, all that you told me between Mungi and here. You didn't know.'

'And I didn't ask your name.'

'But except for that, and the other unimportant detail that I was the heir of Mungi, you seemed to find out all the rest about me, didn't you, Hannah?'

'Ay. It's wonderful.'

'It is. And we'll look for more wonders like it, and find them.'

The tops of the ragged trees that crowned the ridge beyond the creek were showing black against a cool, wet grayness.

'What is that light?' Baynton asked.

'It is the dawn,' said Hannah.

THE END.

THE AUCKLAND ISLANDS.

PERHAPS the last place in Greater Britain still uninhabited though habitable is a small group of islands about three hundred miles south of New Zealand, or the antipodes of a point about two hundred miles west of Cape Clear in Ireland.

The following account of them may be interesting; it is taken principally from the Sailing Directions published by the Admiralty. Reference has also been made to an admirable article published in the Christmas number of the *Otago Witness* for 1895, and written by a gentleman who visited the islands in 1890.

These islands were discovered by Captain Abraham Bristow, of the whaler *Ocean*, belonging to Mr Samuel Enderby. In 1806 he took possession of them for the British Crown, and called them Lord Auckland's Islands, by which name, without the title, they are still known. On examining them

he found a particularly snug anchorage, which he named Sarah's Bosom, under which name, or as Port Ross, it still appears on the charts. Then, following the example of Captain Cook, he landed some pigs, and sailed away.

The islands are not heard of again until 1840, when they were visited by H.M.S. *Erebus* and *Terror*, during the voyage of Sir James Ross to the Antarctic continent. Some time after this a body of seventy Maoris were brought from the Chatham Islands in a whaler, and they were found here by Mr Charles Enderby. To him and other members of the Enderby family the group was granted by the British Government in 1850, as head-quarters of the Southern Whale Fishery Company, in consideration of the 'eminent services' rendered by the Messrs Enderby to geographical science in the Antarctic seas. The company did not pay, and after a few years the islands were abandoned, Mr Enderby leaving in 1853, and the Maoris a few months afterwards.

Whilst the company was in operation the settlement comprised, with the Maoris already there, about three hundred people. After this, principally owing to their proximity to the sailing route from Australia to England, they acquired an unenviable reputation as the scene of numerous shipwrecks, the first in order being that of the schooner *Grafton*, a small, ill-found vessel, which, dragging her anchors in a heavy gale in one of the southern harbours, went ashore and became a total wreck in January 1864. The crew remained for over a year, living on seals and birds; and at last, despairing of relief, they, with scarcely any tools, succeeded in raising and decking their one small boat, and in reaching New Zealand after five days' perilous navigation.

Much more tragic than this was the loss of the *Invercauld*, also in 1864. Of nineteen men who reached the shore, there were next year, when rescued, only three survivors, the remainder having died from cold, hunger, and exposure.

In May 1866 the *General Grant*, a large passenger ship, in a calm drifted ashore against the west side of the island, where the cliffs are perpendicular and there are no harbours, and went down with the loss of sixty-six lives. Ten men and a woman escaped in boats and got round to Port Ross, where they lived on seals, birds, and pigs until they sighted a passing whaler. By hard pulling they succeeded in cutting her off, and were rescued. This party showed great ingenuity in capturing pigs. Having no firearms, they constructed a hook a foot long out of a half-inch iron bolt, and secured it to a strong line of New Zealand flax; it was then lightly attached to a long pole, and the rope and pole being grasped together, they crept cautiously towards the pigs when feeding, and hooking one by means of the pole, hauled it in with the line. Not a few were caught in this primitive manner.

After this disaster the New Zealand Government, from motives of humanity, erected several huts in different parts of the islands, amply stocked them with provisions, and caused them to be visited by a steamer every six months; but the islands are now given a wide berth, and wrecks are more rare, one of the last being that of the *Derry Castle* in 1887. The crew were on one of the outer islands, and though they could see the government hut, they could not for some time reach it, having no boat. After a time they succeeded in constructing a punt, and fared tolerably luxuriously until taken off. A grass and a wooden hut in which they lived while waiting to get across are still in good repair —curious little hutches, to be entered on the hands and knees, but sufficiently weather-proof.

The Auckland Islands consist of one large and several smaller islands; but as none of the adjacent islands are more than a quarter of a mile apart, they may practically be considered as one block about the size of Islay, their area being 140,000 acres. The greatest height is about 2000 feet, the western side being precipitous; but in the twenty odd miles of the eastern side there are three completely landlocked harbours, besides several sheltered anchorages. A low forest skirts all the shores, succeeded by a broad belt of brushwood, to a height of about 500 feet; above which to the summit of the hills extend grassy slopes. The forest consists principally of the New Zealand rata, so conspicuous in summer for its brilliant scarlet flowers. The trees are stunted in height by the wind, but very thick and strong, the boughs so interlaced that they must be either crept under or climbed over; in fact, the woods are almost impenetrable. The grass in the few clear spaces in the lower parts of the islands grows in tussocks. The lower part of the old leaves does not decay for a considerable time, while the new leaves are constantly springing up from the heart, so that after a time each plant becomes a mound two or three feet high, and walking between these mounds is very difficult. Above the brushwood the grass does not grow so much in tussocks, and by keeping on top of the ridges it is easy enough to get about the island.

Rabbits of a silver-gray kind are very numerous on Enderby Island—one of the small ones, where there is a good deal of very sandy ground; but it is doubtful if they would do well on the other islands, where the soil is principally a kind of peat.

The pigs left by Captain Bristow have, it is stated, increased in a most surprising manner. 'I have,' says Mr Enderby, 'seen on Enderby Island, when standing on the cliffs, as many as one hundred at a time feeding on the rocks beneath; and those were not the only pigs on the island, for I have likewise seen as many as six splendid black boars running in the woods, of apparently a different breed from those first noticed; but though the island is only three miles in length by one in width, I have never been able to find their hiding-places or to capture one of them.' He goes on to say: 'On the larger island of Auckland pigs are yet more numerous, and are of two descriptions—namely, those feeding on the seashore, the flesh of

which is very unpalatable until kept on vegetable food for two or three months, and those feeding on the hills or in the woods on a plant called by the Maoris cooper-cooper, which, I presume, is that described by Dr Hooker in his *Antarctic Voyage* as the *Pleurophyllum cruciferum*, or that to which it is closely allied, the *Pleurophyllum speciosum*, which has leaves two feet long by one in width; and this he mentions as the plant with its roots upon which the pigs feed, and says that it is to be found in great abundance in many places on the borders of the woods and on the hills. The flesh of those pigs I found excellent. The stalks of the plant on which they feed are covered with silky hairs, which should be scraped off. When cooked these stalks are not unpalatable, somewhat resembling rhubarb, and are commonly eaten by the Maoris. The contributor in the course of two visits to these islands saw traces of rooting but no pigs; but the shortness of the visits and the very dense nature of the bush make it quite possible that they are still as numerous as above mentioned.'

Small birds are numerous and very tame; some of them seem almost unaccustomed to fly—among others a snipe and a small kind of duck. Albatrosses and other sea-birds frequent the islands in great numbers in December and January for nesting.

The climate is equable in temperature, but stormy and wet; snow is said never to lie for more than three days, except at the summits of the hills. The temperature scarcely ever falls below 30°; on the other hand, the summers are cold. Probably on the whole the climate is very much that of the Northern Hebrides.

Sheep do well; some have been turned out by the trustees of the Southland Wreck Fund. Captain Fairchild, of the New Zealand Government steamer *Hinemoa*, who probably knows more of these islands than any man now living, says in 1895: 'About six years ago, on behalf of the New Zealand Government, I placed several sheep on this island for the benefit of shipwrecked people, and they have thriven remarkably well, seeing that they have been running entirely wild. I have seen them on my periodical trips, and have caught some of them and found them very fat. Their fleece was exceedingly long, the wool trailing on the grass, and they were free from foot-rot. About two years ago we brought two to the Bluff, and then on to Wellington; they were quite a sight, with their long wool and tails, and one would, I feel sure, have weighed 200 pounds.

'We put cattle to try how they would do on Antipodes Island, and they are doing splendidly, and are as fat as can be. I am sure they would do equally well on Auckland Island, as it is so much better sheltered, and has any quantity of the same kind of native grasses, which grow luxuriantly, and it contains several running streams.

'I have found the climate mild, the frosts being very slight, some of the native plants flowering in the winter-time. A steamer can go from Bluff harbour in New Zealand in twenty hours.'

These islands were in November 1894 offered for twenty-one years' lease by the New Zealand Government in three lots of 38,000 and 25,000 acres at £2 per annum, and of 76,000 acres at £5; at the same time the Campbell Islands, 120 miles farther south, of 28,000 acres, were offered at a rent of £2. Campbell Island was taken, but not Auckland, the reason probably being that in the former, owing to its harsher climate, there is no bush, and the whole island is available for grazing purposes. The lessees in 1895 brought down 500 sheep as a beginning, and are reported to be sanguine of their prospects.

When will Auckland Island again be occupied? What a noble deer-forest it would make! What a chance for a botanist or naturalist, armed with all the knowledge gained since the time of Dr Hooker and Sir James Ross in 1840, among the flightless birds and curious flora said to be derived from a sub-arctic land now lost!

Shelter from wind and weather can be obtained in any of the various refuge-huts, and the islands are visited every six months, generally about May and December.

But probably it will not be long before they are taken up, as usual, for sheep. The whales have gone and the seals have gone, but the grass is there; and a second attempt at colonisation will be made before long, let us hope more successfully.

THE REBEL SPY.

By James Workman.

WHEN the civil war broke out my brother Tom was living in New Orleans, and what should he do, the omadhaun, but go and join the Southern army; for Tom, though a good, honest lad, was never throubled with over-much common-sense. The man who goes out of his way to get a bullet or a bayonet through him is, to my way of thinking, little better than a fool. But if he must be after fighting, and nothing 'll keep him from it, why, let him fight on the right side; and it seemed to me that Tom was fighting on the wrong one.

Perhaps the truth is that I never had much taste for fighting, barring, of course, in a friendly and neighbour-like way with the weapons that Nature gave me, or it might be with a neat little bit of blackthorn. That comes natural to any

man; but it is not ashamed I am to confess that the sight of the cold steel always sent a shiver up the small of my back.

So you see that when the recruiting went on merrily, and the rest of the boys shouldered a rifle and went singing and drumming and marching away to leave their legs and arms, and often themselves, on a battlefield, I stayed at home and worked at my little farm. There was many a hard word thrown at me in those days, and the girls turned up their noses and wouldn't look the way I was on.

'Ah, well,' thinks I, 'go your ways, my dears. It's no quarrel of mine, and there's a little cabin in County Clare where there would be little to eat, and maybe nothin' at all to pay the taxes and the rent, if Michael O'Flynn was to shoulder a rifle and get a bullet through his thick head in family quarrels that are no affair of his at all, at all.'

And perhaps there was just another little argument that made me indifferent to what the girls thought about me, and that was a bit of a liking I had for my cousin Norah, that had the charge of the dairy on the big farm next to mine. She was tall and slim, was Norah, with waving brown hair and dark-blue eyes, and a face as sweet as an angel's, and a voice like the music of a flute. I know she wasn't perfect. She'd a temper of her own, had Norah, as every girl worth the whistle of a shillelagh has, and many a dressing down she's given me; but the sweetness of her would make me feel as weak as a child, and I'd rather have had a rough word from Norah than a kiss from the prettiest girl that ever stepped on the ground.

Well, I'm a man with no manner of luck at all. It wasn't me she cared for—not she. It was Tom that was gold in her eyes, and she'd have given the whole of my clumsy body for the end of his little finger. He was a fine boy, with a face like a picture, and a kind of melancholy look in his big brown eyes that made all the girls' hearts warm to him, while I—but that's neither here nor there.

There was a pair of them, for Tom was that fond of Norah he'd have cut his hand off to bring a smile to her face. It was to make a lady of her that he turned clerk and went to New Orleans; and when the war broke out, the drums and the bugles, and the blandanderin' of the speechifiers, and so on, turned his Irish head, and he was shouldering and presenting arms, and marching and countermarching, before he knew where he was.

They're queer, contradictory creatures, are women. There was another boy from a farm near by joined the South before Tom, and I was ashamed of the hard things Norah said about him, for at first she was all on the side of the North. But as soon as she heard that Tom was among the gray coats she swore by everything the South did or said ever afterwards; and if she hadn't been the prettiest girl for twenty miles round, she'd have been tarred and feathered and ridden on a rail, for the Federals had been licked again and again and were fairly dancing with rage.

For a long time the armies never came near us; but after a while they approached us bit by bit, and every morning I'd look out with my heart in my mouth, expecting to see horse, foot, and artillery trampling through my illigant fields of wheat, and abstracting the ducks and hens, that were the pride of my heart, by way of a relish for breakfast. At last the only hand I had left joined the Federals, and I was left alone on the farm. And it was then the thing I'm going to tell you about happened.

I was lying awake one night thinking about Tom and Norah, and wondering how I was to get in the harvest, when I heard a light tapping at the door. Up I jumps, all of a tremble, and laying hold of as fine a bit of timber as ever I held in my fist, I slips up the window and looks out. There was a big lump of a tramp standing at the door.

'What'll you be after?' says I. 'This is no time to be takin' dacent folk out of their beds. Away wid you, or I'll be lettin' the dog loose and givin' you a taste of the stick.'

Then the tramp begins laughin' all over him.

'Ah, go along with you,' says he. 'Is it yourself doesn't know your own mother's son?'

'Tom!' shouts I.

'Whisht, you omadhaun,' says he. 'The Yanks are all over the place, and if they lay their fingers on me without my uniform on I'll be shot as a spy. Open the door quick, and let me in.'

'Well,' says I when he was snug inside, 'it does my heart good to see you, Tom; but what's brought you here at the risk of your neck?'

'Oh,' says he, 'what would bring me here but Norah? I see her face in my dreams, Mike; I hear her voice in the wind; and see her and speak to her I must, for my heart's just sore for a sight of her. The General asked for volunteers to find out what the enemy was after, and I—knowing the neighbourhood—was chosen before all the rest. You must get me a sight of her, Mike, for I can't live without it.'

So it came about that at daybreak I went for Norah and brought her across the fields; and we passed a company of Yankees lying among the wheat—sorrow take them!—and they made game of us, thinking we were sweethearts. Norah was as white as a sheet, and her eyes shining like stars, and my heart was as heavy as lead for the pure love of her, that cared no more for me than the grass she was walking on. I couldn't bear to see them meeting, and it was mighty superfluous I was feeling altogether; and so I went into the barn to look after the beasts, and left them alone in the kitchen.

Well, I hadn't been gone five minutes when I heard a scream and a scuffle, and I runs out. I thought I should have dropped, for there was a dozen soldiers standing at the door, and Tom, with his hands tied behind him, in the middle of them. They hadn't seen me, so I cut round to the back door, and found Norah in the kitchen more dead than alive. There was no time for talk.

'Norah dear,' says I, 'there's a regiment of Southerners at Mackenzie's farm in the wood. If you love Tom you'll run like the wind and bring them here as quick as the fine legs God gave you will carry you. I'll thry to blandander these fellows till you come back; but remember every minute's worth its weight in gold, and Tom's life hangs on a thread.'

The colour come into her cheeks and the light to her eyes, and she was off before I'd got the words out of my mouth. I'm thinking there's a black spot in every man's heart. When I saw her flying among the bushes and trees like a deer, why, God forgive me, I wished, just as long as it would take you to twirl a stick round your head, that I'd stayed quiet and snug in the barn, and let the Yanks go on with Tom's funeral; for then, you see, I might have married Norah after all. I got over it; though, to tell the plain truth, the black notion kept trickling through my brain during most of the queer time that followed. Any way I shouldered a pitchfork, slipped round the barn, and came sauntering towards the soldiers as easy and cheerful as if I was going to inquire after their health.

'The top of the morning to you, boys,' says I. 'I suppose it's thirsty you are. Have you come for a drink?'

There was a long, yellow-faced sergeant in charge of them, and he give me a queer look out of the corner of his eye.

'When we happen to catch people harbouring spies,' says he, 'have you any notion what we do with them?'

'Shoot 'em, I hope,' says I. 'They deserve it.'

'We shoot the spies,' says he, keeping his eye on me; 'but the man that harbours them gets his house burnt down and his cattle driven off.'

'And why shouldn't he?' says I as cool as a priest at a wedding, though my heart turned cold within me and my knees was all of a tremble.

Then he points at Tom, that was standing against the wall with his hands and legs tied.

'We're going to shoot the spy,' says he, 'and then I reckon we'll put a match to the place we found him in.'

I fairly laughed out, though, bedad, it was all I could do to keep from crying.

'Him a spy?' says I. 'Ah, sure you're on the wrong track entirely. He's a dacent boy from the old country, that's going to help me in with the harvest.'

And at that Tom spoke up, and he says: 'I am a spy,' says he, 'and proud of it; so your harvest 'll have to wait till the gray coats give the Yankees another whipping, when it 'll come in mighty convaynient for the cavalry.'

It seems they 'd found some papers on him, and he knew I 'd only ruin myself entirely by pretending to know him.

I saw his game, and I played up to him.

'You onprincipled blackguard,' says I. 'I 'd rather burn every field I have than a horse of them all should get a straw of it. Oh, captain jewel,' says I to the sergeant, 'sure you 'll not let the brigands come rampagin' around here. If their appetites is as powerful as what I 'm towld, sure it 's mysilf they 'll be 'atin' up, bones and all, let alone the pigs and the poultry.' I said it with such a face that the soldiers began laughing at me, and even the yellow-faced sergeant couldn't keep from grinning.

'I 'm not a captain,' says he. 'I 'm a sergeant.'

'More power to you, sergeant,' says I. 'You 've not been rewarded accordin' to your deserts. Shootin' spies is thirsty work,' says I. 'You 'd better have a drink before you commince operations.'

He 'd a cold heart in him, that sergeant; but I could see by the twinkle in his eye that I 'd touched a tender spot in it. They left a man to stand sentry over Tom, and they came trampling into the house after me. Once inside I fairly played with them, for they was just starving, and hadn't had a square meal for a week. I cooked them rashers of ham and made them hot coffee and cakes; and, bedad, it was like wolves and not like Christians they was eating, and the yellow-faced sergeant was the hungriest of them all.

And whenever I got a chance I 'd slip to the door and look along the track that ran through the wood and across the ford; but never a sound could I hear but the splashing of the falls higher up the river and the whistling of the birds in the trees. Back I 'd go smiling as sweet and gentle as if butter wouldn't melt in my mouth, though it was heart-breaking to see the fine ham and eggs fading away like snow in sunshine. And, oh, the way I humbugged them with jokes and stories, and fed them, and sang to them, and whistled to them, makes the perspiration pour off of me to this day; and all the time my heart was sick within me, and my ears straining for the tramp of marching feet, or the clickety-clack of the horses' hoofs along the road. And through it all I felt the corner of the sergeant's cold eye boring into me like a gimlet, and I knew he was after suspecting me, and that in another minute I might be tied up alongside of Tom, and be trying to digest the cold lead instead of the fine ham and eggs the beasts was guzzling in my own little kitchen.

'Sorrow take you, Tom,' thinks I. 'Sure you might have paid a visit to your sweetheart without risking another man's skin.'

And when I thought of the little cabin in County Clare, and the poor old father and mother turned out on the bleak hillside for want of a trifle of rent, and of my own farm in a blaze, and of Norah dying an old maid, sure I hardly knew whether to cry or go out and give Tom the rough side of my tongue for all the foolishness he'd been after.

The sergeant finished at last, and leaned back in his chair, picking his teeth with a fork.

'What's your name?' says he.

'Michael O'Flynn, colonel,' says I, thinking a little promotion would soothe him.

'Well, Mr O'Flynn,' says he, with an evil grin on his yellow face, 'I've got a pleasant surprise for you.'

'I'm glad to hear it,' says I, though my heart sank into my boots.

'Come outside,' says he, and we all trooped out.

Tom was still standing with his back to the wall, with his chest out and his head up. There never was in all this world, I think, a braver man than Tom. I felt ashamed of myself when I saw him, for I felt as if a stream of iced water was beginning to trickle down my back, and my knees was shaking beneath me.

'Look at him,' says the sergeant, showing his teeth; 'look at him close, Mr O'Flynn.'

'I'm lookin' at him,' says I.

'And you don't recognise him?' says he.

'Him?' says I.

'Yes,' says he. 'I've been comparing your features, and I've got an idea, Michael, that this fine young man is your long-lost brother, as the story-books say. Now, I reckon it would be playing it pretty low down on you to separate two loving brothers that can't have seen each other for many a long year when one doesn't recognise the other.'

Then I see he knew all, and the earth and the sky seemed to whirl round me, and I saw his yellow, grinning face through a kind of mist. Tom opened his mouth to speak, but at that very minute I heard above the splashing of the falls the click-clack of hoofs and the tinkling of steel. They weren't used to the sound of the water, and could hear nothing unusual. I looked at Tom with a wink, and he shut his mouth again. But the sergeant saw the wink too.

'Seize him,' shouts he.

There wasn't a minute to lose.

'What do you mean?' says I, picking up my stick from behind the door. 'What do you mean, you that's full to the lips with my illigant ham and eggs, by callin' me the brother of a spy, you yellow-faced monkey?'

Well, the soldiers made a rush at me, and I gave an hullo, and laid about me with my stick. I tell you I just played with them, for they'd thrown away their rifles to take me with the naked hands—me that could trail my coat through the fair at Killaloe and never a one durst step on it. Oh, bedad, it's a fine time I had of it, for it was just healthy diversion after the torments I'd been enduring inside of me. And Tom laughed and shouted:

'More power to your arm, Mike. Give it them! Whack! Hurroo!'

And it's the solemn truth I laid half-a-dozen of them out before they got a hold of me. But no man can say that the Yankees haven't plenty of pluck in them, and in the end they closed on me.

'Look out, Mike,' shouts Tom; 'look out.'

I tried to swing round, but all of a sudden my head seemed split in two, and I fell like a log; for one of the ungrateful villains had picked up his rifle and given me a whack on the back of the head with the butt-end of it. But as I fell I heard the horses come thundering through the wood, and the yells of the rebels, and the shouts of the startled Yankees.

When I came to my senses Tom and Norah was bending over me with their eyes shining with love and tenderness, and the rebels was slicing and frying the ham in the kitchen, and the Yanks was sitting in a row on the ground with their arms tied behind their backs like trussed fowls.

'Are you much hurt, Mike dear?' says Norah.

'No,' says I, sniffing the smell of the cooking, 'but it's ruined entirely I'll be if I have the honour of entertainin' the military every day.'

THE PASSING OF THE POET.

On Western skies he gazed, and, lo!
Beyond the glory and the glow,
A Vision rose, and fairer grew—
(O eyes so dust-dimmed hitherto!)

Through opened gates stole strains of song
From the triumphant poet-throng.
Earth's broken music charms no more—
(O ears so heedless heretofore!)

What heavenly lips have kissèd his,
And left thereon a smile like this?
What crown doth rest his brow above?
(O heart that had not learned to love!)

What hand hath led him far away,
By pathways where we may not stray,
To mansions builded of our God?—
(O feet that could not find the road!)

Ah, weary heart, no more distress'd!
Ah, anxious mind, for aye at rest!
Shall we thus to thy gladness come?—
(Lost child, who did not know thy home!)

ELIZABETH GIBSON.

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THE SECRETARY MURRAY.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

THE Scottish History Society has already done valuable work in connection with the Jacobite rebellions; and now, in the *Memorials of John Murray of Broughton*, it has published the intimate chronicle of one of the arch-movers. Murray's name has become a sort of byword, like that of Ephialtes, the traitor of Thermopylæ. The famous story in Lockhart, of how Mrs Scott's best china was sacrificed rather than that the family should drink from the same vessel as a traitor, is highly characteristic of the national feeling. Bitter songs were made on Murray's name, and the arcana of the English language were ransacked for abuse by gentlemen who had denied themselves the pleasure of looking into the matter. Here we have the culprit's own narrative; not to be taken altogether for gospel, but on the whole a most valuable historical document. A small pamphlet, called *The Genuine Memoirs of John Murray*, was published in 1747, and most histories, including the *Dictionary of National Biography*, have followed it. It seems undoubtedly spurious, in spite of the bravery of its title. These *Memorials* are the only genuine record of a ragged life, which, in the irony of fate, was exposed to the fierce light of a nation's scrutiny. Mr Fitzroy Bell has added much interesting matter in an appendix, and contributes an introduction which is a lucid summary of the main points in the Secretary's troubled career.

The real history, as also the real novel, of the '45 has yet to be written. And he who will write it must have a sense of the drama of it all, the fight of the few against the many, the bleak background of mossy hills, the formless, causeless schemes, the mixture of the heroic and the infinitely small. And he must have a shrewd eye to character, for the history of those years will furnish him with many intricate subjects. There were the good, honest men of the type of Keppoch and Lochiel and Dr Archibald Cameron, and the gentlemen who were much the other way, like our hero and the younger Glengarry. There were the prudent stay-at-homes, Sir Alexander Macdonald and Macleod and Traquair; and there were the soldiers, like Lord George Murray. Then came the great lords, Kilmarnock and Balmerino and Lovat; and in the chief of the Frasers there is enough good and bad to puzzle the most cunning judge. And, finally, there were the troops of the nameless—the freebooters, thieves, spies, outlaws, and honest tacksmen—who for a moment rise to sight in the confusion, and then disappear into the unknown. For, after all, it was a great movement of profound historical significance. It was no mere struggle of reactionaries. On one side it was the last outburst of the discordant elements in Scottish life before the full national character could be formed; on another, it was the last stand made by certain medieval ideas—clanship, petty private organisations, a divinely appointed House—against a cold modern civilisation. And apart from other things, it was the nursery of the dramatic, the centre of old song and story and the sentiment of a lost cause.

Mr John Murray, who tells in his own fashion of all this, was born of a respectable Tweedside stock, the Murrays of Stanhope and Broughton, who were kin to the houses of Philiphaugh and Romanno. He was educated generously at Edinburgh and Leyden, ran between Rome and Paris and Scotland for some years as a Jacobite emissary, and finally emerged with the landing in Moidart in 1745 as Secretary to Prince Charles and counsellor-in-general to the army. He was made colonel of hussars, but he never seems to have led his regiment into action. He accompanied the southward march to Derby, just missed being present at Culloden on account of his health, fled to near the head of Loch Arkaig, where he had the famous consultation with Lochiel, Lovat, and the other Highland chiefs. Thence he departed in hot haste for the south, and his journey is as romantic a narrative as David

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Balfour's. But he had no sooner got to the house of Polmood in Peeblesshire than he was arrested on the information of a herd-boy, and conveyed first to Edinburgh and then to London. From this point his record becomes discreditable. He turned king's evidence and revealed more than enough to incriminate Lovat. Hated by friend and foe, 'Mr Evidence Murray' found small comfort in either London or France. The Prince seems ultimately to have forgiven him, if we may judge from Charles Murray's account of a visit paid to his father in 1763, when the stately red-faced gentleman was pointed out to the small boy as his king. He eloped with a Miss Webb, a Quaker lady, after his first wife left him, and was father of a large family. It is possible that towards the end his reason failed him before his death in 1777. Mr Fitzroy Bell supplies a host of interesting details, such as Charles Campbell's description of him, 'a well-looking little man of a fair complexion, in a scarlet dress and a white cockade.' But his *Memorials* give us a vivid picture of the inner man, sneering, miserable, dabbling alternately in cant and truth, but always a personality.

The earlier part of the *Memorials* is the less interesting, for there Murray is mainly engaged in quarrels with Drummond of Bohaldie and Lord Traquair, and vain negotiations with slippery loyalists. He is sorely irritated again and again, and driven into reflections on human nature. In one passage he lays down the doctrine of predestination. 'Men,' he says (p. 25), 'are like Watches, some of a finer and more delicate make than others; the one goes justly, the other not. Like them in shape, so are we generally much one and the same; but our organs of sense, like their wheels and springs, are finer and coarser, as the workman has bestowed labour upon them or the Supreme Being more exquisite degrees of sensation upon our organs.' And then he adds in a characteristic note: 'I hope this Comparison will not be esteemed inconsistent with the Christian Scheme, or the rules of sound Philosophy, as no such thing is intended.' Murray's narrative gives the reader a strong impression of the scandalous mismanagement of the whole business—honest men working at cross-purposes, and blackguards fighting openly for their own hand. Many of the details given are new to me. It is refreshing to find so many of the Campbell tartan on the Jacobite side; and there is a curious account of Murray's overtures to the Cameronians of Galloway and the west, who 'were greatly disgusted with the government, and, like the Jews, had kept themselves distinct from the other inhabitants of the land.' As the time drew nigh for the actual expedition Murray's troubles increased, and Lovat and Macleod irritated him beyond endurance. He made a desperate journey from the Lowlands to Lochaber, of which we should like the details, for it must have been a rough business. But at any rate he got to the Prince, and in a chaos of bad spelling the narrative of the campaign begins.

It is a strange revelation of the inner workings of a romantic enterprise. Spies and go-betweens are plentiful in these pages; James Mohr MacGregor, Black John Macleod, and a host of others appear under aliases or abbreviations. One learns (on Murray's word) that Lovat not only instigated the attack on the Lord President Forbes in his house of Culloden, but actually desired to have him murdered. The whole matter is very doubtful; but at the trial a witness, William Walker, declared that the attack was made by Fraser of Byerfield, and that Lovat knew nothing of it; and Norman Macleod, who could have had no reason to lie about it, in a letter preserved in the Culloden Papers describes the old lord as being in a state of vast anxiety and great misery lest it should be blamed on him. As a matter of fact, such an escapade would not have suited Lovat's plans, for the friendship of the Lord President was a card which he kept in reserve. Murray's account of the march to the south is very spirited, and every now and again he introduces little thumb-nail sketches of friend and foe. His picture of Edinburgh during the occupation seems in the main accurate. He has no special love for the Presbyterian clergy, as he is careful to show. 'And whilst I am talking of the clergy,' he writes (p. 210), 'I can't help taking notice of an incident that happened soon after. One M'Vicar, minister of the West Church, who was the only one of them who continued to preach, lett fall some things in his prayer reflecting on the Chevalier, which, when he was told of, he did not in the least seem to mind it, but said that he looked upon the fellow as an honest fool, and would have no notice taken of him.' The 'some things' thus generously overlooked by the Prince were, as the Editor points out, the petition that the young man who had come seeking an earthly crown might instead have given him a crown of glory. Throughout the narrative Murray is a great connoisseur of character. He has the good sense to admire Lochiel and Lord Pitsligo ('a Saint and Hero of old'); he is, of course, devoted to the Prince; for Lord George and certain of the chiefs he has a modified respect; while, on the other hand, he has no words bad enough for Traquair and Lord Lovat. The latter is the 'most abandon'd and most detested man in his country, and one who never acted a fair part either in publick or private life.' (It is strange that these were almost the same words which Lovat, in his defence at his trial, used of Murray.) 'In short, if such like people merit the good graces and favour of Mankind, even the Laird of M'Leod need not dispair of having his Vilainys forgot, and one day die a Martyr.' Traquair is roundly abused, and no great wonder. 'If his lordship,' says Murray (p. 353), 'be not lost to all sense of Shame, those facts must sleep-

ing and waking stare him in the face, and make him hide his dirty head from all intercourse with the world amongst his Hills in Tweedale.'

When the narrative begins again after Culloden it is in the form of a letter written by the Secretary to some imaginary friend who is solicitous about his welfare and anxious to hear the calumnies disproved. It begins with a lofty panegyric on virtue and heroism, in which Murray rises to the height of his great argument. He is very bitter, and with good cause, against the stay-at-home Jacobites, who fought Drummossie over the tea-table; the 'parcel of Antiquated Attorneys, with the help of a black Gentleman in a gown and cassock, who will show us how to march straight and easy to the Capitall. . . . Every Old Woman, Green Girl, Cock Laird, and Pettefogger being now become Soldiers and Politicians, denouncing one a Coward, t'other Traitor, and a third a Blockhead.' He tells of the last terror-stricken conference, where, to the accompaniment of Lovat's gibes, the broken, travel-worn chiefs held the last parliament of the cause. He tells of his part in the disposal of the famous treasure, and on the whole he seems to have acted well enough. The fact that he refused to escape with his dying friend Perth must be set down, as Mr Fitzroy Bell says, 'to the credit side of his strangely-involved account with honour.' When it was necessary for him to get to the south, he chose the inland road through Glenlyon and Balquhidder. The account is good reading, especially for one who has himself tramped most of the way. Murray was set ashore in Appin, and apparently went up Glencoe and across Rannoch Moor into Glenlyon. There he lay hid for some days on a rough hillside till he could slip down into Balquhidder. Thence he crossed Stirlingshire into Lanark, and with great fatigue came by Carnwath to Hartree near Biggar, where he found no shelter. He thought of 'taking a private road by a place called the Broadfoord to his Brother's house at Stobo,' but reflected that he might get a poor reception. So he went to his aunt's house at Kilbucho, where he was recognised by the servants, who could not understand a 'person in a jocky Coat and blew bonnet' being treated with deference and given wine instead of whisky. A scoundrelly herd-boy carried the news to some dragoons at Broughton, and when Mr John Murray was sleeping the sleep of the just in his bed at Polmood, he was awakened by the enemy and carried off to Edinburgh. Such is the account given in the *Memorials;* but there is a persistent tradition in the neighbourhood that he lay for some time in Broughton, concealed partly in a cave in the garden of his farm-steward, Bertram, at the head of the village, and partly in an old vault in the churchyard.

The rest of the book is chiefly taken up with a defence of his not very defensible later life. His chief point is that he only became king's evidence when he knew his evidence was of no use to the government; that Lord Lovat would have been convicted even apart from his witness; and that he was careful to compromise no one who had any chance of safety, especially the English Jacobites of the type of the Duke of Beaufort. On the whole we may allow him the last point; he seems to have gone about his black performances with as much consideration as one could expect. But undeniably his evidence was the principal cause of Lovat's death, and his guilt in this matter will be differently estimated by those who regard Simon Fraser as one of the few great men and the one supreme intellect in Scotland at the time, and those who look upon him as a most perfect blackguard who made the earth cry out against his infamies. Both views have been taken, and the truth seems to be where it generally is—half-way between them. As to the first matter, it is difficult to acquit Murray. His motive in his action was less prudence and worldly wisdom than sheer naked cowardice. I cannot help thinking with Clerk of Penicuik that his capture had something of the nature of a surrender, and that he might have escaped if he had wished. The fact of putting himself so deliberately in danger's path seems to argue that he had conceived among the Highland hills the design of giving evidence, and that he went out of his way to be caught. No man would run his head into a noose so deliberately, and with so little ground, unless he foresaw some way of getting it out. The truth seems to be that physical cowardice was the rock on which Murray was shipwrecked. He was loyal and industrious, a man of some education and ability, and capable of no little admiration for virtue and a genuine devotion to his friends; but in the face of danger he wholly collapsed, and we are compelled to accept Æneas Macdonald's verdict, that 'Mr Murray was so honest between man and man that in private life he would not be guilty of a dirty or dishonest action; but then he knew him to be such a coward, and to be possessed with such a fear of death, that he was much afraid Mr Murray might be brought the length of doing anything to save a wretched life' (*Lyon in Mourning*, iii. 522).

The book is a wonderful storehouse of quaint details and a gallery of contemporary portraits done by a master-hand. Of one person we hear less than we should like. The beautiful Mrs Murray, who sat on horseback at the Cross of Edinburgh and distributed white cockades at the time of the Prince's entry, comes little into these pages. She was with Murray in Lochaber after Culloden, and with immense difficulty escaped to Edinburgh. Murray is careful to disprove certain slanders which credited her with returning from the north with large sums of money, and at some length explains that she was not attainted by any

law, 'never having acted the Amazon by bearing arms, and not having been denounced a rebel.' She went to London at his request, and then crossed to the Continent while he lay in the Tower. Of her later history nothing seems known. She is said to have been unfaithful to him, which perhaps was no great wonder, for though we may apologise now and then for the Secretary, we cannot think him much of a man.

A word about the illustrations, which are both important and interesting. There is a portrait of Prince Charles in infancy, from a miniature formerly in the possession of Murray, and now in the possession of her Majesty the Queen. Another portrait shows him in boyhood, a third at twenty-four; while there is a fac-simile of a minute of the Lodge Canongate Kilwinning 2, with Murray's name erased.

LIFE IN MADRID.

By Charles Edwardes.

FOR one reason, if for no other, Madrid deserves to be the capital of Spain: it is the loftiest of the large towns of the country. From the seaboard, north, south, or east, one climbs to it gradually by those amiable Spanish railways the service on which is designed to minister rather to the security than the business of life. There is something grandiose in the last stage of the journey. From whatever quarter you come to the town, the few concluding miles are a decided ascent. You zigzag through a tawny plateau with dried water-channels seaming it. The people, like the landscape, are sun-dried and brown. There are no trees to abate the heat or break the force of the wind—piercing cold in winter if from the snow-clad Guadarramas to the north, and desiccating from the south in summer. You rise and rise, until at length you come to the russet-and-white suburbs of the capital. This itself stands higher still, like a vast citadel, close pressed by the blue heavens. Gateways open from it, marking where the snow-white and very bad roads start for the extreme ends of the kingdom. But whiter, if possible, than these roads is the huge royal palace, which shows a face of some five hundred feet in length on the south side of the town. There are gardens beneath it, with trees of fair size; and lower still the much-mocked Manzanares trickles from one washer-woman to another, choked with soapsuds. But the outlook from it—save at early morn or sunset—is really quite savage. Spain seems a desert.

One continues to ascend from the railway station, over rough cobbles, past majestic buildings and pretty palm-decked squares studded with statues, until the Puerta del Sol is attained. Here we are about two thousand five hundred feet above the sea-level, and in the very holiest of holies of the Spaniard's heart. The Puerta del Sol is not a beautiful open space, like Trafalgar Square or the Place Vendôme. But it is tolerably roomy in a town notorious for its sufferings from cramp. The best hotels look upon it; the tram-cars start from it; bull-fighters, *pelota* players, and politicians alike gossip at their best in its cafés; and if there is any national agitation afoot, you may feel its pulse here as nowhere in Spain. You may buy innumerable trivial things from the street hucksters who stand with their backs to the buildings of the Puerta del Sol, and live full pleasant days—journals, matches, old books, sweetmeats, and so forth. And nowhere in all Spain are they so assiduous in urging you to gamble in the State lotteries.

The streets that proceed from the Puerta del Sol are all respectable without being magnificent. Some think that of Alcala even magnificent, with its handsome shops and offices, its increasing breadth, and its fashionable vivacity. It certainly ends with conspicuous pomp among the palaces in which Spain's State affairs are mismanaged. The verdure of the park—a glorious evergreen—begins where it ends; and the stately triumphal arch at the corner of the park hints at Spain's earlier greatness, and the crowds that pass under it Sunday after Sunday in the summer towards the bull-ring. Madrid's beggars seem to like the neighbourhood of the Alcala, and they ought to be good judges. Here they ask with the politest air for '*Otro real, señor!*' ('Another threepenny-bit, sir!'), and in the streets and church-porches they sit in social groups, with their mendicancy-badges at the neck, smoking cigarettes, criticising the devout, voluble or silent, eager to be profusely thankful for the gift of a copper or profusely acrimonious for the refusal of one. If, as a professional man, you decide to live in this street, you must be prepared to pay two or three hundred pounds per annum for a mere flat of five or six rooms.

One soon understands Madrid's most inveterate vice. She was forbidden by her kings in the past to spread. The consequence is that she has grown perforce skywards. Her older streets are very dismal, malodorous passages, and you may guess at the multitude of inhabitants to each towering house by the multitude of washed linens and other picturesque garments which decorate the balconies, one above the other, and the very roofs of the houses, a hundred feet and more over the tiresome stones of the street. Small rooms are a natural sequel to this state of things. Even at reputable hotels they thrust their guests into bedchambers of quite penitential dimensions, with any sort of a prospect—some

worse than none. The staircases are like pit-shafts, and the atmosphere suffers for the same reason. This is so in some of the quarters where foreigners are lodged. What it is like in the muddled rookeries between the Plaza Mayor and the Toledo Gate, where one can scarcely see the sky for the network of overhanging clothes, one prefers to imagine rather than investigate. The old part of Madrid is an extraordinarily perplexing settlement. You may wander for hours among its alleys, coming now and again to tiny little squares, each with a statue in its midst and a café named after the statue; and the more you try, with or without direction, to get free of the alleys and strike some main lung of the town, the more hopelessly you seem to be lost. There is something rather eerie, too, as well as baffling, in the solitude of many of these hand's-breadth streets, with their ancient shrines and ancient escutcheons (showing what the old nobility were content to put up with!), to say nothing of their extremely ancient smells. Life is as safe here from marauders as in any other European capital; but one cannot help feeling mightily suspicious of the atmosphere in these neglected slums.

Indeed, Madrid is not reckoned a healthy town. It is, of course, very cold in winter when the wind is from the Guadarramas, which make such a menacing scrawl on the horizon to the north; and in summer the heat is often terrific. Even in spring, we are told by the local humorists, it is advisable to wear furs and carry a small brazier, especially in the churches. Expatriated Britons in Madrid have no worse words for March in London than for March in Madrid: this too, if they are to be believed, without prejudice. But, at any rate, away from the stagnant parts of the old town one may rely on a certain amount of invigorating air; and, for all its cramp, no European capital has more enchanting gardens than those of the Madrid public park. This in May yields quite blissful hours among its flowers, fountains, and fir groves. Though hardly more than a stone's-throw from the traffic of the fashionable quarter of the town, one's surroundings are here supremely rural; nor is the hand of the landscape gardener obtrusively displayed. But in the same month it often rains on these uplands with astonishing fury. Caught in the Royal Picture Gallery one morning by one such downpour, I joined a group of liveried officials and watched the gargoyles in a courtyard of the building cascading upon the nether pavement.

'Would it might drown Cuba!' said one of the men, in an unpatriotic burst, when a comrade mentioned the war news of the morning. But the others did not go so far as that. They too cursed the island, which had, I gathered, had some official effect upon their salaries. They were otherwise content that the bursting gargoyles should flood the mildewed, weedy courtyard, and save them the trouble of giving it a spring cleaning. After the May showers Madrid looks nothing less than charming, especially if you view the mass of its pale-red roofs from any of the high ground by the *pelota* hall above the Botanical Gardens. Then, too, if ever, the environing wilderness puts on a tender down of green which makes one think better of this corner of Old Castile than it deserves.

One expects in these times of national misfortune (though, in truth, for a century or two Spain has known little prosperity) to find in Madrid strong signs of the wear and tear of the Cuban affliction. No such thing in fact. The town eats and drinks, and goes to mass and the bull-fights just as cordially as if Cuba were a proper tribute-paying part of the realm. The people have been brought up on that valuable word 'Patience!' nor is it in the national temperament to vex itself about an evil that has already become familiar.

Certainly in the cafés there is rhetoric enough, if you go to the right ones. As the sleepy-faced little boys who retail the papers swing into these resplendent halls with fresh editions, the papers are snatched from them, and the telegrams absorbed with something of the emotion and ebullient ardour that one has been taught to expect in the children of the South. But one soon tires of the lip-wisdom of these coffee-politicians. The sleepy-faced little boys do not wink an eyelash even when a perspiring enthusiast shouts words in denunciation of the royal family and all the ministers; nor does the calm and rather stout proprietor, who views his crowds of customers from his snug bureau in the middle of the room, retort one word in objection. Spain seems to have learnt the lesson that mere speech is of little or no account. Even the journals of the capital are allowed to be very rude to those in high office. Deeds are quite another matter. But when certain restive spirits fidget with their hands and proclaim their anger about the nation's impotence, they are promptly reminded by the press that of late years all Spain's campaigns have been protracted affairs, and that it is almost treasonable to be in a hurry. The national spirit is better exemplified by a memorable old lady in a veil whom one night at eleven o'clock I beheld enter a large café near the Puerta del Sol, and who, after a modest drink of syrup and water, composed herself to sleep among the rather noisy men around her, and was thus sleeping, elegantly, with folded hands, when I left the place just before midnight. Spain would fain continue the long sleep in which she has been plunged for many decades of years. Only her people can appreciate the pain and annoyance caused her by the rude awakening at the hands of those unsympathetic persons who compose the United States of America.

But to return to Spain's capital. The largest building in it is the royal palace, and then come the hospitals. The palace is far too pretentious for a country that has almost given up hopes of ever living within its means. Spain's Queen-Regent, however,

is less pretentious than her and her little son's town house. I shall not soon forget her kindly words one Sunday morning after mass in the gilded palace chapel, when a tattered old peasant woman from the *campo* stretched out her hands as her Majesty passed by, and gave her a sort of blessing. Seen kneeling in state before the altar in white silk and diamonds, and (one fancied) with a very large sense of her human value, she scarcely gripped the affections, though her deportment excited admiration for its dignity. The whispers from the crowd who had wrestled into the space allotted to them were more in dispraise of the strange uncomeliness of the ladies in waiting and the officiating clergy, and the very broad backs of the soldiers of the guard. But afterwards, when the Queen smiled at us like any peasant woman herself, and nodded with no affectation of dignity at all, and even condescended to address these few genial words to the most excited of her subjects present—evidently without the least thought or care for daggers or dynamite—then one understood a little why Madrid talks of her as 'Cara Reina!'

That same afternoon, however, in the royal courtyard, whither I went to enjoy the outlook over the white balustrade at the tawny country to the south, Spain excited a little laughter. There was a small brass cannon near, with the word 'Sevilla' on it, and the date 1884. I inspected the antiquity without enthusiasm, and was with great promptitude interfered with. 'You are not permitted to look at the artillery, and neither may you smoke in its vicinity!' said the warrior on guard. One could not but withdraw smiling, although the object in frowns and pipeclay seemed to threaten active opposition. We might as well forbid foreigners in London to cast their eyes upon the clumsy ordnance taken from Russia in the Crimea. But this is the dear South all over: having lost the substance of greatness, it must, for its own pride's sake, claim a sort of respect for the shadow thereof.

One of the odd features of life in Madrid these many months past is the distribution of leaflets in all parts of the town, inviting you to volunteer for Cuba. The practice was licensed in January 1896. On the surface, the inducements to serve seem fair. Whether you are a bachelor, a widower, or a married man, you will be welcome, if you are between nineteen and forty years old. Half-a-crown a day until you are affiliated, two pounds down when you embark, and ten pounds a year (which may be paid to your family if you prefer it) while you serve are the conspicuous inducements on these leaflets. No doubt they have done a certain amount of national work, for I have caught a parish priest in a country town of the Peninsula rubbing his nose very viciously while he read the latest of them (a pale pink trifle), just stuck by some meddling agent upon his very church door. But one should go to Corunna, if not to Cuba itself, to see the reverse side of this ensnaring picture. Meanwhile, as a stimulant to the very just wrath (as it is esteemed) of Spain against the United States, Madrid has for long been selling in its streets, at a penny each, ugly black cardboard rodents termed 'Yankee Rats.' According to the measure of your patriotism, if a Spaniard, you may either put your heel on the cardboard rat, or merely play with it, realising your superiority to it.

Madrid is not a town to visit with a large measure of anticipations; but no foreigner in Spain will understand the country unless he idles a little in the Puerta del Sol. The national museums are nothing like what they would be if the nation itself had not been ruthlessly pillaged by the French and its own members. Nevertheless, they have kept much that is unique. The royal armoury is a matchless institution, and Murillo's sweetest faces are still in Spain and Madrid. But, after all, it is the people one comes to see, and these will not disappoint. Lounging in the Puerta del Sol, one may view all Spain's costumes go by with the jingling of the trammules' bells, and, better still, the faces that animate the costumes.

Judged on this showing, at a venture one may say that there is still abundance of latent power in the country's inhabitants. Who doubts this, however? Since the time of Charles the Fifth, Spain has not lacked worthy children, but worthy administrators of her estate and guides for her people. For these she continues to wait and pray.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—I HEAR NO GOOD IN THE INN AT THE FORDS O' CLYDE.

FOR a second I was so filled with despair at Master Veitch's news that my mind was the veriest blank, and I could get no thought save that bitterest of all—that my lady was gone. But with a great effort I braced myself to action.

'And what of my servant Nicol?' I asked, and waited breathlessly for the answer.

'Oh, he was away on the hills seeking ye, Master Burnet. When he got no word, Marjory was in sic a terror that nothing would suffice her but that he maun off to Tweeddale and seek every heather-buss for word o' ye. He hadna been gone twae days when half-a-dozen men, or maybe more, came, wi' horse and a', and a letter frae you yersel', seekin' the lass. They said that a' was peaceably settled now, and that you had

sent them to fetch her to meet you at Lanerick. I hadna a thocht but that it was a' richt, and neither had the lass, for she was richt blithe to gang. Next day—that was yestreen—here comes your servant, Nicol, wi' a face as red as a sodger's coat, and when he finds Marjory gone he sits doon wi' his heid atween his hands and spak never a word to ony man. Then, aboot the darkening, he gets up and eats a dinner as though he hadna seen meat for a twal'month. Then off he gangs, and tells na a soul where he's gaun.' The old man had lost all his fine bearing and correct speech, and stood by the door shivering with age and anxiety.

A whirlwind of thoughts passed through my mind. Now that the old order was at an end, Gilbert's power had gone with it, and he was likely to find it go hard with him soon. There was but one refuge for him—in his own lands in the west, where, in his great house of Eaglesham or his town dwelling in Glasgow, he might find harbourage; for the very fact that they were in the very stronghold of the Whigs made them the more secure. Thither he must have gone if he had any remnant of wit, and thither he had taken my lady. And, with the thought, my whole nature was steeled into one fierce resolve to follow him and call him to bitter account. My first fit of rage had left me, and a more deadly feeling had taken its place. This earth was too narrow a place for my cousin and me to live in, and somewhere in these westlands I would meet him and settle accounts once and for all. It was not anger I felt, I give you my word. Nay, it was a sense of some impelling fate behind driving me forward to meet this man who had crossed me so often. The torments of baffled love and frustrated ambition were all sunk in this one irresistible impulse.

I clambered on my horse once more; and a strange sight I must have seemed to the gaping servants and their astonished master.

'I am off on the quest,' I cried; 'but I will give you one word of news ere I go. The king has fled the land and the Dutch William goes to the throne.' And I turned and galloped down the avenue, leaving a throng of pale faces staring after my horse's tail.

The dull November eve came on me ere I reached the Clyde. 'Twas no vantage to ford the stream, so I rode down the left bank among damp haughs and great sedgy pools. In a little I had come to the awful gorge where the water foams over many linns, and the roar of the place is like the guns of an army. Here I left the stream-side and struck into the country, whence I returned again nearly opposite the town of Lanark, at the broad, shallow place in the river which folk call the Fords o' Clyde.

Here there is a clachan of houses jumbled together in a crinkle of the hill, where the way from the Ayrshire moors to the capital comes down to the bank. Here there was an inn, an indifferent place, but quiet and little frequented; and, since there was little to be got by going farther, I resolved to pass the night in the house. So I rode down the uneven way to where I saw the light brightest, and found the hostel by a swinging lamp over the door. Giving my horse to a stableman with many strict injunctions as to his treatment, I entered the low doorway and found my way to the inn parlour.

From the place came a great racket of mirth; and as I opened the door a glass struck against the top and was shivered to pieces. Inside, around the long table, sat a dozen dragoons making merry after their boisterous fashion. One would have guessed little indeed from their faces that their occupation was gone, for they birled at the wine as if the times were twenty years back and King Charles (whom God rest!) just come anew to his throne.

I had never seen the soldiers before, but I made a guess that they were disbanded men of my cousin's company, both from their air of exceeding braggadocio which clung to all who had any relation to Gilbert Burnet, and also since there were no soldiers in this special part of the Clydesdale save his. I was in no temper for such a racket, and had there been another room in the house I should have sought it; but the inn was small and little frequented, and the accommodation poor at the best. I was still worn with my exertions of yesterday, and weary with long riding; so, shutting the door, I sought a retired corner-seat to get my limbs at rest.

But it was clear that three-fourths of the company were in the last state of drunkenness; and since men in liquor can never let well alone, they must needs begin to meddle with me.

'Gidden,' said one, 'what kind o' gentleman ha'e we here? I havena seen sic a fellow sin' yon steeple-jaick at Brochtoun Fair. D'ye think he wad be willin' to gi'e us a bit entertainment?'

Now you must remember that I still wore my suit of torn and dirty crimson, and with my stained face and long hair I must have cut a rare figure.

But had the thing gone no further than words I should never have stirred a finger in the matter; for when a man's energies are all bent upon some great quarrel he has little stomach for lesser bickerings. But now one arose in a drunken frolic and staggered over to where I sat, and plucked me rudely by the arm. 'Come ower,' he said, 'my man, and let 'sh see ye dance the "Nancy kilt her coats." You see here twelve honest sodgers, whae will gi'e ye a penny a-piece for the ploy.'

'Keep your hands off,' I said brusquely, 'and hold your tongue. 'Twill be you that will do the dancing soon at the end of a tow on the Castlehill, when King William plays the fiddle. You 'll be brisker lads then.'

'What!' says he in a second, with drunken gravity; 'do I hear you shpeak treason against his Majesty King James? Dod, I'll learn ye better.' And he tugged at his sword; but being unable in his present state to draw it with comfort, he struck me a hard thwack over the shoulder, scabbard and all.

In a moment I was ablaze with passion. I flung myself on the fellow and with one buffet sent him rolling below the table. Then I was ashamed of myself, for a drunken man is no more fit for an honest blow than a babe or a woman.

But there was no time for shame or aught save action. Three men—the only three who were able to understand the turn of affairs—rose to their feet in a trice, and with drawn swords came towards me. The others sat stupidly staring, save two who had fallen asleep and rolled from their seats.

I picked up my chair, which was broad and heavy, and of excellent stout oak, and held it before me like a shield. I received the first man's awkward lunge full on it, and, thrusting it forward, struck him fair above the elbow, while his blade fell with a clatter on the floor. Meantime the others were attacking me to the best of their power; and though they were, singly, feeble, yet in their very folly they were more dangerous than a mettlesome opponent who will keep always in front and observe well the rules of the game. Indeed, it might have gone hard with me had not the door been flung violently open, and the landlord entered wringing his hands and beseeching, and close at his heels another man, very tall and thin and dark. At the sight of this second my heart gave a great bound, and I cried aloud in delight, for it was my servant Nicol.

In less time than it takes to write it, we had disarmed the drunken ruffians and reduced them to order. And, indeed, the task was not a hard one, for they were a vast deal more eager to sleep than to fight, and soon sank to their fitting places on the floor. Forbye, they may have had some gleam of sense, and seen how perilous was their conduct in the present regimen of affairs. Then Nicol, who was an old acquaintance of the host's, led me to another room in the back of the house, where we were left in peace, and, sitting by the fire, told one another some fragment of our tales.

And first for his own, for I would speak not a word till he had told me all there was to tell. He had had much ado to get to Caerdon, for the hills were thick with the military, and at that wild season of the year there is little cover. When he found no letter he set off for the hiding-place above Scrape, where he knew I had been, and found it deserted. Thence he had shaped his way again to Smitwood with infinite labour, and told Marjory the fruit of his errand. At this her grief had been so excessive that nothing would content her but that he must be off again and learn by hook or crook some word of my whereabouts. So began his wanderings among the hills, often attended with danger and always with hardship, but no trace of me could he find. At last, somewhere about the Moffat Water, he had forgathered with a single tinker whom he had once befriended in the old days when he had yet power to help. From this man he had learned that the Baillies had with them one whom he did not know for certain, but shrewdly guessed, as the laird of Barns. With all speed he had set off on this new quest, and followed me in my journey right to the moss of Biggar. Here all signs of the laird came to an end, for most of the folk of the place knew nought of the airt of the gipsy flight, and such as knew were loath to tell, being little in a mood to incur the Baillies' wrath. So nought was left for him but to return to the place whence he had started. Here he was met with the bitter news that I have already set down. He was thrown into a state of utter despondency, and sat for long in a fine confusion of mind. Then he fell to reasoning. There was no place whither Gilbert could take a woman save his own house of Eaglesham, for Dawyck and Barns were too near the hills and myself. Now, if they took her to the west, they would do so with all speed; they had but one day's start; he might yet overtake them, and try if his wits could find no way out of the difficulty.

So off he set, and came to the inn of the Clyde fords, and then he heard that on the evening before, such a cavalcade as he sought had passed. But he learned something more, he went on—namely, that my cousin's power was wholly broken, and that now I was freed from all suspicion of danger. Once more he fell into a confusion; but the one thing clear was that he must find me at all costs. He had heard of me last at the town of Biggar, not fifteen miles off; when I heard the great news he guessed that I would ride straight for Smitwood; I would hear the tidings that the folk there had to tell; and, if he knew aught of me, I would ride straight, as he had done, on the track of the fugitives. So he turned back to the inn, and abode there awaiting me, and lo! at nightfall I had come.

Then for long we spoke of my own wanderings, and I told him many tales of my doings and sufferings up hill and down dale, as did Ulysses to the Ithacan swineherd. But ere long we fell to discussing that far more momentous task which lay before us. It behoved us to be up and doing, for I had a horrid fear at my heart that my cousin might seek to reach the western seacoast and escape to France or Ireland, and thus sorely hinder my meeting with my love. I had no fear but that I should overtake him sooner or later, for fate had driven that lesson deep into my heart, and to myself I said that it was but a matter of days or weeks, or maybe years, but not of failure. I was for posting on even at that late hour, but Nicol would have none of it.

'Look at your face i' the gless, sir,' said he, 'and tell me if ye look like muckle mair ridin' the day. Ye're fair forwandered wi' weariness and want o' sleep. And what for wad ye keep thae queer-like claes? I'll get ye a new suit frae the landlord, decent man, and mak' ye mair presentable for gaun intil the wast.'

I looked, as he bade me, in the low mirror, and saw my dark face and wind-tossed hair, and my clothes of flaming crimson. Something in the odd contrast struck my fancy.

'Nay,' I said grimly, 'I will bide as I am. I am going on a grim errand, and I will not lay aside these rags till I have done that which I went to do.'

'Weel, weel, please yersel',' said my servant jauntily, and he turned away, whistling and smiling to himself.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—AN OLD JOURNEY WITH A NEW ERRAND.

I SLEPT like a log till the broad daylight on the next morn woke, and with all speed I got up and dressed. My weariness was gone, and the dull languor which had oppressed me had given place to a singular freshness of spirit.

When I went below I found my servant ready and waiting, with the horses saddled and my meal prepared. The soldiers had gone early, paying no score, for when their liquor had left them they had wakened up to the solemn conviction that this country-side was not like to be a pleasant habitation for them for many months to come. So they had gone off, to Heaven knows where, cutting my bridle-rein as a last token of their affection.

It was near ten o'clock ere we started, the two of us, on our road to the west. I had travelled it many times, for it was the way to Glasgow; and I found myself calling up, whether I would or no', a thousand half-sad and half-pleasing memories. Had I not looked at my comrade every now and then, I might have fancied that I was still the schoolboy, with his wide interest in letters and life, and little knowledge of either, and with half-a-dozen letters in his pocket, looking forward with fear and hope to town and college. Heigh-ho! many things had come and gone since then, and here was I still the same boy, but ah, how tossed and buffeted and perplexed! Yet I would not have bartered my present state for these careless and joyous years; for, after all, this is a rugged world, with many sore straits and devilish temptations, but with so many fair and valiant rewards that a man is a coward indeed who would not battle through the one for the sweet sake of the other.

'Nicol,' said I after a long silence, 'you know the errand we go on. I have told you of it, I think. It is to find my cousin and Mistress Marjory. If God grant that we do so, then these are my orders: You shall take the lady home to Tweeddale, to Dawyck, which is her own, and leave me behind you. I may come back or I may not. If I do, all will be well. If I do not, you know your duty. You have already fulfilled it for some little time; if it happens as I say, you shall continue it to death. The lass will have no other protector than yourself.'

'E'en as ye say,' cried he, resuming his hilarity, though whether it was real or no' I cannot tell. 'But dinna crack aboot siccan things, laird, or ye'll be makkin' our journey nae better than a buryin'. It's a wanchancy thing to speak aboot death. No' that a man should be feared at it, but that he should keep a calm sough till it come. Ye mind the story o' auld Tam Blacket, the writer at Peebles. Tam was deein', and as he was a guid auld man, the minister, whae was great at deathbeds and consolation, cam' to speak to him about his latter end. "Ye're near death, Tammas," says he. Up gets auld Tam. "I'll thank ye no' to mention that subject," he says; and never a word wad he allow the puir man to speak.'

In the town of Hamilton we alighted for dinner at an inn which bears for its sign the 'Ship of War,' though what this means in a town many miles from the sea I do not know. Here we had a most excellent meal, over which we did not tarry long, for we sought to reach Glasgow ere nightfall, and at that season of the year the day closes early.

As we rode down the narrow, crooked street I had leisure to look about me. The town was in a ferment, for, near the field of Bothwell Brig, where the Whigs had suffered their chiefest slaughter, it had been well garrisoned with soldiers, and the news of the Prince of Orange's landing put the place into an uproar. Men with flushed, eager faces hurried past with wonder writ large on their cheeks; others stood about in knots talking shrilly; and every now and then a horseman would push his way through the crowd, bearing fresh tidings to the townsfolk or carrying it thence to the west-country.

Suddenly in the throng of men I saw a face which brought me to a standstill. It was that of a man, dark, sullen, foreign-looking, whose former dragoon's dress a countryman's coat poorly concealed. He was pushing his way eagerly through the crowd, when he looked into the mid-street and caught my eye. In an instant he had dived into one of the narrow closes and was lost to sight.

At the first glance I knew my man for that soldier of Gilbert's, Jan Hamman, the Hollander, whom already thrice I had met—once in the Alphen Road, once at the joining of the Cor Water with Tweed, and once at the caves of the Cor, where so many of his Majesty's servants went to their account. What he was about in this west-country I could not think, for had he been wise he would have made for the eastern seacoast, rather than venture into this strong-

hold of those he had persecuted. And with that thought another came. Had not he spoken bitterly of his commander? Was he not the victim of one of my cousin's many infamies? Had he not in my own hearing sworn vengeance? Gilbert had more foes than one on his track, for here was this man, darkly malevolent, dogging him in his flight. The thought flashed upon me that he of all men would know my cousin's plans, and would aid me in my search. I did not for a moment desire him for an ally in my work; nay, I should first frustrate his designs before I settled matters with Gilbert, for it was in the highest degree unseemly that any such villain should meddle in matters which belonged solely to our house. Still, I should use him for my own ends, come what might.

I leaped from my horse, crying on Nicol to take charge of it, and dashed up the narrow entry. I had just a glimpse of a figure vanishing round the far corner, and when I had picked my way, stumbling over countless obstacles, I found at the end an open court, roughly paved with cobble-stones, and beyond that a high wall. With all my might I made a great leap and caught the top; and lo! I looked over into a narrow lane wherein children were playing. It was clear that my man had gone by this road, and would now be mixed among the folk in the side street. It was useless to follow farther, so in some chagrin I retraced my steps, banning Nicol and the Dutchman and my own ill-luck.

I remounted, making no answer to my servant's sarcastic condolences—for of course he had no knowledge of this fellow's purport in coming to the westlands, and could only look on my conduct as a whimsical freak. As we passed down the street I kept a shrewd lookout to right and left if haply I might see my man, but no such good luck visited me. Once out of the town, it behoved us to make better speed, for little of the afternoon remained, and dusk at this time of year fell sharp and sudden. So, with a great jingling and bravado, we clattered through the little hamlets of Blantyre and Cambuslang, and came just at the darkening to the populous burgh of Rutherglen, which, saving that it has no college or abbey, is a more bustling and prosperous place than Glasgow itself. But here we did not stay, being eager to win to our journey's end; so, after a glass of wine at an inn, we took the path through the now dusky meadows by Clydeside, and passing through the village of Gorbals, which lies on the south bank of the river, we crossed the great bridge and entered the gates just as they were on the point of closing.

We alighted for the night at the house of that Mistress Macmillan where I lodged when I first came to college. She welcomed us heartily, and prepared for us a noble supper, for we were hungry as hawks, and I for one was tired with many rough adventures. The house stood in the Gallow Gate, near to the Saltmarket and the college gardens; and as I lay down on the fresh sheets and heard the many noises of the street, with the ripple of the river filling the pauses, I thanked God that at last I had come out of beggary and outlawry to decent habitation.

(To be continued.)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

OLD chemical text-books refer to three elements which were only known in the aëriform condition—oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen. These three had, up to twenty years ago, resisted all attempts to liquefy them. Then two of these so-called permanent gases yielded to cold and pressure, and were reduced, in small quantities, to liquid form. There was a doubt about hydrogen. It was liquefied theoretically, but the result was merely the bedewing of a glass vessel. Recently, however, hydrogen has been unmistakably reduced to the liquid form by Professor Dewar, who was able to show an ounce or two of the element. Its boiling-point is about two hundred and forty degrees below the zero of the centigrade scale, a degree of cold which can be better appreciated when it is stated that an empty glass vessel placed in the liquid was quickly filled with solid air! The liquefaction of hydrogen is a great achievement; and although we cannot foresee any direct commercial advantage from it, there is no doubt that it will put in the hands of chemists an agent which will be valuable in many lines of research.

SUBMARINE PHOTOGRAPHY.

Novelists are very fond of describing the beauties of the submarine world, with its wealth of vegetable and animal growth of the most gorgeous tints. We may presume that they base their conclusions upon what may be seen of the rocky bed of the sea from a boat, or from their study of an artificial aquarium, for very little can be seen by a diver immersed in the water. Fishes whose eyes are adapted to the medium in which they live must presumably see farther into the water than can human beings; but still it may be imagined even their vision is most limited. Attempts to take photographs in sea-water have been made over and over again, and some of the results obtained by Professor Boutan have recently been published. This gentleman dons a diving-dress and takes with him a water-tight camera to the bottom of the sea, sets the instrument up on a tripod stand, and works as leisurely as if

he were on dry land. The results are hardly commensurate with the trouble taken in obtaining them. Much more valuable records have recently been obtained by Mr Saville-Kent, who photographs in air, but with his camera pointing downwards through the water. Several of his pictures were recently exhibited, and we mention, among the more interesting, studies of sea anemones, Australian jelly-fish, and, most curious of all, a family of newly-hatched turtles indulging in their first swim.

THE CONGO RAILWAY.

The completion of the Congo railway, which has taken ten years to accomplish, is an event which is worthy of record, for this is not only a railway, but a way to the civilisation of some thirty-five millions of human beings. The enterprise is due to the Belgians, and, though the success of the Congo Free State has been far from being triumphant, it is remarkable as the first and only attempt at colonisation ever undertaken by that people. The railway is a great achievement, for the natural obstacles were many in number, the climate at many parts of the route so deadly that the workmen perished by the hundred, and the scarcity of water and food supplies led to much suffering. The line is single, and is two hundred and thirty miles in length; in its course it offers examples of all kinds of engineering difficulties in the way of tunnels, bridges, and deep cuttings through hard rock. This railway brings the Atlantic Ocean and the Lower Congo within reach of three thousand miles of navigable waterways, and thus opens up to European commerce a million square miles of country which before was quite shut out from communication. The foresight and enterprise which conceived and carried out the idea of this African railway is not likely to go unrewarded. In an early issue of this *Journal* the Rev. W. H. Bentley, of the Congo Baptist Mission, will give an account of a trip on this railway.

COMBATING THE TSE-TZE FLY.

All have heard of the ravages of the terrible Tse-tze fly of Africa, which is so fatal to cattle and horses that none of these animals can approach with impunity the so-called 'fly-belt' where the dreaded insects congregate. This belt commences about one hundred miles from the coast, and extends for about the same distance up-country, and the reinforcements recently sent to Uganda to quell the mutiny which broke out among the Soudanese troops were compelled to cross it. In order to protect their ponies two officers of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers hit upon the device of dressing the animals up in specially constructed garments, which gave them a most comical appearance, resembling the pantomimic creatures seen on the stage at Christmas-time. First, the ponies were swathed in bands of straw, on the top of which came coat and trousers of cloth dipped in oil and iodoform. It was necessary thus to raise the material from actual contact with the hide of the animals, for the Tse-tze fly can pierce ordinary cloth. It will be interesting to learn whether the ponies thus protected went unscathed through the terrible 'fly-belt,' for the experimental clothing, if effectual, may lead to the introduction of some material which may come into regular employment for the same object.

RELICS OF BUDDHA.

Some remarkable Buddhist antiquities recently discovered in India have been described in the *Allahabad Pioneer* by Mr Vincent Smith, a well-known antiquary. Some years ago the discovery of an inscribed pillar, erected in the third century, indicated with certainty the site of Kapilavastu, the home of Gautama Buddha, who lived about 500 B.C. The ruins of this ancient city are now covered by jungle, but are being excavated, and thus buildings more ancient than any previously known in India are being brought to light. Another discovery, also in Nepalese territory, close to the British frontier, is that of a brick tumulus containing relics of Buddha himself. These are fragments of bone, in a decayed wooden vessel, with which were found five small vases of soapstone and a very fine bowl of rock-crystal, all containing gold ornaments, pearls, and precious stones, besides various objects delicately wrought in crystal and agate. This wonderful collection was deposited in a massive coffer of sandstone, buried under eighteen feet of masonry. An inscription on one of the vases states that the relics are those of the Buddha, and indicates that the tumulus was constructed about 300 B.C.

POULTRY-FARMING.

Once more the attention of farmers and others is being called to the vast sums of money which we in this country are paying away to foreigners for produce which might well be raised at home. Mr Gurney, the British consul at Cherbourg, who last year discussed the subject at length, again returns to it in a recent report. More than this, he has sent some notes on poultry-raising for profit — which we trust our home authorities will see the wisdom of circulating widely — in which he points out the conditions necessary for success, with advice as to feeding, breeding, and artificial incubation. He tells us that last year Britain paid France more than a million sterling for eggs, and nearly as much to Germany and Russia. Belgium received more than three-quarters of a million, and Denmark more than half-a-million, for the same description of produce. Including other countries, the total imports of eggs amounted to four and a quarter millions sterling. Cottagers and labourers, as well as farmers, are urged to turn their attention in this direction, and it is certain that by following

Mr Gurney's advice they would soon make the industry profitable.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA.

'Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.' And what may be described as a splendid conquest is the recent concession to a British syndicate of the enormous coalfield, two hundred and fifty miles long by forty miles wide, which lies in the province of Shan-si, less than three hundred miles distant from Pekin. As well as a commercial victory, it is a conquest over superstition, for the chief obstacle to the business being concluded was the existence of an old Chinese edict, which forbade digging to a greater depth than thirty feet in case certain subterranean dragons should be let loose. For many years this gigantic coalfield, with its rich stores of iron and limestone, has been known and coveted by different European powers, and its opening up is bound to give immense prestige to the nation finding the necessary capital. It was calculated by an expert in 1882 that this coalfield could supply the whole world with fuel for two thousand one hundred years at the rate of consumption then prevalent. In return for obtaining full powers to exploit the minerals, to construct necessary railway lines, and to import machinery duty free, the syndicate will pay the Chinese authorities a royalty of 25 per cent. on the profits; the arrangement to hold good for sixty years. It is said that large quantities of petroleum are also to be found in this district, and that gold is also to be had; but the chief efforts of the new syndicate will be turned towards the mining of coal and iron in what are probably the richest fields yet discovered. See an article on 'The Mineral Riches of China' in this *Journal* for March.

WASTED GAS.

To leave gas-jets and gas-fires burning at all times, day and night, simply to save matches and avoid the trouble of relighting, would seem to be a fatuous as well as a most wasteful proceeding, which would hardly commend itself to anybody save perhaps the director of the gas company benefited by the act. Yet this is what has been going on for a long time in some of the natural-gas districts of the United States. The gas, being a gift from the earth, and not a product of the retort, which must be paid for, is not valued as it should be, and posterity would have to suffer unless this wanton waste were stopped. In Indiana a local court had decided that no action could lie, for a man had a right to do what he liked with his own; but the supreme court has reversed this decision, and declared the wanton waste illegal, as being against the general public good. According to *Cassier's Magazine*, the waste of natural-gas has been of the most reckless character, in some cases the vapour being burnt as a flare from the open ends of pipes without burners. It is believed that the action of the supreme court in checking this extravagance will cause the wells to yield for an indefinite period instead of being soon exhausted.

THE EVILS OF TRAWLING.

Mr F. Comyn, who at one time acted as expert to the Fishery Board for Scotland, has recently written to the *Times* on the above subject, and it is to be hoped that his words will lead to remedial legislation. He gives first of all a description of the common trawl-net, and then shows how it scrapes up from the sea-bottom shellfish, stones, silt, seaweed, wreckage, and unfortunately immense numbers of immature fish, which are crushed or smothered in the net, and are subsequently thrown overboard with the other rubbish harvested by this horrible angling implement. Some years ago Mr Comyn's remonstrances resulted in the construction of a new form of trawl, which took as many full-sized fish as the ordinary net, but let the small fry escape, and it brought up with it no dirt or stones. This was tested by the Fishery Board at Granton with its steam trawler, with the result just stated; but, when offered to the trawlers, it, being something new, did not meet with approval. Mr Comyn now recommends that a fair trial should be made of both systems, and says that 'two large steam trawlers of equal power and tonnage working side by side, one with the ordinary net, the other with what may be described as the "discriminating" net, would yield more exhaustive, accurate, and unbiassed information than a score of Royal or Departmental Commissions, at a tithe of their cost.' He urges that experiments should be undertaken in this direction at the government expense, more especially because this country has done little or nothing for the fisheries, although it has sought to control them outside its own jurisdiction.

UNLOADING A SHIP BY SUCTION.

An interesting public exhibition was lately given in the Albert Dock, London, of a comparatively new and very rapid method of transferring bulk wheat from a ship into barges. The vessel *Chicago*, which belongs to the London Grain Elevator Company, and is fitted with pneumatic machinery invented by Mr F. E. Duckham of Millwall, was moored alongside the grain-ship *Minnewaska*, and from this ship's lower hold the grain was delivered into the barges at the rate of one hundred and thirty-five tons per hour. The chief feature of the apparatus is a cylindrical tank which is partly exhausted of air, from which a number of flexible suction tubes can be carried to any place in the grain-ship. On its way from ship to barge the wheat passes through automatic weighing-machines, and is not touched by hand at any stage of the process. The same system is in operation at Hamburg, Stettin, Limerick, and

some few other places, and is considered to be the most perfect method of unloading wheat which has yet been devised. It may be mentioned that the *Chicago* was built by Messrs Ramage & Ferguson of Leith.

ELECTRIC LAMP PRECAUTIONS.

We have more than once commented in these columns upon the not too well-known fact that electric glow-lamps are sufficiently hot to char and fire an inflammable substance with which they may be placed in contact. There is a prevalent idea that such lamps give off no heat; but this is far from being correct; indeed, in Germany so many fires have occurred in shop-windows from placing goods in touch with these lamps that the police have issued a notice containing certain precautions which should be observed. All such lamps, they suggest, should be furnished with globes, shades, or wire guards, so that the lamps cannot themselves come into contact with goods, and in every case the covering should be so arranged that there is free access of air. In the case of arc-lamps, which will occasionally drop sparks of white-hot carbon, it is recommended that each lamp should be provided with a metal ash-tray. Lastly, all wires carried within shop-windows should be most carefully insulated.

MOTIVE-POWER FROM SEA-WATER.

It has long been the dream of inventors to find some means of turning to profitable account the millions of horse-power running to waste which are represented by the waves on the sea-shore, and many have tried to turn this intermittent motion into one which is constant and regular enough to work machinery. What seems to be a successful solution of the problem is described and illustrated in a recent issue of the *Scientific American*. The installation is at Potencia, California, and the plant has been erected by the Los Angeles Ocean Power Company. The apparatus comprises a pier, which extends three hundred and fifty feet into the sea, at the end of which are heavy floats of special construction, which rise with the waves, and as they fall they act directly upon the pistons of water-pumps. The pumps force the water through a check-valve into a reservoir on the shore which has an air-space above, and this air, as it becomes compressed, projects the water upon the buckets of a water-wheel, which it drives at a high rate of speed. The water-wheel is connected with a dynamo or other machinery, and so far as the trial has gone it has proved to be a most economical way of obtaining power.

BEE-STINGS.

It is not perhaps generally known that certain bee-keepers, after a course of stinging by their honey-producers, acquire immunity from the poison, and will thereafter receive stings with the greatest equanimity. Others never become immune to the poison, and are obliged to avail themselves of the best remedies procurable. Dr Langer of Germany has been making inquiries as to the nature of these remedies, and has consulted a large number of bee-keepers on the question; but he does not seem to have gathered anything that was not known before. Ammonia in one of its forms—either liquid or any of its salts—is commonly used as an antidote to bee-stings. Permanganate of potash is effective when injected, but we should think that the inconvenience of such an operation would be quite as great as that caused by the sting itself. The old cottage-remedy—the blue-bag of the wash-house—is once more advocated as an effectual remedy, but is said not to be so good as ammonia. The same remarks apply to other insect-stings.

GERMAN INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE.

The systematic way in which our German competitors go to work in finding fresh outlets for their industrial products is evidenced by a small exhibition, open only to traders, not to the general public, which was recently inaugurated at Berlin. It would seem that directly Germany acquired a territorial footing in China, she sent to the country a committee of experts, who were instructed to find out the particular commodities exported there from Europe and Japan, to ascertain whether Germany could not supply such goods at a cheaper rate, and to show the Teuton trader generally what he can profitably import into both China and Japan. Samples of the goods to which buyers were accustomed, with the prices affixed—such as underclothing of all kinds, shawls, blankets, and furniture stuffs—the Berlin manufacturer could see for himself at this exhibition, and could thus avoid the mistake that has been made over and over again of sending to a foreign country goods for which there was no demand. In a few weeks this collection will be split up and distributed among the manufacturing districts of the German Empire, so that this valuable object-lesson shall have a wide range of scholars.

THE BOATSWAIN'S CALL.

By ALAN OSCAR, Author of *Captain Kidd's Millions*, &c.

WHEN I received charge of a district in the coastguard service I met with many strange, silent old men of the coast, and heard many a wild story of the sea. Of the few local people who were possible as companions, the aged rector of Gillestone was one; he and I had many a ramble together and many a talk. He had many stories to tell of the closing years of the great wars; of daring smugglers and many other things. We had walked together to Aber Fach when he told me this one.

A wild place, Aber Fach, even on a summer's eve; but in a winter storm more terrible than death itself. To the east the coast rises in cliffs, and on the slope of the first can just be seen the cottages of Penmarch. Away inland lies Gillestone, hidden among trees. But here, all around, are dismal flats, broken now and again by rough sand-dunes covered with long, coarse spear-grass—the only thing which can live under the breath of a winter gale. Beyond the flats stretches a broad beach of limestone pebbles; again, beyond this, lie rugged, flat ledges of rock, which only show when the tide recedes, and which spread seaward half a mile.

An awful place to look upon, even—as I have said—on a summer's eve. You can fancy, even then, what an awesome place it must be when the huge breakers leap before the driving of the fierce storm—leap howling on that rocky ledge, rush up the stony beach, and, in receding, drag the thousand pebbles with them, raising a noise like rattling thunder.

On all this wide, wild expanse stood but one little hut—a thing that had once been a ship's round-house. Some of the ship's timbers lay about even yet; but this was the only part of her which stood intact.

'London Tom's house,' said my friend the rector.

'A man lives there?' cried I, in astonishment.

'He did till a few years ago. A strange old man, full of the ancient superstitions—if they *are* superstitions—and a wild Methodist. In my clerical capacity I was, in his eyes, tainted with the mark of the beast; but as a companion he received me, and I often brought him a little flask of brandy or some small comfort. He was past eighty when he died.'

'But what a place for a man to settle down in!' I said.

'Yes. Perhaps so. But he had his own wild reasons. Let me tell you the story here, now, with the very place before your eyes. Your sea-knowledge will make you able to picture the scene and the old man's tremendous exit. I saw all myself; and even now it awes me to think of it or tell it.

'It was in '13, when, as if we had not enough to do with European affairs, we must fight the American States. My old father—rector here before me—had lately sent me up to Jesus, and I was home for Christmas. What a wild place Oxford was in those days! Drinking, town-and-gown riots, badger-baiting, cock-fighting; but never mind that.

'We were so used to howling storms that, unless one of our smuggling luggers were expected, we seldom took note of weather, but sat snug and let it howl. Wrecks were rare; but when they did occur there was always good chance of plunder, and our coast-men were always on the lookout in such nights. This night it was roaring in the chimneys, and the Channel drizzle was driving up thick as a hedge. Father and I sat over our mulled port, and were thinking of bed, when, through the swish of the rain on the window and the howling of the gale, I heard a shout; then voices calling; then a hurried tramp of footsteps and a loud rapping at the door; and then, before I could jump to see who it was—for the maid was abed—in the fellow rushed. I met him in the hall. It was old Hoel, our man-of-all-work.

'"Master Richard!" he gasped, flicking the wet from his eyes, "ship ashore, sir! Right on Breaksea Point! *And it's dead low-water!*"

'I was ready in a moment. Father would have come but that I strongly forbade him. We quickly felt our way down the dark, narrow lane and came out here, just where we stand. Having got used to the darkness, we found we could see better every moment. Then I remembered. It was full moon, and she was rising. Our heaviest gales come at full and change.

'There was a little crowd looking seaward; and soon, in the growing light, I saw, away beyond the beach, past the long stony reef, out in the roaring breakers, a dark patch. Even as I looked came a sharp tongue of flame, then the dull thud of their gun's report. No help could reach them out there; half a mile of a raging hell of broken surf divided them from land. We could only stand and look, hazarding opinions as to what she might be.

'I heard one ranting smuggler—John Morgans—shout in his fellow's ear: "She will be a ship-o'-war, yiss, sure! Wass because of her tall spars, look you!"

'And the other answered, with a curse, that he hoped better things—a Bristolman, now, with good freight.

'It was very terrible to see that dim object, the mere ghost of a ship, out there, and to know that living men stood on her decks spending their last awful moments. Any one of us—ay,

even the most callous wrecker there—would have risked his life for them, joyfully, had it been possible. But there was no *risk*—any attempt would have been instant death; for the incoming tide, crawling and thundering along the reef, would have dashed any man to pulp had he ventured there. In half-an-hour, if she drove farther up, we might possibly do something. (You know how quickly and how high our tides rise—forty feet in spring-tides with a westerly gale behind.) But would she last? There was little hope of it.

'As I stood there with Hoel, staring full face out into the lashing rain and spray, I suddenly heard a bugle-call. Was it possible? Again! In a lull of the gale out rang the "assembly." The last "ta-ra" swept by like the wail of a fleeing spirit. Hardly had it ended when a wicked squall drove up. When it had passed, when again the moon peered through the flying rack, the dark patch, which was a ship, had all but disappeared in the roaring breakers. And as I still stared seaward came a huge white wall of foam. It struck her! engulfed her! and when it swept by she was gone!

'Gasping shouts and groans went up.

'"Ah! There, now! Diawl! She 's gone what-effer!" And then lower tones: "There 'll be wreckage in the morning indeed!"

'In rushed the tide. Many standing there still hoped that some of the poor fellows might yet win to land alive; none of us thought of going home, for even if no men reached the shore salvage might sweep in.

'Sure enough, presently came a dark object through the white waste of foam. It drove in slowly, now standing stationary a moment as it caught some stone in the reef, now surging inward, and ever swept by the fierce waves. At last it drove right up to the beach, and we all rushed down.

'It was a huge fragment of the deck, with this round-house attached, and clinging within it were four men, one of whom carried a child in his arms. We quickly had them out; they were all dazed with their voyage across that awful mile of breakers—the child seemed dead. We had them up to the village, the man who held the child coming to my share. Ere we got him to the house he went faint and had to be carried. I took the child, who seemed to be a boy of about ten years. The other was a smart-looking fellow, with shaven face set in a fringe of black whisker, and with his hair tied in a queue—a fashion which had nearly died out. Round his neck, on a silver chain, hung a boatswain's whistle.

'We put them both to bed, Myfanwy, our maid, weeping and wailing over the little lad, who was dead. Presently, under the influence of warm blankets, and hot brandy forced between his clenched teeth, the man showed signs of recovery. And suddenly he started up, shouting: "Here, sir! Ay, ay, sir!" I did not dream that these were the last words of sanity he would speak. And yet—I don't know—the space between sanity and madness is so small that—— But you shall judge for yourself.

'The story of the wreck we learnt from the other survivors. The vessel was the *Pique*, a corvette armed *en flute;* she was running for Bristol with a sum in silver, valued at fifty thousand pounds, taken from a French transport. The gale had driven them out of their reckoning, and they fancied themselves in mid-Channel when they struck, for the soundings hereabout are no guide. London Tom was the boatswain. When hope seemed gone the commander had ordered him to call all hands aft, and the bugler to call the marines; this done, he harangued the crew, telling them that, as there was nothing to be done, it only remained for them to die like British sailors. He then gave Tom charge of his son, and ordered him for shelter into the round-house, for the seas were now flying over them.

'"I stay here on deck with my men," he said; "and if I die and you are saved, see that my boy is sent safely to his mother."

'He had hardly given this order when a huge wave swept the deck, carrying the house and its occupants with it.

It was sad work burying the poor dead fellows, for thirty bodies washed up; and sadder to see the pale, weeping, widowed mother who came to the funeral of her little son. But these things passed, and left us with Tom. He had taken up his abode in the round-house, which had been hauled up above high-water mark, and here he stuck.

'He turned out a mild, harmless man, as many naturals are, and was a great friend of all our children. The villagers took him under their charge, fitted up his strange dwelling, and kept him provided with such simple food as they themselves used. I helped, of course. Presently we learnt that he had strange ways. At night, and especially at the full of the moon and in wild storms, he would wander along the sand-dunes, now and again winding his call—the call for "All hands"—"Teee—wit-it-it-it-it-it-it-it-it, Teeee—whr-r-r-r-r-r-r-r—in." Then he would lift his deep voice: "All ha—nds, ahoy!"

'After such nights he would fasten the door of his house and stay in the whole day.

'He became an attender at the little Methodist chapel, and in moments of excitement (the only times when he did become excited) would declaim against the Church, as also he would sometimes do in his talks with me; but we were good friends for all that. More than once I asked him about his nightly rambles.

'"I 'm waiting the captain," he would reply. "He 'll come up from yonder one day, and he 'll ask me, 'Tom,' he 'll say, 'where is Master

Charles?' and who but me can tell him? I shall say, 'He's gone on ahead, your honour; the Lord High Admiral Christ called him, and he couldn't wait for us.' The captain wouldn't believe no one else; 'cause why—he gave the lad into my charge. But when he sees me he'll know that all's well; and he'll know the old *Pique's* round-house; d'ye see?"

'And so Tom lived there, and never wandered away from these flats except to go to chapel and to see that the graves in the churchyard were cared for. God seems very tender to such as he. Not a soul round here would have harmed the old man; even the lads, the wildest, never teased him. I remember one collier boy, who came to visit a relation, made game of old Tom; the village lads set upon him and nearly killed him.

'One moonlit night something prompted me to go down to the beach and see Tom. He was not in his house, so I wandered along the sand-dunes, and presently saw him standing motionless on a little hillock. He took no notice of my approach, but stood staring out to sea. I spoke, asking, as many times before I had asked, why he stood there. He turned and spoke with even more than his usual solemnity:

'"I've been called, sir; and they told me to get ready, for I should soon have to meet my commander."

'"Who are *they?*" I asked.

'"Those that sleep down there," he answered, pointing to where the ship had gone to pieces. "Those, and the others up in the churchyard. When I piped all hands to-night I heard them answer. And so I know that the captain will soon be coming, and he'll want to know where Master Charles is; then he'll want the hands turned up to muster, and I'll have to be here to call 'em. You don't know the discipline of a ship-o'-war, sir. When the commander-in-chief calls we must all answer together, smartly. All I'm sorry for is that them jollies won't have no bugler to blow the assembly for 'em. Poor chap, he lost the number of his mess with the rest. And yet I don't know. Perhaps he'll have his bugle ready—maybe. Any way they'll hear me wind my call."

'It made me creep to hear the strange old man talk thus. I seemed to hear Death calling him. I left him there and went home.

'The following night one of the villagers, who had been to see Tom, called and told me I was wanted down on the beach by the old man.

'I went. A gale was rising, and wailed mournfully in the air. The remembrance of the night of the wreck was strong upon me. As I walked down the moon rose—as on that terrible night, it was full.

'The old man was waiting, and was evidently in a state of excitement. He gave me no greeting, but began muttering, "They are calling me!"

'"You wanted me, Tom?" I asked at length.

'"Yes, sir," said he; "now that the time has come I feel afraid to meet the commander alone, and, somehow, I felt I would rather have you than the minister; you're a gentleman, and know what is due to an officer and a gentleman; and I don't think Christmas Elias" (that was his minister) "is quite used to the quality."

'"But," said I, "do you really think, Tom, that the captain is to meet you to-night?"

'"I know it, sir," he answered solemnly; and, mad or not, he greatly impressed me. "I'm all ready," he continued—"all ready to go with the rest of the hands. Come, sir! If you will be so kind." And he led the way out towards the sandhills.

'The moon had risen, but was now behind a low bank of cloud. The breakers were moaning; it was evident that a storm approached. It was nearly low-water, and a long stretch of beach and reef lay between us and the sea. I held back a bit. He paced forward by himself, mounting one of the sandy hillocks. There he stood, black against the brightening sky. Suddenly his shrill call rang out; then his hoarse shout: "All hands, ahoy!"

'It sent a cold shudder down my back. He turned and beckoned me.

'"They're mustering," he whispered as I came up to him. "Look!" But I saw nothing. "Don't ye see 'em, sir?" he said, pointing seaward, with staring eyes.

Just then the moon emerged from the cloud which had overshadowed her, and struck the line of breakers, which, glinting in her beams, looked now like a row of champing, white-maned chargers at a halt.

'"Captain! I'm here waiting orders!"

'The old man's voice rang out like a trumpet. He started, then again pointed seaward.

'And I—what had come over me? Had his intense spirit compelled me also? I shook with astonishment. In trembling wonder I stared. There, advancing like a wreath of mist across the dunes, came a figure in naval uniform! London Tom seemed to be talking to him.

'"Yes, your honour! All present and sober. Pipe down? Ay, ay, sir."

'He wound a call on his whistle, one sharp "twit," followed by a long whirring note, then fell backward into my arms—dead.'

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st.* All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d.* For its return in case of ineligiblity, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d.* To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

QUEEN ELMA.

By ARCHIBALD EYRE, Author of *A Slight Mistake.*

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to prevent the identification of the individuals whose pains and passions form the subject-matter of this narrative, by giving feigned names both to persons and to places. If, notwithstanding this precaution, any reader endowed with exceptional acumen guesses either wholly or in part that which I wish to hide, I would beg him to regard the discovery as a confidential matter between himself and me, if not for my sake, then for the sake of those high-born personages whom I have dared to limn on my canvas.

It was about the beginning of August in the year 189– that, after a solitary ramble, extending over a good many weeks, through a certain portion of Europe, I found myself within a few miles of the frontier of the little kingdom of Herzoglia. I determined to press on that same day to the capital, which, I discovered, was only ten miles across the frontier. I was influenced to this decision by the knowledge that my uncle, Lord Carton, was accredited to the Herzoglian court as British ambassador, and I felt that, as a dutiful nephew, I ought not to pass so near without pausing to pay my respects. I had therefore wired to him of my approaching advent; and, reflecting that the contents of my knapsack did not contain all the requisites for a visit to an ambassador, I had also wired to Vienna for some of my heavier baggage to be sent on.

Herzoglia is one of those petty states that are such obvious anachronisms in modern Europe. From its geographical position it concerned the interests of two at least of the Great Powers, for reasons which I cannot more particularly specify without risking the betrayal of what I wish to keep secret. These reasons are, however, of no importance so far as this narrative is concerned. It will be sufficient to say that at the time of which I am writing Herzoglia, small though it was in point of size, boasted a queen, a court, and a standing army, and was the object of eager regard and anxious solicitude on the part of Russia and Austria.

It was, I remember, a hot afternoon. After leaving the telegraph office I wandered to the outskirts of the little frontier town, and flung myself down by the roadside, beneath the shadow of some trees. I looked idly round. Just opposite was a small chapel, dedicated, as I could see from the printed notices on the door, to a saint of unfamiliar name. In the porch stood the surpliced curé, gazing up and down the road. His eye caught mine, and he smiled affably.

'The heat is great,' he observed in German.

I assented, and would have continued the conversation if, with another glance along the road, he had not vanished abruptly into the interior of the chapel.

I wondered sleepily for whom he had been looking. The long white road, which I must shortly tread, lay before me like a great earthworm, twining its way through vineyards gently upwards until it was lost behind the sky-line. As I glanced along its weary length I saw a horseman appear, a little black speck against the blue sky. I watched him lazily as he galloped down the gentle slope, looking at first like a crawling fly on a piece of white ribbon, but gradually increasing in size until he reined his horse to a walking pace within a hundred yards. I fell to speculating as to his probable profession.

'Probably an officer,' I concluded, noticing his erect, soldierly carriage. He was dressed in civilian attire, and as he approached I could see the Herzoglian royal arms on the horse's bridle.

He stopped before the door of the chapel and dismounted. As he fastened his horse's reins to a hook on the wall I had a good opportunity of scrutinising his appearance. He was a tall young fellow, probably about twenty-five, with fair hair and

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blue eyes and a frank, good-natured face. I should have called him singularly handsome if it had not been for a certain want of strength about his mouth, a defect which his slight moustache did not hide.

His eye fell on me.

'Good-morning. Perhaps you will be good enough to look to the mare while I am away? She is inclined to be restless.' He spoke somewhat peremptorily.

'Oh, certainly,' I responded, deciding it was not worth while resenting his off-hand manner.

He gave me a quick glance. 'You are not a native of these parts, I see.'

'No,' I replied. 'I am just passing through the town.'

'Of what country?'

'An Englishman.'

He looked at me thoughtfully. 'You belong to a great nation'——

'I know,' I answered lazily.

'Which possesses most of the essentials of the ideal race.'

I sat up. 'Most?' I asked. 'Not all?'

He looked at me smilingly.

'It may astonish you, but—not all.'

'What do we lack?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'It is not a difficult question, but the answer would take too long. Besides, it would probably not convince you.'

'Go on,' I said briefly.

'To give two instances, then, you English have neither imagination nor a sense of humour.'

'To that I cannot agree.'

'I knew you would not believe me,' he answered, tolerantly. He had fastened his horse securely, and stood regarding me, with one arm thrown negligently across the saddle.

'These are small qualities, at any rate.'

'They eclipse the gaiety of your nation, notwithstanding.'

'We are a practical people,' I commenced, protestingly.

'Very,' he assented dryly. 'That is your chief virtue and your greatest defect.' Then he smiled again. 'You mustn't mind what I say,' he said half-apologetically, 'for in truth I think the English are the most remarkable people in the world—with one solitary exception.'

'And that is?'——

He pointed in the direction he had come. 'Have you ever heard of the people of Herzoglia?' he asked. Although there was laughter in his eyes, I think he spoke half-seriously. The next moment he nodded to me and disappeared within the chapel, leaving me curiously attracted by his personality, as one sometimes is even in the case of a passing stranger.

I lay still and smoked, speculating as to what his errand to the curé might be, until sleep nearly overpowered me. I was roused by the sound of wheels, and I discovered that a closed carriage had drawn up before the door of the chapel. A young girl alighted.

'Wait for me at the inn, Fritz,' she said. 'I will go straight there from the confessional.'

The driver touched his hat clumsily, and, whipping up his horses, drove slowly on.

The girl turned as if to enter the chapel, when she noticed the first-comer's horse. She hesitated a moment, and then she went to the animal and put her arms round its neck.

'I wish you could speak,' I heard her whisper. 'Perhaps you could tell me if I am doing right.'

Then her eye fell on me. Her clear cheek flushed, and with a proud little air that charmed me mightily, she entered the chapel.

Sleep had fled utterly from me. The beauty of the girl would have driven a heavier drowsiness from a less susceptible nature than mine.

'I seem to have struck a romance,' I said to myself. 'Confessional indeed! Much that young lady will confess to-day!'

I looked longingly at the door of the chapel. Could I not also enter? It stood invitingly ajar. Although the sun was shining brilliantly, and my eye looked over miles of landscape, I felt as if I were shut out of the world, the only entrance to which was through the little chapel door, half-covered with printed notices.

'I suppose I mustn't,' I said, with a sigh. 'It's no business of mine.' To keep myself from temptation, I filled my pipe afresh.

My abstention was rewarded, for at that moment the curé appeared at the door. He beckoned me with something of mystery in his air; I rose and crossed over to him with alacrity.

'Will you be so good,' he said, 'as to act as witness of a little ceremony that is to take place within?'

'Certainly,' I replied, with eagerness. The charmed portals were to be opened to me.

He shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly. 'Two young persons are to be married,' he said—'young persons of no consequence,' he added, looking at me from the corners of his eyes; 'and it happens there is no witness available at the moment.'

'It will be no trouble,' I responded, depressed at the thought that the pretty girl was so soon to be appropriated. 'Such a pretty girl, too!' I added, half-aloud.

The curé frowned a little. 'That is a matter on which I am not a competent judge,' he observed severely. 'Will you walk in?'

At his invitation I entered the little stuffy interior, round which hung gaudy pictures which were a pain to look upon. An odour of stale incense hung in the air. At the altar the couple I had seen enter the chapel were standing. I took up my position a little to the side, and the curé commenced the service.

When it was at an end the curé fetched a book, in which he made an entry, and the two having signed their names, he beckoned to me. He pointed

to a blank space on the page. The names of the newly-married couple were covered with a piece of blotting-paper, which I tried to brush aside; but the curé's forefinger was upon it.

'You sign there,' he said imperturbably, pointing to the allotted place, and I wrote my name without further ado.

'Who are they?' I asked carelessly when the pair had left the chapel. 'I suppose it is not a secret.'

The curé did not reply for a moment.

'Secret?' he said at length. 'Why should it be a secret? The girl is the daughter of a vintner in Lapsburg, and the man is a corporal in the Herzoglian Guards.' He looked me calmly in the face as he said this, and I have seen nothing so blandly innocent as was his face at that moment.

'Really,' I said, a trifle disappointedly. 'I thought that young fellow was a gentleman.'

'It does not require a genealogy to make a gentleman,' responded the curé oracularly.

'The girl certainly looked well-born,' I said carelessly; 'but appearances are often deceptive.'

The curé did not reply. I bade him good-day, and went out of the chapel. The girl had vanished, and the man was already on the back of his horse. When he saw me he leant over and held out his hand.

'Thanks,' he said, with his bright smile. 'I am sorry to have bored you with my little affair.'

'It was no trouble,' I responded, taking his hand with, I fear, a slightly condescending air. 'I wish you luck, corporal.'

A slight look of surprise came over his face, and then he laughed.

'I suppose I shall never see you again,' he said lightly, 'or I should be glad to fulfil a similar office for you.'

He nodded to me in his familiar way, and, putting spurs to his horse, was a crawling fly on the Lapsburg road almost before I could get my knapsack into place.

I had walked about five miles toward the capital when the closed carriage overtook me. The blinds were down, so I caught no glimpse of the newly-made bride.

The stars had commenced to shine before I reached Lapsburg. I found my way without difficulty to my uncle's residence, who received me with his usual kindness.

'This is an unexpected pleasure, nephew,' he said, shaking my hand with unaffected cordiality; 'but it is always the unexpected that happens in Herzoglia.'

'You have no sinecure, then?' I asked when our greetings were at an end and I had satisfied him as to the welfare of relations at home.

'Alas! yes,' he said, sighing. 'None of the fun comes my way. I live an untroubled life. My government rarely bother me with instructions, and I know for a fact that they don't read my despatches.'

'That is surely satisfactory?' I hazarded.

He pursed his lips. 'Not to an ambitious man. What chance have I to bring myself into favourable notice? Here I am, and here I suppose I shall remain until I retire from the service.'

After dinner I began again on the subject.

'Is nothing stirring in this sleepy little place?' I asked.

He yawned a little. 'I shouldn't be surprised if there was a revolution in a day or two.'

'Not really?' I cried.

'It is quite possible,' he answered; 'but I don't take much interest in the matter.' He lit a cigar, and began upon a subject which seemed to interest him more. 'Diplomacy in Herzoglia,' he said, 'resolves itself into a prolonged duel between the Austrian and the Russian ambassadors. I look on and speculate how much better I could do things myself.'

'What is the bone of contention?'

'It is the old fight for "influence." It happens that there are two claimants to the throne. There is Queen Elma, the reigning sovereign; and then there is her cousin, the Count Ulric of Lapsburg, who, I think, has the better claim, and whose following is undoubtedly increasing. Elma, however, has the support of Russia.'

'Well?' I asked, for he had paused.

'The whole capital is divided into two rival parties. I say the capital advisedly, for the country people don't care two straws about the matter. The court is enclosed in a network of intrigue. There is certain to be a big flare-up soon.'

'But what have the ambassadors to do with it?'

'If Count Ulric were to upset the present dynasty it would mean the end of Russian influence.'

'I see.'

My uncle roused himself. 'It is quite plain to me,' he said, with increased vivacity, 'that if once Ulric was suppressed, Queen Elma would shortly follow him into limbo. She is not a tractable person, and insists on her own way, notwithstanding Russian protests. Oh, she's a difficult person, is the Queen Elma.'

'Why don't the two—Elma and Ulric—combine against their common foe?' I asked wisely.

'Things are not so plain to the persons concerned as they are to so acute an observer as myself,' said my uncle gravely. 'But your remark outlines the policy of the Austrian ambassador.'

'Whose star is in the ascendant just now?' I asked, yawning a little, for I was tired after my walk.

'The Austrian ambassador's, if rumour speaks true. His object is to get the Queen and Ulric to marry; and I understand that at the court ball to-morrow their formal betrothal will be announced. Austria's calculation is that this marriage would be a check on Russian influence; but whether this would be so or not I can't say.'

'At any rate, the betrothal is a slap in the face for the Russian ambassador?'

'It would seem so; but one never knows what cards friend Slavoski has up his sleeve. I await developments.'

'What do the parties chiefly concerned think about their proposed marriage?'

'The Queen is in its favour. Ulric is a handsome young fellow,' replied my uncle absently. 'I like Ulric,' he went on. 'I like his breezy irresponsibility, and I wish him a better fate than to marry her Majesty.'

'Why? Is she ugly?'

'No; she is very handsome. But for a wife'—— He made an expressive gesture.

'Tell me,' I said, interested.

My uncle smiled. 'I will make a point of presenting you at the ball to-morrow. You will be able to judge for yourself.'

'What is her defect?' I persisted.

'She reminds me in some respect of your poor dear aunt,' he replied, casting a glance up at the painting of his deceased wife that hung upon the wall.

I discreetly did not press for further particulars.

'What does Count Ulric think of it all?' I asked, after a moment's reflection.

'Heaven knows! He is a fluttering, irresponsible butterfly, and neither knows nor cares what the next half-hour will give forth. And yet he is a charming young fellow.'

'A curious pair to control the destinies of a kingdom,' I observed.

My uncle nodded. 'They come straight from comic opera; and yet,' he added thoughtfully, 'one never knows whether the orchestra may not strike up a tragic finale.'

'The Queen loves Ulric?' I asked.

'And is as—jealous—as—as'—— His eye sought the picture on the wall.

'How will it all end?'

'I haven't an idea. I am inclined to think, as I said, that friend Slavoski is laying the train for a *coup d'état*.'

'He seems a regular Machiavelli.'

My uncle looked absently at the electric lights. 'He is able enough, no doubt. I sometimes wish I had an opportunity of crossing swords with him. But, alas! there's no chance of it.' He caught my eye, and smiled. 'It's a secret between us, that though I go about in a mask of impenetrable mystery, I have really nothing to hide.'

'I should like to meet Slavoski.'

'And so you shall, my boy. He is dining here to-morrow before the ball. But you must be tired, and I have been wearying you. Good-night.'

CYCLE TOURING.

'TAKEN altogether,' says the Countess of Malmesbury, 'cycling has been one of the greatest blessings given to modern women.' One of the very apparent benefits to both men and women is the ability to quickly change surroundings, deliver from monotony, and give a wider horizon to daily existence. Not every one can take a cycle tour round the world, yet all who ride may make a bit of this fair world better known to themselves, develop a love for country life, and counteract the dwarfing influence of the overcrowded life in town. When in an inspired moment we review the past, that portion of time is probably fullest of pleasant recollection, of wholesome and healthy stimulus, which has been filled with memories of days in the open air; it forms a bridge between monotonous periods of hard work, as we think of days that have delivered us from ourselves, and given life a background of freshness and greenness; days which have been a well of refreshment, the remembrance of which is for a lifetime.

Puck said he would put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes. This occupies the average cyclist three years. Mr Thomas Stevens, starting from San Francisco in April 1884, took that time to ride round the world. Mr T. Allen and Mr L. Sachtleben, two American students, as a practical finish to a theoretical education, also took three years to the 15,404 miles—not reckoning the unrideable oceans. Many people, and even we in our own fifteen years a-wheel, must have gone two or three times round the world in point of distance. Now that the cyclometer is in common use, this can be easily tested. We hear from time to time of plenty short and adventurous rides as the cyclist goes to and fro in his native land, native county, or afield on the Continent. In holiday seasons he breaks away from all restraint, and adds several counties to his conquests. Mr R. L. Jefferson has ridden from London to Constantinople, and also to Moscow, doing the 4281 miles of the latter journey in forty days. The *Times*, in noticing this exploit, asked if the game was worth the candle, as the cycle was made for man and not man for the cycle. Probably one might as well have himself whirled in the train like a parcel through grand and beautiful scenery. Later, Mr Jefferson annexed Siberia, and, like Captain Burnaby, he has since ridden to Khiva. Mr J. Foster Fraser, Mr Lunn, and Mr Low started in April 1896 on a cycling tour round the world; and the description by the former of 'The Finest Cycling Route in the World,' in *Chambers's Journal* for June, is sufficient to fill the soul of the average cyclist with envy.

When gone about intelligently, cycle touring has a high recreative and instructive value. A man may move from point to point, and be the slave of his machine, and when he returns the only remarkable thing in the journey has been the distance he has travelled in a given time; but this is scarcely touring for pleasure and profit. One may also ride a hundred miles a day; but if on tour it is probably better to ride from forty to fifty miles. Sandow asks his pupils to use their intelligence while at his gymnasium. Every cyclist should do the same when on the wheel. Here more than in any other method of travelling he finds that freedom of movement and gipsy-like absence of restraint which R. L. Stevenson describes so well in his paper on walking tours, which Thoreau enjoyed by Walden Pond, and Bayard Taylor in his walking tour over Europe, as recorded in his *Views Afoot*.

Experience is the best teacher in cycle touring as in aught else, and this one must pay for either in hard cash or in mileage covered. There is abundance of useful and helpful literature, however. The member of the Cyclist Touring Club is kept in touch with the freshest intelligence by the monthly magazine. There are plenty of other journals also, and many newspapers and periodicals find it to their interest to give considerable space to the subject. Books are useful in their own place, and we have the Badminton volume crammed with cycling lore; Pinkerton's *Complete Cyclist;* the four volumes of the C.T.C. handbooks devoted to England, Wales, and Scotland; Mecredy and Wilson's *Art and Pastime of Cycling*, Bidlake's *Cycling*, Brown's *Cycling*, Erskine's *Lady Cycling*, Hillier's *All-Round Cycling*, and *Cycling* in the Suffolk Sporting Series; and for pocket use there are maps and Inglis's *Contour Road Books*. A recent addition is *Cycle Touring* (Bell & Sons), by A. W. Rumney, tourist editor of *Cycling*, to which we will return. How the pastime is growing is evident from a glance at any of our good suburban roads on a fine day. The membership of the C.T.C. is almost 50,000, the French Touring Club now numbers over 60,000, while the League of American Wheelmen reckons over 100,000.

These numbers bear only a small proportion to the now cycling millions. Members of the C.T.C. are not all tourists, and hundreds tour who are not members. Mr Joseph Pennell, who has had extraordinary experience of touring, both here and on the Continent, says that it is a matter of temperament, and that those who tour must ever remain in the minority. In regard to progress he says: 'Stop when you get tired; travel by rail when it is too hard work. There is no glory to be got from hard work in cycling. You might as well amuse yourself.'

The cycle has widened the possible area of observation at our intended holiday resort. The county in which we reside can be gradually intersected, by circular tours if possible; and much instruction and enjoyment may be secured both before and afterwards by getting up the historical, literary, and other associations of each day's ride. It is wonderful how interesting a dull local guide or book becomes when made an adjunct of such tours. More preparation is required if we strike off for several days or weeks; and it is then that the C.T.C. handbooks and the volumes already mentioned are most useful. May and June and early October often afford perfect weather for touring, as in the two early months the country is at its freshest, and frequently, in our uncertain climate, the end of July and August are failures in regard to weather. We are inclined to agree with Mr Rumney as to solitary touring: that 'in really wild scenery a man will see more of Nature's beauties, drink them in more keenly, acclimatise himself more readily to his surroundings, and in consequence probably get greater benefit from his holiday, than in company with another. . . . A solitary wayfarer will obtain more information and more interesting converse with the natives by the roadside, or the chance fellow-guests at an hotel, than a party or even a couple could.' To be either alone, or in company, say with two, three, or four brethren of the wheel, may be desirable, according as it suits our programme; for it is when we are done-up or in cases of accident that we know the value of company. We have done the whole of Tweedside, from the source of that river to the sea, with Ettrick, Yarrow, and the Land of Scott, alone, and also with companionship; also, the Carlyle and Burns localities in Dumfriesshire, including lonely Craigenputtock, and some of the country in Galloway glorified in the stories of S. R. Crockett. The Roman Wall in Cumberland, and Northumberland, we did alone, and, with Dr Bruce's admirable handbook, we found it singularly enjoyable. Northumberland is unusually rich in old castles, churches, and historical associations; and we have found visits to Bamborough, Holy Island, Alnwick, Morpeth, and elsewhere also memorable and interesting. We have been over many of the rideable roads in Perthshire, Banff, Moray, Aberdeen, and Kincardineshire; but found one of the finest rides a circular tour from the town of Perth. Starting from that town up the valley of the Earn, we had six miles of lovely Loch Earn and fifteen of Loch Tay on our route, which was by Methven, Crieff, Comrie, St Fillans, Lochearnhead, and Killin. This was a ride of about fifty miles on the Saturday; and, with Sunday's rest in Killin, we were fresh for other fifty miles round the north side of Loch Tay, by Lawers, Kenmore, Aberfeldy, Dunkeld, Bankfoot, back to Perth. The scenery between Comrie and St Fillans is uncommonly fine, and is grandly broken by the Aberuchill Hills; and the westering sun striking on Loch Earn as we emerged at St Fillans, and on banks begemmed with primroses, made this part of the ride fresh and charming.

The experienced tourist may safely be left to arrange his own touring outfit. One may cram all the available guide-book information, yet find that it hardly fits his special case. To have a good machine, and to be personally in good condition, with weather and roads favourable, are the first essentials. No two cyclists will agree as to the amount of luggage to be carried, a point which is best determined by one's own taste and the length of the tour. An ordinary waterproof cape is a necessary abomination, which those who have experienced a damping by condensed and imprisoned perspiration might wish abolished. The equipment of the most experienced cyclist Mr Rumney ever knew was a tooth-brush, pocket-comb, and a map. According to Pemberton, the absolutely necessary articles are two spare Jaeger shirts, a pair of extra thin stockings, a cape, the usual toilet requisites, with several pocket-handkerchiefs. For Continental tours he advises joining the C.T.C., for the sake of getting machines easily through the custom-house; and he further advises the taking of a few spare parts in case of accident. The main points in a touring cycle are a reliable 'first-grade;' also a good brake—for to ride without one, in view of the many lamentable accidents caused thereby, is pure folly—mud-guards and luggage-carrier, gear not exceeding 63 inches, and weight of machine not under 32 lb. Having been thrown twice by stones catching in his front mud-guard, Pemberton has nothing good to say of them. One has only to get covered with mud from head to heel, however, to think them a necessary evil.

Here is a specimen of what one cyclist carries as a light outfit for a tour not exceeding a week: a flannel night-shirt, two needles and cotton, pocket scissors, three handkerchiefs, three collars, shaving requisites, pocket-comb, tooth-brush, extra shoe-laces, waterproof cape—weight 2¼ lb.; carrier 1 lb.—total 3¼ lb. Mr Rumney advises, instead of the night-shirt, another flannel day-shirt, which could serve the double use. Another cyclist carries, instead of a night-shirt, a suit of pyjamas, made of fine navy-blue serge, which he finds comfortable to sleep in, and even decent for appearing in public should his riding-clothes require drying. Another seasoned traveller carries, if out for more than one night, flannel pyjamas, flannel shirt, flannel pants, thin knickers, tennis blazer, light shoes, one pair of stockings, handkerchiefs, tooth-brush, nail-brush, and sponge—the whole about 7 lb. A lady tourist finds the following ample for two or three nights away from home: a comb, tooth-brush, soap, tooth-soap, small end of loofa, pair of shoes, and curling-pins, together with a light-weight *robe de nuit*, a silk vest, a silk blouse, an extra pair of stockings, and a cycling mackintosh cape. The whole rolls into a hold-all 12 inches long and about 18 inches in circumference.

The triangular bag fitted into the frame of the machine (only it interferes with freedom in pedalling if stuffed too full), or on a carrier over the back-wheel, is preferred by some. Messrs Cook, in their conducted tours, recommend a poncho in case, strapped on the handle-bar, which for a week's tour should contain an extra pair of stockings, flannelette night-shirt, brush, comb, tooth-brush and powder, soap in tin, and light waterproof leggings.

It is recommended by many that the day's programme be something like the following: After a hearty breakfast, make a leisurely start, take a simple lunch of bread and milk, or fruit, an early cup of afternoon tea, and make late dinner or supper, after riding is done, the heavy meal of the day. A square meal about midday requires a lengthy halt, as no one feels quite comfortable for riding without a good rest. Most people feel in form for the fastest work of the day between 5 and 7 P.M. There are sundry suggestions in the C.T.C. Handbook not to tour on a strange machine nor on a strange saddle. The Henson, Esmond, and Pattisson saddles are specially mentioned by Rumney. The most comfortable saddle we have ever seen was that on the dandy-horse in the armoury of Alnwick Castle. We have also the hints not to tour in new clothes or new shoes, and to look well to tyres, bearings, and chain before starting; also, not to ride before breakfast without slight refreshment. Hear the C.T.C. again: 'Nibble biscuits and fruit' ('raisins or chocolate,' says Rumney) 'on and off all day as you ride, making a continuous picnic of the journey, with occasional wayside drinks of either soda and milk, stone gingerbeer, or tea. Avoid square meals during the day, as riding after dinner is disagreeable. Avoid new bread, indigestible pastry, and wines, beer, or spirits until the ride is over.'

Cycling, according to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, is favourable to temperance. He has never met a drunken cyclist. We have, but he was in a ditch, with his head bleeding like a stuck pig. Do not smoke when on the machine. Breathe as far as possible through the nose, though this is difficult where the work of riding is hard.

It is quite possible the tourist will turn his back on most of these hints of all kinds contained in papers and books, and only remember his shortcomings when necessity arises for the use of them, and so take the fortunes of the way whatever these may be. He wants a good time, freedom, fresh air, exercise, new scenes and impressions, as a fillip to a more humdrum existence. And, with few exceptions, he will not be disappointed; for should the weather prove good, and there be no accident, he will return so thoroughly refreshed that he will want to repeat the experience in another direction at the earliest possible opportunity.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THE HOUSE WITH THE CHIPPED GABLES.

THE next morn the weather had changed. When I looked forth through the latticed panes to the street, it was a bleak scene that met my eyes—near a foot of snow, flakes tossing and whirling everywhere, and the roofs and gables showing leaden dull in the gloom.

My first care was to inquire at Mistress Macmillan if she knew aught of my cousin's doings, for the town-house of the Eaglesham Burnets was not two streets distant. But she could give me no news; for, said she, since the old laird died, and these troublous times succeeded, it was little that the young master came near the place. So, without any delay, I and my servant went out into the wintry day, and found our way to the old, dark dwelling in the High Street.

The house had been built near a hundred years before, in the time of Ephraim Burnet, my cousin's grandfather. I mind it well to this day; and oft, as I think of the city, that dreary, ancient pile rises to fill my vision. The three burnet leaves, the escutcheon of our family, hung over the doorway. Every window was small and well barred with iron, nor was any sign of life to be seen behind the dreary panes. But the most notable things to the eye were the odd crowstep gables, which, I know not from what cause, were all chipped and defaced, and had a strange pied appearance against the darker roof. The house faced the street, and down one side ran a little lane. Behind were many lesser buildings around the courtyard, and the back opened into a wynd which ran westward to the city walls.

I went up the steps, and with my sword-hilt thundered on the door. The blows roused the echoes of the old place. Within, I heard the resonance of corridor and room, all hollow and empty. Below me was the snowy street, with now and then a single passer, and I felt an eerie awe of this strange house, as if one who should seek to force a vault of the dead.

Again I knocked, and this time it brought me an answer. I heard feet—slow, shuffling feet—coming from some distant room, and ascending the staircase to the hall. The place was so void that the slightest sound rang loud and clear, and I could mark the progress of the steps from their beginning. Somewhere they came to a halt, as if the person were considering whether or not to come to the door; but by-and-by they advanced, and with vast creaking a key was fitted into the lock and the great oak door was opened a little.

It was a little old woman who stood in the opening, with a face seamed and wrinkled, and not a tooth in her head. She wore a mutch, which gave a most witch-like appearance, and her narrow, gray eyes, as they fastened on me and sought out my errand, did not reassure me.

'What d'ye want here the day, sir?' she says in a high, squeaking voice. 'It's cauld, cauld weather, and my banes are auld, and I canna stand here bidin' your pleesur'.'

'Is your master within?' I said shortly. 'Take me to him, for I have business with him.'

'Maister, quotha!' she screamed. 'Wha d'ye speak o', young sir? If it's the auld laird ye mean, he's lang syne wi' his Makker, and the young yin has no' been here thae fower year. He was a tenty bit lad, was Maister Gilbert, but he gaed aff to the wars i' the abroad, and ne'er thinks o' returnin'. Wae's me for the puir, hapless chiel;' and she crooned on to herself in the garrulity of old age.

'Tell me the truth,' said I, 'and have done with your lies. It is well known that your master came here in the last two days with two men and a lady, and abode here for the night. Tell me instantly if he is still here or whither he has gone.'

She looked at me with a twinkle of shrewdness, and then shook her head once more. 'Na, na; I'm no' leein'. I'm ower near my accoont wi' the Lord to burden my soul wi' lees. When you tae are fa'in' i' the hinner end o' life ye'll no' think it worth your while to mak' up leesome stories. I tell ye the young maister hasna been here for years, though it's blithe I wad be to see him. If ye winna believe my word ye can e'en gang your ways.'

Now I was in something of a quandary. The woman looked to be speaking the truth, and it was possible that my cousin could have left the city on one side and pushed straight on to his house of Eaglesham, or even to the remoter western coast. Yet the way was a long one, and I saw not how he could have refrained from halting at Glasgow in the even. He had no cause to fear my following him there more than another place. That I would come post-haste to the westlands at the first word he must have well known, and so he could have no reason in covering his tracks from me. He was over well-known a figure in his own country-side to make secrecy possible; his aim must be to outrace me in speed, not to outwit me with cunning.

'Let me gang, young sir,' the old hag was groaning. 'I've the rheumaticks i' my banes, and I'm sair hadden doon wi' the chills, and I'll get my death if I stand here longer.'

'I will trust you, then,' said I; 'but since I am

a kinsman of your master's and have ridden far on a bootless errand, I will even come in and refresh myself ere I return.'

'Na, na,' she said, a new look—one of anxiety and cunning—coming into her face; 'ye maunna dae that. It was the last word my maister bade me ere he gaed awa. "Elspeth," says he, "see ye let nane intil the hoose till I come back."'

'Tut, tut! I am his own cousin. I will enter if I please;' and calling my servant, I made to force an admittance.

Then suddenly, ere I knew, the great door was slammed in my face, and I could hear the sound of a key turning and a bar being dropped.

Here was a pretty to-do. Without doubt there was that in the house which the crone desired to keep from my notice. I sprang to the door and thundered on it like a madman, wrestling with the lock, and calling for the woman to open it. But all in vain, and after a few seconds' bootless endeavour I turned ruefully to my servant.

'Can aught be done?' I asked.

'I saw a dyke as we cam' here,' said Nicol, 'and ower the back o't was a yaird. There was likewise a gate i' the dyke. I'm thinkin' that'll be the back-door o' the hoose. If ye were awfu' determined, laird, ye micht win in there.'

I thought for a moment. 'You are right,' I cried. 'I know the place. But we will first go back and fetch the horses, for it is like there will be wild work before us ere night.'

But, lo and behold! when we went to the inn stable my horse was off. 'I thocht he needit a shae,' said the ostler, 'so I just sent him down to Jock Walkinshaw's i' the East Port. If ye'll bide a wee I'll send a laddie doun to bring him up.'

Five, twenty, sixty minutes, and more we waited while that accursed child brought my horse. Then he came back a little after midday; three shoes had been needed, he said, and he had rin a' the way, and he wasna to blame. So I gave him a crown and a sound box on the ears, and then the two of us set off.

The place was high and difficult of access, being in a narrow lane where few passers ever went, and nigh to the city wall. I bade Nicol hold the horses; and, standing on the back of one, I could just come to within a few feet of the top. I did my utmost, by springing upward, to grasp the parapet, but all in vain; so, in a miserable state of disappointed hopes, I desisted and consulted with my servant. Together we tried the door, but it was of massive wood, clamped with iron, and triply bolted. There was nothing for it but to send off to Mistress Macmillan and seek some contrivance. Had the day not been so wild and the lane so quiet we could scarce have gone unnoticed. As it was, one man passed, a hawker in a little cart seeking a near way, and with little time to stare at the two solitary horsemen waiting by the wall.

Nicol went off alone, while I kept guard—an aimless guard—by the gate. In a little he returned, carrying an old boathook with the cleek at the end somewhat unusually long. Then he proposed his method. I should stand on horseback as before, and hang the hook on the flat surface of the wall. When by dint of scraping I had fixed it firmly, I should climb it hand over hand, as a sailor mounts a rope, and with a few pulls I might hope to be at the summit.

I did as he bade, and with great labour fixed the hook in the hard stone. Then I pulled myself up, very slowly and carefully, with the shaft quivering in my hands. I was just gripping the stone when the wretched iron slipped and rattled down to the ground, cutting me sharply in the wrist. Luckily I did not go with it, for in the moment of falling I had grasped the top, and hung there with aching hands, and the blood from the cut trickling down my arm. Then with a mighty effort I swung myself up and stood safe on the top.

Below me was a sloping roof of wood, which ended in a sheer wall of, maybe, twelve feet. Below that in turn was the great yard, flagged with stone, but now hidden under a cloak of snow. Around it were stables, empty of horses, windy, cold, and dismal. I cannot tell how the whole place depressed me. I felt as though I were descending into some pit of the dead.

Stanching the blood from my wrist—by good hap my left—as best I might with my kerchief, I slipped down the white roof and dropped into the court. It was a wide, empty place, and in the late afternoon looked gray and fearsome. The dead, black house behind, with its many windows all shuttered and lifeless, shadowed the place like a pall. At my back was the back-door of the house, like the other locked and iron-clamped. I seemed to myself to have done little good by my escapade in coming thither.

Wandering aimlessly, I entered the stable, scarce thinking what I was doing. Something about the place made me stop and look. I rubbed my eyes and wondered. There, sure enough, were signs of horses having been recently here. Fresh hay and a few oats were in the mangers, and straw and droppings in the stalls clearly proclaimed that not long agone the place had been tenanted.

I rushed out into the yard, and ran hither and thither searching the ground. There were hoof-marks—fool that I was not to have marked them before!—leading clearly from the stable door to the gate in the High Street. I rushed to the iron doors and tugged at them. To my amazement, I found that they yielded, and I was staring into the darkening street.

So the birds had been there and flown in our brief absence. I cursed my ill-fortune with a bitter heart.

Suddenly I saw something dark lying amid the

snow. I picked it up, and laid it tenderly in my bosom. For it was a little knot of blue velvet ribbon, such as my lady wore.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—UP HILL AND DOWN DALE.

RUSHED up the street, leaving the gates swinging wide behind me, and down the lane to where Nicol waited. In brief, panting words I told him my tale. He heard it without a movement, save to turn his horse's head up the street. I swung myself into the saddle, and with no more delay we made for our lodgings.

'There is but one thing that we may do,' said I. 'The night is an ill one, but if it is ill for us 'tis ill for them.' And at the words I groaned, for I thought of my poor Marjory in the storm and cold.

At Mistress Macmillan's I paid the lawing, and having eaten a hasty meal, we crammed some food into our saddle-bags, and bade the hostess good-bye. Then we turned straight for the West Port of the city.

It was as I had expected. The gates were just at the closing when the twain of us passed through and rode into the bleak night. The snow had ceased to fall early in the day, but now it came on again in little intermittent driftings, while a keen wind whistled from the hills to the north. The land was more or less strange to me, and even my servant, who had a passing acquaintance with many country-sides, professed himself ignorant. It was the way to the wild Highlands, the country of Campbells and Lennoxes, and far distant from kindly Christian folk. I could not think why my cousin had chosen this path, save for the reason of its difficulty and obscurity. I was still in doubt of his purpose, whether he was bound for his own house of Eaglesham or for the more distant Clyde coast. He had clearly gone by this gate from the city, for this much we had learned from the man at the Port. Now, if he sought Eaglesham he must needs cross the river, which would give us some time to gain on his track. But if he still held to the north, then there was nought for it but to follow him hot-foot, and come up with him by God's grace and our horses' speed.

I have been abroad on many dark nights, but never have I seen one so black as this. The path to the west ran straight from our feet to the rugged hills which dip down to the river-edge some ten miles off. But of it we could make nothing; nor was there anything to tell us of its presence save that our horses stumbled when we strayed from it to the moory land on either side. All about us were the wilds, for the town of Glasgow stood on the last bounds of settled country, near to the fierce mountains and black morasses of the Highlandmen. The wind crooned and blew in gusts over the white waste, driving little flakes of snow about us, and cutting us to the bone with its bitter cold. Somewhere in the unknown distances we heard strange sounds, the awesome rumble of water or the cry of forlorn birds. All was as black as death, and, in the thick darkness, what might otherwise have seemed simple and home-like was filled with vague terrors. I had shaped no path; all that I sought was to hasten somewhere nearer those we followed, and on this mad quest we stumbled blindly forward.

When we had gone some half-dozen miles a light shone out from the wayside, and we descried a house. It was a little, low dwelling, with many sheds at the rear—clearly a smithy or a humble farm. My servant leaped down and knocked. The door was opened; a warm stream of light lay across the snowy road. I had a glimpse within, and there was a cheerful kitchen with a fire of logs crackling. A man sat by the hearth shaping something or other with a knife, and around him two children were playing. The woman who came to us was buxom and comely, one who delighted in her children and her home. The whole place gave me a sharp feeling of envy and regret. Even these folk, poor peasants, had the joys of comfort and peace, while I, so long an outlaw and a wanderer, must still wander hopeless, seeking the lost, cumbered about with a thousand dangers.

'Did any riders pass by this road to-day?' I asked.

'Ay; four passed on horses about midday, or maybe a wee thing after it—twae stoot fellows and a braw-clad gentleman and a bonny young leddy. They didna stop, but gaed by at a great rate.'

'What was the lady like?' I asked breathlessly.

'Oh, a bit young thing, snod and genty-like. But I mind she looked gey dowie, and I think she had been greetin'. But wherefore d'ye speir, sir? And what are ye daein' oot hereaways on siccan a nicht? Ye best come in and bide till mornin'. We've an orra bed i' the house for the maister, and plenty o' guid saft straw i' the barn for the man.'

'Did they go straight on?' I cried; 'and whither does this way lead?'

'They went straight on,' said she, 'and the road is the road to the toun o' Dumbarton.' And she would have told me more; but with a hasty word of thanks I cut her short, and once more we were off into the night.

From this place our way and the incidents thereof are scarce clear in my memory. For one thing, the many toils of the preceding time began at last to tell upon me, and I grew sore and wearied; also a heavy drowsiness oppressed me, and even in that cold I could have slept on my horse's back. We were still on the path, and the rhythmical jog of the motion served to lull me, till, as befell every now and then, there came a rut or a tussock, and I was brought to my senses with a sharp shock. Nicol rode silently at my side, a great figure in the gloom, bent low, as was

always his custom, over his horse's neck. In one way my present state was more pleasing than the last, for the turmoil of cares in my heart was quieted for the moment by the bodily fatigue. I roused myself at times to think of my purpose and get me energy for my task; but the dull languor would not be exorcised, and I always fell back again into my sloth. Nevertheless we kept a fair pace, for we had given the rein to our animals, and they were fresh and well fed.

Suddenly, ere I knew, the way began to change from a level road into a steep hill-path. Even in the blackness I could see a great hillside rising steeply to right and to left. I pulled up my horse, for here there would be need of careful guidance, and was going on as before when Nicol halted me with his voice.

'Laird, laird,' he cried, 'I dinna ken muckle aboot the Dumbarton road, but there's yae thing I ken weel, and that is, that it keeps i' the laigh land near the water-side a' the way, and doesna straiggle ower brae-faces.'

This roused me to myself. 'Did we pass any cross-road?' I asked; 'for God knows the night is dark enough for any man to wander. Are you sure of what you say?'

'As sure as I am that my fingers are cauld and my een fair dazed wi' sleep,' said he.

'Then there is nought for it but to go back and trust to overtaking the path. Our highway must lie to our left, since we clearly have turned to the right, seeing that if we had turned to the left we should have reached the water. If, then, we strike straight from here along the bottom of the slope, will we not reach the town? The chances are that we should never find our path, whereas this way will bring us there without fail if we can stomach some rough riding.'

'Weel, sir, I'm wi' ye wherever ye like to gang. And I'll no deny but that it's the maist reasonable road to tak', if ye're no' feared o' breakin' your craig ower a stane or walkin' intil a peat-bog.'

So, wheeling sharply to our left, we left the path and rode as best we could along the rough bottom of the hills. On one hand the land lay back to the haughlands and ordered fields; on the other it sloped steeply to the hills. Scrunts of birk-trees and strange, gnarled trunks came at times; but in general the ground was open and not unsuited for horses in the light of day. Now it was something more than difficult, for we came perilous near oftentimes to fulfilling my servant's prophecy. All drowsiness had vanished with the rough-and-ready mode of travel, and in this fashion we must have ridden some half-dozen miles, when we were suddenly brought to an end in our progress. Before us lay a little ravine clogged with snow, in whose bottom a burn roared. It was a water of little size, and in summer weather one might all but have leaped it. Now the snow had swollen it to the semblance of a torrent, and it chafed and eddied in the little gorge, a streak of dark, angry water against the dim white banks. There was nothing for it but to enter and struggle across, and yet, as I looked at the ugly swirl, I hesitated. I turned to Nicol, who sat with his teeth shaking with the bitter weather.

'There is nought for it,' said I, 'but to risk it. There is no use in following it, for we shall find no better place in a ravine like this.'

Even as I spoke my servant had taken the plunge, and I saw horse and man slip off the snowy bank into the foam. I followed so closely that I lost all sight of them. To this day I remember the feelings of the moment—the choking as an icy wave surged over my mouth, the frantic pulling at the bridle-rein, the wild plunging of my horse, the roar of water and the splash of swimming. Then, with a mighty effort, my brave animal was struggling up the farther side, where my servant was already shaking the water from his clothes.

This incident, while it put me in better heart, vastly added to my bodily discomfort. An icy wind shivering through dripping garments may well chill the blood of the stoutest. And for certain the next part of the way is burned on my memory with a thousand recollections of utter weariness and misery. Even my hardy servant could scarce keep from groaning; and I, who was ever of a tenderer make, could have leaned my head on my horse's neck and sobbed with pure feebleness.

The country was now rough with tanglewood, for we were near the last spur of the hills ere they break down on the river. Somewhere through the gloom lights were shining and moving, as I guessed from a ship on the water. Beyond were still others, few in number, but fixed, as if from dwelling-houses. Here at last, I thought, is the town of Dumbarton which I am seeking; and, fired with the hope, we urged on the more our jaded beasts.

But lo! when we came to it, 'twas but a wayside inn in a little clachan, where one solitary lamp swung and cast a bar of light over the snowy street. I hammered at the door till I brought down the landlord shivering in his night-dress. It might be that my cousin had halted here, so I asked the man if he had any travellers within.

'None, save twae drunk Ayr skippers and a Glesca packman; unless your honour is comin' to keep them company.'

'Has any one passed, then?' I cried.

'How could I tell when I've been sleepin' i' my bed thae sax 'oors?' he coughed, and seeing we were no sojourners, slammed the door in our face.

We were numb and wretched, but there was nought for it but to ride on farther to the town. It could not be far, and there were signs of morn already in the air. The cold grew more intense,

and the thick pall of darkness lifted somewhat toward the east. The blurred woods and clogged fields at our side gradually came into view; and as, heart-sick and nigh fordone with want of sleep, we rounded the great barrier ridge of hill, an array of twinkling lights sprang up in front and told us that we were not far from our journey's end. Nevertheless it was still dark when we rode into the narrow, cobbled street and stopped at the first hostelry.

Now both the one and the other were too far gone with weariness to do more than drop helplessly from our horses and stagger into the inn parlour. They gave us brandy, and then led us to a sleeping-room, where we lay down like logs and dropped into a profound slumber.

When we awoke the morning was well advanced. I was roused by Nicol, who was ever the more wakeful, and without more delay we went down and recruited our exhausted strength with a meal. Then I summoned the landlord, and asked, more from habit than from any clear expectation, whether any travellers had lodged overnight.

The man answered shortly that there had been a gentleman and a maid, with two serving-men, who had but lately left.

In a great haste I seized on my hat and called loudly for the horses. 'Where did they go?' I said. 'By what way? Quick, tell me.'

'They took the road down to the ferry,' said he, in great amazement. 'It's no' an 'oor since they gaed.'

Thereupon I flung him his lawing, and we rushed from the house.

PREMATURE BURIAL

READERS of Wilkie Collins's novel, *Jezebel's Daughter*, will remember that dramatic scene in the German deadhouse, when the English widow, poisoned and supposed to be dead, wakes from her awful sleep and confounds her enemies. Indeed, this is an old device of the realistic novelist, and one which never fails to enthral the reader by the very daring with which so grim a subject is made subservient to the demand for thrilling fiction. Yet, if all accounts are true, the novelist who relies upon this form of incident is likely in the future to find himself, like Othello, occupationless. It is all owing to those terrible X-rays, which have so much to answer for already, and which, like a piercing search-light, are dispelling the mist and darkness in which so many important facts have long been lost to sight. We are now informed, among other wonderful things possible since their discovery, that it is easy, by a slightly different form of ray, to photograph the interior of the human body, the resultant photographs differing according to whether the body is dead or living. This means, of course, supposing the invention to be worth anything, that the world will be placed in possession of what scientists have long been seeking—an absolute test whether death has really taken place. In Paris the rays have already been used to good purpose. The relatives of a man who was supposed to have died were afraid to inter him, lest the spark of life had not quite departed. In the end they satisfied themselves by having the thorax exposed to the wonderful Röntgen rays. The result dispelled all doubt and fear. The slightest and most occasional movement of the heart would have blurred the picture; there was no such movement—the heart was still and rigid—the man was dead beyond all question.

It is impossible almost, at first thought, to realise the immensity of such a discovery, and its inestimable value to mankind. Think for a moment of the horrors of premature burial. Think of the terrible uncertainty with which many human beings are even to-day put away into the tomb; and think also of the horror and unspeakable anguish of the wretched creature whose return to consciousness is but the prelude to a death than which it is impossible to realise anything more ghastly or horrible. This Victor Hugo realises in a thrilling scene in *Les Miserables*. If this new invention can do what is claimed for it, these uncertainties and horrors will become things of the past, and the haunting fear which has pursued so many nervous people through life will vanish like the mists of night before the rising sun.

There are people who steadfastly refuse to believe in the possibility of a living interment. Yet in 1896 no less than 11,464 uncertified deaths took place in the United Kingdom, the bodies of these being placed in the ground without official examination to see if life had really left. The Home Secretary, questioned in 1897 in the House of Commons on the subject, remarked that the uncertified deaths were increasing year after year, but he did not think that a certificate of death would be a guarantee against premature burial. Possibly not, owing to our present faulty system. Hundreds of certificates are given every year by medical men who never see their patients in the hour of death, nor even after, so that a certificate in such cases is no guarantee at all. Nor is in all cases the certificate of a doctor who has seen the body thoroughly trustworthy, for exhumation has oftentimes revealed the appalling fact that the supposed corpse was not dead at all when interred, but lived to die a death so truly terrible that the pen shrinks from even attempting to describe it. Moreover, medical certificates are

not always made out as carefully as they might be. It was reported in the Manchester papers a short time back that at an inquest at Runcorn on an infant there were three mistakes in the doctor's certificate. It was stated in the certificate that the certifying doctor saw it alive later than he really did; the age was given wrongly; and the address at which the child died was wrong. As the coroner remarked, the doctor acted in good enough faith, but 'without due inquiry.' Exactly; and many a hundred death-certificates are issued yearly 'without due inquiry.' That is one of the faultiest points in our present system.

What has long been wanted has been a scientific test of death. At present, leaving the discovery of the X-rays out of account, there is no such test. There is, indeed, the old-fashioned belief that if a pin is used to prick the skin the puncture will remain open in the case of a dead body, whereas the puncture will redden and close up if the person is still alive. Yet this, and kindred tests, have not always acted, and it is the knowledge of this fact which has led so many people to leave directions for a thorough examination to be made of their bodies after death was supposed to have taken place. Wilkie Collins, who has already been quoted, left a missive among his papers directing that when he died a thorough examination of his body was to be made by a skilled surgeon. Lady Burton, wife of Captain Sir Richard Burton, ordered that her body should be pierced with a needle in the region of the heart. Mr Edmund Yates of the *World*, Miss Ada Cavendish, Miss Harriet Martineau, the authoress, and Hans Andersen, the writer of so many fairy tales, may be mentioned as instances of men and women who have left instructions that they should not be interred until everything possible had been done to make sure that they were lifeless. In some cases it was the severance of a vein, in others even decapitation, that was resolved upon. Others, with a similar end in view, have adopted different means. The signalling invention of Edgar Allan Poe—who wrote this subject up in his characteristically weird fashion—is familiar to all readers. Then there is the apparatus of a Russian inventor, which consists in a mechanism placed in the throat of the corpse. If consciousness returned, and an effort were made to breathe, the effort set in motion certain wires, which resulted in a bell ringing in the cemetery-keeper's lodge. In *Jezebel's Daughter* the idea is very similar, save that, instead of a throat apparatus, wires were fastened to the hands of the corpse. Last year Sir Henry Littlejohn told his students at Edinburgh of a fancy coffin, fitted with patent springs so constructed that on the slightest indication of returning life they would immediately open the coffin and thus save the victim. This may have been a reference to the Russian invention, seeing that the idea is the same, though there is a slight difference in detail.

These things are mentioned to show that a reasonable fear of premature burial has existed in the minds of persons who could not be called 'cranks.' Nobody who knew the late Edmund Yates or Wilkie Collins would imagine for a moment that their minds were unevenly balanced, or that they were likely to be frightened by foolish fears. As a matter of fact, they knew that the fate they dreaded was possible, and that our present regulations were not ample enough to prevent it. The only test of death we have is the appearance of decomposition. On sanitary and other grounds this cannot always be waited for, and so human bodies are perforce put away without any real valid test having been made. They may be dead—the vast majority are; they may not be dead, and investigation and research have unfortunately proved that in quite a number of cases they certainly were not.

There is a large literature on this subject, which is interesting if gruesome reading. A recent pamphlet gives no less than thirty-two cases of actual premature burial, four probable or doubtful cases, and no less than sixty-nine averted cases, all on the authority of medical men who vouch for the accuracy of the facts. The Rev. H. R. Haweis, whose pen illuminates any subject it touches, has also written a booklet on the subject, in which he collected many actual cases of interment before death, on testimony which cannot be doubted. Then recently, since these publications, several cases have been reported from France, where interments are allowed after twenty-four hours' interval after death. In most Continental countries, and certainly always amongst the Jews, interment follows rapidly upon the heels of death, and it is a singular fact that the greater number of cases of premature burial are reported from those countries where this rapidity is customary. This is proof enough that these were instances of merely suspended animation—similar to that written of by Lady Burton in her Life—which might have been discovered by either of two things—a thorough test of the departure of life, or by waiting until animation was resumed. The thorough test we have not as yet seen in operation; the waiting, in most cases, is altogether out of the question.

It is an affectation in some quarters to pour ridicule upon fears of premature burial. It is quite true that the cases of such interment are rare in comparison with the number of deaths. Still they *do* happen, and *may* happen, and it is because of this that the discovery of a real test such as the one just announced is of such great importance to mankind. In Paris the civic authorities some years ago offered a prize for such a test, but it was never awarded. In England no similar step has ever been taken by the authorities, and yet no less a person than Sir Henry Thompson tells us that it is easier for a case of premature burial to take place in Eng-

land than in France under our present system of allowing so many uncertified deaths, and of granting certificates without the medical men having subjected the body to a careful examination. The fact is that the public were roused to a state of almost unreasoning fear some years ago by the discovery of a few cases, and then allowed themselves to be lulled into a sense of security by the emphatic declaration that the possibility was so remote as not to be worth thinking about. It was an instance of the swing of the pendulum so typical of the British mind; and in this connection it has to be admitted that the public were unreasonably excited. Too much was made of the solitary cases discovered, and the danger was painted in colours much too lurid. Everybody who could invent a story of a supposed return to life in the coffin was sure of a ready audience, and it is not to be wondered that some absurd exaggerations found their way into print. One such instance may be worth recalling. An old woman, bent with age, lay in her coffin, with a penny on each eye to keep down the lid. During the 'wake' she suddenly sat bolt upright; the pennies dropped from her eyes, and she stared fixedly about her. The explanation was very simple. After being deposited in the coffin, a piece of wood was fastened across her body to keep her straight. The giving way of this brace, as it may be called, caused her poor old frame to spring like a bow to its customary position. Hence the sitting upright.

Doubtless many of the alleged cases of a return to life are to be explained by perfectly natural means. Yet with all this the fact remains that the fear of premature burial is a very real one, and is based upon a series of appalling facts which cannot be denied. It is because of this that in the invention of such a perfect test as that just discovered we are bound to recognise one of the greatest benefits which could be conferred upon humanity.

PATRICIA.

By C. Kennett Burrow.

'I COULD never make out why, in the name of wonder, you were christened Patricia.'

'It was supposed to be feminine for Patrick, I think. But please don't waste your time in worrying over my name, Mr Shove.'

'And please always be careful, Miss O'Neill, to pronounce my name with the "o" long, and not as though it rhymed with "love." You said it very prettily then. My difficulty about your name is that one wouldn't know what to call you if one wanted to shorten it.'

'Pat,' said Miss O'Neill.

'But Pat's a man's name. Wouldn't Patry be better?'

'No,' she said; 'and anyway it doesn't matter, does it?'

'It might some day,' I said, and looked at her with what I intended to be a very meaning glance.

'Well,' said she, 'there'll be plenty of time for you to make up your mind.'

'That doesn't sound kind. I don't know what you mean by it, Pat.'

'Ricia,' she added.

'I may call you Patricia?'

'If it will please you.'

'Of course it will please me. But you?'

'I don't mind in the least.'

'You're a very indifferent person, Miss O'Neill.'

'Well,' she said, 'you can't expect me to be interested in my own name.'

'Or mine,' I added.

'I know you almost as well as my name.'

'And think as little of me, I firmly believe.'

'You're a silly boy. What do you want me to do? Am I to go down on my knees to you?'

'That would be very nice, I think. Better still; you might allow me to kneel.'

'That would certainly not be nice. Men always look foolish when they kneel to a woman.'

'How do you know?' I asked, for I was certain Patricia had never been to a theatre in her life, not even in Dublin.

'Do you suppose, Larry, that you're the only person who ever wanted to kneel to me?'

'I should like to suppose it, Patricia.'

'Would you indeed?' said she, and swept me a curtsey.

Then she sat down to the piano, and, turning her face towards me, sang:

> 'O Larry, me dear, ye're the nicest av boys;
> But sure, Larry, that isn't all.
> Ye must turn out yer toes in an iligant pose,
> And never say die till ye fall!'

There were several verses in this foolish song, and she went through them all. When she had finished, Patricia bowed to me again and glided out of the room, smiling with unruffled innocence.

'Patricia,' thought I, 'you're the most tantalising of creatures, and the sweetest. One moment you seem to love me, and the next you're as far away as the moon. What a pity we know each other so well! It doesn't give me a fair chance.'

It was November, but fine and clear and not at all cold. I walked into Ballyclogher after lunch

to post my letters and to buy some little things for Patricia. She made no scruple to use my services. I remember in one shop, where they sold everything, I found some fine Irish clay-pipes, and bought two dozen of them; these I carried back in great triumph, packed in a little box. Patricia begged one of them, to blow soap-bubbles she said; but I never saw her engaged in that charming occupation.

After this I took my gun, and, calling the two setters, Mars and Nimrod, and little Willie Donnell to beat for me, I went over the turnip-fields to the wood. I care nothing for the wholesale slaughter of a big shoot, but I love the chances of a casual excursion with the dogs. If you want to get away from yourself, there is nothing like it, in my judgment. When your finger is on the trigger, and the dogs, head down, are making a line just ahead of you, there is no room for anything else; an abstracted person could not even walk over a turnip-field without coming to grief.

Mars raised a small covey of partridges, and, by unusual good luck for me, I killed with both barrels. This put me in a good humour with myself, and on we went. I can't say that Willie Donnell was a good beater, and he had a silly way of shouting 'Mark' shrilly when an innocent thrush or blackbird rose; but he meant so well and appeared to enjoy the work so much that I had not the heart to send him back.

We had worked half up the wood, and I had a couple of brace of pheasants to my credit, when Mars ran back, wagging his tail violently. 'Set, hang you!' I shouted.

'Oh, Mr Shove,' said a voice, 'shame on you to swear at the poor doggie because he goes to meet a friend.' I turned, and there was Patricia, calmly walking along through the dead leaves.

'Well,' I said, 'a dog shouldn't run away from his duty even for you. I could forgive a man for it. What do you want out here, Patricia?'

'Oh, I just heard the firing, and thought I'd come to see whether you could shoot.'

'Of course I can shoot.'

'You all say that. My cousin Archie O'Neill said so, but the birds he brought home were a week dead, and came from Carmore.'

'Well, my birds are still warm,' I said; and I called Willie Donnell to show them to her. She looked at them and nodded.

'I can shoot, you know,' she said.

'Indeed!' said I. 'Perhaps you would like to show me how well you do it, now?'

'You don't believe me; but I can.'

'I'll believe anything you tell me, Patricia.'

'Ah, Larry,' she said, 'you're a good creature, and I wouldn't deceive you for the world. Give me the gun.'

I handed it to her, and she looked to see that the cartridges were all right. I confessed to myself that she handled the thing in a business-like way, and not as most girls do, as though they were afraid it might go off unexpectedly. I sat down on the trunk of a tree and looked at Patricia.

'Sit down,' I said, 'and get your nerves under control and think what you'd like to shoot at.'

She stood before me with the gun on her shoulder, part of the barrel being hidden by her loose hair; I felt that my gun was happy.

'What do you think I'd shoot at but a bird?'

'Oh, come!' I said.

She turned scornfully on her heel and called the dogs. I followed, watching her sure step on that uneven ground with delight. Suddenly Mars stopped dead, head down, tail steady. 'Mark,' I whispered. In a moment a cock pheasant rose and rocketed up into the bare branches. Patricia sighted with the utmost coolness, fired, and the bird fell.

'Bravo!' said I. 'I should have missed that. Considering that my gun's far too long for you, it was magnificent.'

'You forget,' she said, 'that I'm a big girl.'

'How could I forget with you standing there before me? If I live to be as old as Biddy Maguire, I'll remember how you look at this moment, Patricia. Ah, child,' I added (I felt that I might call her child, being four years her senior), 'if you'd only believe how you're always before me, night and day.'

She blushed and turned her dark eyes aside; I think her breath caught. At that moment Willie Donnell shouted, and another bird was up. Patricia fired and missed.

'The other barrel,' I cried.

'Larry, it isn't loaded,' said she, looking at me with the prettiest penitence.

'You're a nice sportswoman,' said I.

'You should have loaded it for me.'

'Well, I admit that. But what made you miss? It was an easier shot than the other.'

'You were talking to me,' she said.

'Patricia, put down that stupid gun and sit here by me; it's as warm as spring. We've shot enough for to-day, and Willie Donnell can go back with the dogs.'

'I must be going in,' she said.

'Nonsense,' said I; 'sit down, child, and make me happy.'

'Oh, if that will make you happy'—— and she sat down on a tree-trunk and looked across the fields to the mountains that rose green and gray beyond.

'You could make me happy for ever, Patricia, if you liked.'

'Indeed,' said she. Then she turned her face to me and laughed softly. 'You think I could,' she went on; 'but what can a girl do, even a big girl? 'Tis easy talking, Larry.'

'Give me your hands,' said I, 'and I'll tell you.'

She gave me her ungloved hands, and I held them for a time without speaking, looking into her wonderful, deep eyes. She met my gaze as steadily as a child.

'Patricia, you can love me,' I said at last.

'I do love you, Larry.'

I shook my head.

'That's not the way I mean; you must love me as I love you.'

'And how's that?' she asked.

'So much that the sight of you makes me sick with happiness; to hold your hands, like this, is heaven, and to kiss you would be a kind of absolution.'

'I don't think I love you like that. But you may kiss me, Larry, if you like. You used to kiss me when I was a little girl, and now I'm only a little girl grown up.'

'You must kiss me as well.'

'Yes,' she said.

So we kissed, and for a moment I had my arm about her. Then she was on her feet, crimson as some of the dead leaves under her.

'I didn't mean that kind of kiss!' she cried.

'I'm sorry,' said I. 'You should have told me the kind you meant. My dear, if you knew my heart you would forgive me.'

She stood looking on the ground, kicking a little hole in it with the toe of her shoe. She was not really angry—I could see that; but I could not be sure what her trembling lips meant or why her eyelashes were heavy with tears. I did not realise then what the first lover's kiss symbolises to such a girl as Patricia, a girl compounded of fire and pride and utter nobleness of blood.

After a time she gave me her right hand again and said quietly, 'I forgive you.'

I stooped and touched her fingers with my lips—not a lover's kiss, but one of simple reverence.

As we walked back to the house (I was her father's guest) we hardly spoke at all. But that evening, as the old man nodded in his chair after our usual game of chess, we drew together again.

'To-morrow,' I said, 'you're going to take me to Cashel, aren't you?'

'You must see Cashel,' she said.

'Of course, and if to-morrow's fine'——

'We'll drive there,' she said, 'and have lunch in the ruins.'

'Beautiful!' said I.

'But it may be too cold.'

'There are rugs,' I said.

'It may rain.'

'There are umbrellas and mackintoshes. Let it be Cashel to-morrow, whatever happens, Patricia.'

She promised; and when I went to bed I sat up for a long time and smoked one of my new clays, thinking blissfully of Cashel and the long drive there and back. It was two o'clock before I was asleep; my room was so full of smoke that I could hardly see across it.

The morning was fine, and at eleven o'clock the car was ready and we set out. The country through which we drove was beautiful; but all my eyes were for Patricia; only now and then did I realise how fair a land it was. Holy Cross Abbey, by the water-side, a haunt of ancient peace if ever there was one, stuck in my memory; but I can recall little else until we reached Cashel. Patricia had been very silent, but occasionally she gave me her eyes in a way that made my heart thump; I could not be quite sure just what she meant.

As we walked up the steep approach to the gray ruins that crown the abrupt Rock of Cashel she became her old self again, and we raced each other to the top. It was a dead heat, although Patricia protested that she won; but when I asked her what prize she wanted, she only glanced at me again with that new look of hers. We wandered about the ruins and the graveyard until it was time for lunch, which we spread upon the grass-tufted floor of what had once been a room, now roofless, and with a sheer drop on one side to a kind of courtyard below. We made the place, which we seemed to have entirely to ourselves, echo with our laughter, and the old cathedral looked down upon us not unkindly, like a ripe old man smiling at youth.

Patricia had had the forethought to put a bottle of champagne in the basket; but, for the reason, as she said, that she did not care for wine, only one glass. But I soon overcame her scruples and handed her a bumper.

'Patricia,' I said, 'you must drink my health.'

'I will, Larry, with all my heart.'

'Do you mean that?'

'I do,' she said, and drank, with a very pretty inclination towards me. Then she filled again and handed the glass to me.

'Your health, Patricia,' said I, 'with all my love, and may you see what a jewel I am and secure me while you have the chance!' And I drank to the last drop and turned the glass upside down.

'You're a jewel indeed,' said she, 'and will make some girl happy.'

'It's you or no one, Patricia. I've found you, and I'll look no farther.'

'Oh Larry, why wouldn't some one else do for you as well?'

'Because you are you and there isn't any one else in the world.'

'That's a good reason,' she said.

'It's so good that I wonder you can hesitate!' cried I.

'Have some cold chicken, Larry.'

'Hang the chicken,' I said; but I took it all the same, and we got on to less dangerous ground, and became children just as we had been in the old days.

After lunch we wandered about again, spending the afternoon in that hand-in-hand familiarity which is so sweet, and yet, to one in my undefined position, so bitterly disquieting. But I was blindly happy, telling her absurd stories that I

might hear her laugh, and sad ones that I might see her eyes fill with pity; and she, on her part, told me a hundred little things about herself that seemed to make me free of her inner life.

At last, when it was nearly dusk, we stumbled upon King Cormac's Chapel. I have no idea who King Cormac was, but I know that his chapel was extraordinarily dark and damp and gloomy, and that we seemed suddenly shut away from all the light and sweetness of the world. However, we proceeded cautiously, and after a time reached an arched embrasure with a projecting stone base from which the pillars sprang. Here we sat down in a silence that made Patricia shiver.

'King Cormac's Chapel,' I said, 'is like a prison.'

'It makes me cold,' Patricia answered.

There was a high window opposite, through which I saw a patch of evening sky; there was just light enough for me to distinguish Patricia's face dimly.

'Well,' I said, 'this has been a great day for me, Patricia. I've had you all to myself for six hours. But what's that when I want to have you all my life?'

She drew closer to me and touched my hand.

'Larry dear, what does it feel like here'—and she laid her hand upon her heart—'when you love so much as that?'

At that moment I heard a sound like the closing of a door, but I took no heed of it.

'It feels,' I said, 'as if another life were in you. And,' I continued, 'I can't bear it any longer. My spirit's all in the dark, just as my body is in this black chapel. Let's go away and get into the world again, and perhaps it will teach me to forget.'

I took her arm and led her to the door, she saying nothing, but I heard her breathing. I put out my hand and pushed against the grated door: it was locked. I was not in the least afraid for myself; indeed, I think I inwardly blessed King Cormac, but I did not know how Patricia might take it.

'Wait a moment, Larry,' she said, as I fumbled with the lock.

'We must wait!' I said. 'We're prisoners; the thing's locked.'

'Locked!' she cried. Then she laughed and took my hand.

'You can take care of me,' she said; 'in a minute you may shout; but first I must tell you something.'

A pang struck through my heart.

'Well, child,' I said.

'I think I love you a little, Larry.'

'I believe that, but a little's no good. Don't play with me, Patricia.'

She drew herself up and took my face between her hands and kissed me. All the blood in my body seemed to run to meet that kiss.

'Will that do? Is that love enough?'

'Pat,' I cried, 'do you mean it? Is it true?'

'Would I lie to you, Larry?'

'God bless King Cormac,' I said, and took her in my arms.

'I knew it yesterday, Larry.'

'Then God bless yesterday as well.'

'Are you happy now, Larry?'

'Don't!' I said. 'This is no place for making love, Pat—'tis a king's chapel. Where's your reverence, child?'

'King Cormac's dead,' she said.

'Yes, but he might have a ghost.'

'I'd love to see it.'

'I'd rather see the care-taker,' I said, and with that shouted at the top of my voice. After five minutes of this exercise we heard a shuffling of feet and saw the swaying light of a lantern. A frightened face appeared at the other side of the grating.

'What's that at all?' asked a shaking voice.

'What indeed! What do you mean by locking folks in like this?'

'Ach, sure, I didn't know ye were there.'

'You might have looked, anyway.'

'Sure I did look, but divil a soul could I see.' He opened the door and let us forth, full of eloquent apologies.

'There's a car waitin' at the bottom av the hill; maybe that's yours, sor?'

'Maybe it is,' I said, and made him happy with half-a-crown.

As I have already said, I don't know who King Cormac was; I prefer that he should remain a myth to me; but I never look at Patricia without blessing his chapel and his name.

THE ROMAN WALL, NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sunshine and the old gray wall,
Far blue sky and rest;
Where the curlews, passing, call,
And the stonechats nest.

Midday, where the foxgloves tall
Rear their purple heads:
Where the wanderer's slow footfall
Sinks in thymy beds.

In the perfect summer air,
Dreaming here I lie;
Peewits, o'er the landscape bare,
Circling round me fly.

Purple flower from foreign land
On the ruined stone;
Brought by careless Roman hand,
Name and fame unknown.

Gleaming water far away,
Burnished in the sun:
Catching sunset's latest ray,
When the day is done.

In the evening's calm repose,
Still I take my rest
As the rook far homeward goes,
Sailing to the west!

G.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE CHOICE MATRIMONIAL.

By the Author of *How to be Happy though Married; The Five Talents of Woman*, &c.

THERE are men who take less thought and care in the choice of a wife than they do in selecting a tie or a pair of gloves; and there are girls who marry men about whom they know as little as they do about the running of a torpedo or the management of a first-class battleship. No wonder that husband and wife give and receive shocks after marriage. If ever we should obey a precept in reference to marriage, surely it ought to be that of Goethe—'Choose well; your choice is brief, but yet endless!'

'But love is blind,' people say, 'and marriage is a lottery.' Certainly love may not be very sharp-sighted; but we need not blindfold it. The hero of Carlyle's book, *Sartor Resartus*, says that in the blackest period of his doubt he was withheld from suicide by a certain aftershine of Christianity. In the same way, even when our judgment is most blinded by love, a certain aftershine of common-sense may save us from killing our happiness by a foolish marriage. We may be head over ears in love; but we will not entirely lose our heads if we have tried to cultivate presence of mind in the time of danger.

Of course it is by our feelings and instincts, and not by our reason, that we make choice in this matter; but reason may exercise at least a negative influence. If our hearts tell us when we should marry, our heads may point out those with whom it is inexpedient to wed; and it is possible to keep our hearts in our heads.

In saying this I am far from advocating the cold-blooded marriage of expediency. No; I believe in love-marriages, and think that they are far more likely to turn out well than are those which are formed upon so-called interested principles.

> Tell me where is fancy bred,
> Or in the heart or in the head?

In this sweet little song of Shakespeare the word 'fancy' means love; and the true answer, as it seems to me, to the question is that this love or fancy is bred or produced, not in the head, where we think and speculate and make bargains, but in the heart, where we feel, admire, and love. This, at least, is what Nature says. The first time a young man meets a certain young lady he feels drawn towards her as by an invincible impulse. He does not know what is over him. It might be the measles, but it is not—it is love. He says to himself, 'Well, of course I'm not a marrying man; but if I were I might do worse than marry that young lady.' And when he does marry her—never trust those who say that they are not marrying men: they go off first—his friends say, 'Well, I never could see what Mr So-and-so saw to like in Miss So-and-so.' That is just it: his friends could not see it, and he himself could not see it; but it was Nature speaking to him in his strongest feelings, and saying, 'Marry her, for she is your complement, the one who fills up and completes your nature. Do this, and you will be happy ever after; refuse her for the sake of another with more money or influential connections, and you will be as miserable as is your own dirty little soul.' It is true, as Mr Ruskin reminds us, that many mistakes come from marrying the wrong person; but though instinct is not infallible, it is, especially when it has not been spoiled, the best guide we have. One countryman said to another, 'Now, if every one had been of my thinking, every one would have wanted to marry my old woman;' his friend reassured him by saying: 'If every one had been of my mind, no one would have wanted to marry your old woman.' So it is that each eye forms its own idea of beauty, which is an excellent thing for some of us who otherwise might never have been able to marry at all.

The same sort of people who tell the young that in marrying they should not think of their feelings generally go on to say, 'And whatever you do, do not allow yourself to be influenced by beauty, for beauty is only skin-deep.' I never hear this about beauty being skin-deep without

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thinking of a reply which was once made by an Irish girl. She was very good-looking, and was talking to a young man who was anything but this. He, thinking that she wanted a little taking down, remarked in the course of conversation, 'But you know beauty is but skin-deep.' 'Yes,' she replied, 'I know it; but ugliness goes into the bone.' This saying, then, is neither true nor wise, but merely skin-deep; for what is beauty in many cases but the outward and visible sign of health? And we all know how important health is to matrimonial felicity. A rounded figure, bright laughing eyes, a clear complexion—these things, even if they were not, as we hold they are, good in themselves, are valuable as showing that their possessor is one who is capable of furthering the interests of the race by producing healthy children.

Then we are to remember that beauty of the highest kind is, as it were, a garment which covers spiritual and moral beauty, the beauty of holiness, the beauty of a good character; and this leads us to speak of character as being, after all, the great constituent of domestic happiness. An Irish magistrate once asked a prisoner before him, 'Are you married or single?' 'Single, pl'ase your worship.' 'Oh then,' replied the magistrate, 'it is a fine thing for your wife.' It is indeed a fine thing for any woman who has missed marrying a man with a bad or even an indifferent character. There are, I know, women who say that they do not mind men being a little wild; that they rather like a rake—just a small garden one, I suppose. Well, all that I can say is that these ladies are like their mother Eve, who 'knew not eating death.' I do not believe in marrying a man in a missionary spirit, hoping to turn him from the error of his ways. It is far more likely that he will improve his wife off the face of the earth by bad treatment than that she will reform him. Men after thirty years of age are not so easily reformed. Then you have to consider the effect living with a bad man will have upon your own life and character.

> Maid choosing man, remember this:
> You take his nature with his name.
> Ask, too, what his religion is,
> For you will soon be of the same.

'Who can find a virtuous woman?' Alter the question, and put it in this way: 'Who seeks for one?' Men marry those who please their eyes or who flatter them, and do not seek in their wives those qualities upon which domestic happiness depends; and then they wonder why their marriages are failures! A minister's wife falling asleep in church, her husband called out, 'Mrs B——, every one knows that when I married you I got no beauty with you; your friends know that I got no money; and if I have not obtained the grace of God with you, I have had indeed a bad bargain.' Truly, that man is much to be pitied whose wife is without the grace of God; for as nothing can be better than a good woman, so nothing can be worse than a bad one. An old preacher, condemning those who make hasty marriages, says: 'If a man long for a bad wife, he were best to go to hell a-wooing, that he may have choice.' Some men and women marry so foolishly that one would think that they longed for bad partners. But, indeed, it is not necessary to go to the place beneath to satisfy such a longing. There are but too many upon earth capable of becoming bad husbands and wives, and it is as well to keep out of their way.

One of the most important things to think about in the choice of a partner for the matrimonial firm is temper. After impurity, drunkenness, gambling, and such gross sins, perhaps there is nothing which mars marriage more than bad temper. The confidential servant of a Scotch laird told him one day that he was going to leave his service. 'Why?' asked the master. 'Are you not comfortable?' 'Oh, comfortable enough; but, to tell the truth, I can't stand the temper of your wife. She's always scolding me.' 'If that be all,' said the laird, 'you have very little to complain of.' 'Little or much, I'm going.' Seeing that the man had made up his mind, the laird said, 'Well, go then, and be thankful for ever after that you have not to live with her.' It is indeed a matter for great thankfulness to escape marrying a person with a bad temper.

Sir David Baird and some other English officers were imprisoned by Tippoo Sahib in his dungeons at Bangalore. When the mother of Sir David heard the news in Scotland, alluding to the way in which prisoners were fastened to each other in those days, and to the energetic temperament of her son, she said, 'Lord pity the chiel that's tied to our Davie.' He or she is certainly greatly to be pitied who is cursed with one of the many varieties of bad temper.

'But how,' it may be asked, 'is the temper or any other characteristic of one with whom we are thinking of marrying to be known?' Men were deceivers ever, and even women can do a little in this way; and some of them do it so cleverly that after marriage their husbands discover that, like Jacob, they have courted one woman and married another. Why is a woman like a bell? Because you cannot tell what she is made of until you ring her. Replying to one who asked him whether a certain young lady would make a good wife, the famous preacher, Robert Hall, said, 'How can I possibly tell? I never lived with her.' This is, after all, the only true test; but still, a small straw shows which way the wind blows, and there are indications of character which a wise person choosing a life-partner would not fail to note. Inquire what kind are the mother and sisters of the one you are thinking about, and remember that character is shown by small things.

In his advice to young men, Cobbett tells them to

be very careful not to marry a lazy woman, for she will make her servants lazy and her children too. Then the question comes as to how the purblind lover is to discover whether she upon whose smiles he is doting is indolent or energetic. Cobbett answers this by giving certain indications to be noticed. 'Observe,' he says, 'how she shakes hands, how she puts her foot upon the ground, how she eats.' This last is very important; for if a girl eat in a lazy, indifferent manner, as if she took no interest in the operation, she is not likely to attend to her husband's dinner; and though some men have no hearts, I never heard of any without stomachs. Then Cobbett goes on to tell the story of how a young man of his acquaintance living at Philadelphia was put off from marrying by a chance expression which fell from the lips of his lady-love. He was visiting one evening at her father's house, and he heard her say to her sister, 'I wonder where our needle is.' That was enough; he went away as soon as was consistent with politeness, resolved to have nothing more to do with one who had a needle in partnership with another, for he argued, 'She can't be an energetic woman, or else she would have a needle all to herself—her very own; and she can't be an orderly one who would keep my house as it should be kept, or else she would have known where the fractional part of the needle was.'

At the same time, it is quite useless for either man or woman to expect perfection. The man who will not marry until he gets this must necessarily remain unmarried. He is a sour grape, hanging by a twig of obstinacy on a wall of great expectations; and the only thing to be said in his favour is that he has missed the opportunity of making some woman miserable. A young man once said to a friend, 'I'm not going to give myself away when I marry. The fortunate girl who gets me must have three qualifications.' 'What are these?' 'She must be handsome, rich, and a fool.' 'Why all that?' 'Well, she must be handsome and rich, or else I won't have her. She must be a fool, or else she won't have me.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XL.—EAGLESHAM.

IT was dawning morn, gray and misty, with a thaw setting in on the surface of the snow. Down the narrow, crooked streets, with a wind shivering in our teeth, we went at a break-neck gallop. Sometimes in a steep place we slipped for yards; often I was within an ace of death; and at one street turning Nicol came down with a mighty clatter, though the next minute he was up again. A few sleepy citizens rubbed their eyes and stared from their windows, and in the lighted doorway of a tavern a sailor looked at us wonderingly.

In less time than it takes to tell we were at the water-edge. Here there is a rough quay, with something of a harbour behind it, where lie the sugar-boats from the Indies when the flood-tide is too low to suffer them to go up-stream to the city. Here also the ferry crosses the river four times daily.

Before us the water lay in leaden gloom, with that strange dead colour which comes from the falling of much snow. Heavy waves were beginning to roll over the jetty, and a mist was drooping lower and ever lower. Two men stood by an old anchor, coiling some rope. We pulled up our horses, and I asked impatiently where the ferry might be.

'Gone ten meenutes syne,' said one, with no change on his stolid face. 'There she is, gin ye ha'e een i' your heid to see;' and he pointed out to the waste of waters.

I looked, and saw a sail rising and sinking in the trough of the waves.

'When does she return?' I cried out, with many curses on our laggard journey.

'Whiles in an 'oor, whiles in twae. She 'll be twae the day ere she 's back, for the ferryman, Jock Gellatly, is as fu' as the Baltic wi' some drink that a young gentleman gied him.'

So we turned back to the harbour tavern with all the regrets of unsuccess.

The man had said two hours, but it was nearer three ere that wretched shell returned; and when it came 'twas with a drunken man who could scarce stagger ashore. I was in no mood for trifling.

'Here, you drunken swine,' I cried, 'will you take us across and be quick about it?'

'I maun ha'e anither gless o' Duncan's whusky,' said the fellow, with a leer.

'By God, and you will not!' I cried. 'Get aboard and make no more delay, or, by the Lord, I 'll throw you into the stream!'

The man hiccuped, and whined, 'I canna, I canna, my bonny lad. I had ower muckle guid yill afore I sterted, and I maun ha'e some whusky to keep it doon. I 'm an auld man, and the cauld air frae the water is bad for the inside. Let me be, let me be;' and he lay down on the quay with the utter helplessness of a sot.

'Here is a devil of a mess,' I cried to Nicol. 'What is to be done?'

'I 'll ha'e to tak' the boat mysel', laird,' said my servant quietly. 'If I droon ye, dinna complain.'

Indeed, I was in no mood for complaining of anything which would carry me farther on my quest. With some difficulty we got the horses aboard and penned them in the stalls. Then

Nicol hoisted the sail, and we shoved off, while with a boat-hook I kept those at bay who sought to stop us. Once out on the stormy waters I was beset with a thousand fears. I have ever feared the sea; and now, as we leaped and dived among the billows, and as the wind scoured us like a threshing-floor, and, above all, as the crazy boat now almost lay sideways on the water, I felt a dreadful sinking of my courage, and looked for nothing better than immediate death. It was clear that Nicol, who knew something of seamanship, as he knew of most things, had a hard task to keep us straight, and by his set face and white lips I guessed that he too was not without his fears. Nevertheless, the passage was narrow, and in less time than I had expected we saw a dim line of sand through the fog. Running in there, we beached the coble and brought the horses splashing to shore.

The place was dreary and waste, low-lying, with a few huts facing the river. Beyond, the land seemed still flat; though, as far as the mist suffered me to see, there seemed to be something of a rise to the right. My feet and hands were numbed with cold, and the wound in my wrist, which I got in scaling the wall, smarted till it brought the water to my eyes. I was so stiff I could scarce mount horse, and Nicol was in no better plight.

We rode to the nearest cottage, and asked whither the folk had gone who landed with the last ferry. The woman answered gruffly that she had seen none land, and cared not. At the next house I fared little better; but at the third I found a young fisher lad, who, for the sake of a silver piece, told me that they had headed over the moor about three hours ago.

'And what lies beyond the moor?' I asked.

'Beyond the muir,' said he, 'is a muckle hill they ca' Mistilaw, a' thick wi' bogs; and ayont it there are mair hills and mosses; and syne if ye ride on ye'll come to Eaglesham, whaur the muirs end and the guid lands begin. I yince was ower there wi' my father aboot a cowt, and a braw bit place it is, and no' like hereaways.'

So Nicol and I, with dogged hearts and numbed bodies, rode into the black heath, where there was no road. The snow had lost all hardness, and was thick and clogging to our horses' feet. We made as good speed as we could, but that, after all, was little. About midday we had crossed the first part of our journey, and were clambering and slipping over the shoulder of Mistilaw. This hill is low and trivial contrasted with our great Tweedside hills; but it well deserves its name, for it is one vast quagmire, where at all seasons mists and vapours hang. Beyond it and all through the afternoon we struggled among low hills and lochs. We halted at a solitary shepherd's hut among the wilds, and ate a vile meal of braxy and oatencake. Then again we set forth, and in the darkening came to the wide moor which is the last guard of the wastes and borders the pleasant vale of Cart.

Now here I fell into a great fit of indecision. It was clear that Gilbert and Marjory were but a little way off, in the house of Eaglesham, and I had almost reached the end of my travels. But here my plans came to a sudden end. Was I to ride forward and boldly demand my cousin to let her go? I knew my cousin's temper; he could make but one reply, and at last some end would be placed to our feud. But with this came another thought. Gilbert was not a man of one device, but of many. If I sought to wrest my lady from his hands by force it was most likely that he would be the winner, for he was ever ripe for high, bold, and dastardly policies, and at such a time was little likely to be punctilious.

So, in my extremity, I fell to consulting with Nicol, and between us we devised a plan. I liked it so well that I lost all dismal forebodings and proceeded to put it in action. Night fell just as we came to the meadows above the village, and the twinkling lights of the place served as our guides. There was an inn there which I remembered of old time, for the innkeeper had come originally from Tweeddale. At first I would have shunned the place, but then I remembered that the man was dead these half-dozen years, and all the place so changed that I was secure from recognition, even had I not been disguised and clad in the manner I was. So, without any fear, we rode up to the door and sought admittance.

The place was roomy and wide, with a clean-swept floor, a fire blazing on the hearth, and a goodly smell of cooked meat everywhere.

The landlord brought us a meal, which we ate like hungry men who had been a long day's journey in a snow-bound world. Then I lay back and stared at the firelight, and tried hard to fix my mind on the things which were coming to pass. I found it hard to determine whether I was asleep or awake, for the events of the past hours were still mere phantasmagoria in my memory. Through all the bewildering maze of weariness and despair and scrupulosity of motive, there was still the one clear thought branded on my mind. And now, as I sat there, the thought was alone, without any clear perspective of the actors or the drama to be played. I scarce thought of Marjory, and Gilbert was little in my mind, for the long series of cares which had been mine for so many days had gone far to blunt my vision and drive me to look no farther than the next moment or the next hour. I was dull, blank, deadened, with the one unalterable intention firm in my heart; but, God knows! little besides.

About nine or ten—I know not rightly—my servant roused me and bade me get ready. He had ordered the landlord to have the horses round to the door, giving I know not what excuse. I mounted without a thought, save that the air was raw and ugly. We rode down the silent street, out on to the heath, where the snow was deeper and our steps all but noiseless. The night was clear and deadly chill, piercing to the marrow.

A low snow-fog clothed the ground, and not a sound could we hear in that great wide world save our own breathing and our horses' tread. A sort of awe took me at the silence, and it was with solemn thoughts that I advanced.

In a while we left the heath, and dipping down into the valley of the stream, entered a wood of pines. Snow powdered us from the bare boughs, and a dead branch crackled underfoot. Then all of a sudden—black and cold and still, from the stream-side meadows and all girt with dark forest—rose the house. Through the tree-trunks it looked ghostly as a place of the dead. Then I remembered that this was the hill-front, where no habitable rooms were; so, marvelling no more at the dearth of light, we turned sharp to the left and came on the side looking to the river.

Two lights twinkled in the place, one in the basement and one in the low first story. I cast my memory back over old days. One was from the sitting-parlour where old Gilbert Burnet had chosen to spend his days; and the other —ah, I had it!—'twas from the sleeping-room of old Mistress Burnet, where she had dragged out her last years and drawn her last breath. But for these there were no other signs of life in the house.

We crossed the snowy slopes to the black shadow of the wall, where we halted and consulted. By this time some life and spirit had come back to my movements, and I held myself more resolutely. Now I gave my servant his orders: 'If so happen we get Mistress Marjory safe,' said I, 'you will ride off with her without delay, down the valley to the Clyde, and then straight towards Tweeddale. You will get fresh horses at Hamilton, and till then these will serve your purpose. Once in her own countryside, there remains nothing for you save to see that you do her bidding in everything. If God so will it, I will not be long in returning to you.'

Then, with no more words, we set our faces to our task.

The light in the window above us still shone out on the white ground. Many yards to our left another patch of brightness marked where the other lamp burned. There was need of caution and stillness, else the master of the place would hear. I kicked my shoes from my feet, though it was bitter cold, and set myself to scaling the wall. The distance was little, scarce twenty feet, and the masonry was rough-hewn and full of projecting stones, yet I found the matter as hard as I could manage; for my hands were numbed with the excessive chill, and the cut in my wrist still ached furiously. I was like to swoon twenty times ere I reached the corner of the window. With a sob of exhaustion, I drew myself up and stared at the curtained window.

Very gently I tapped on the pane, once, twice, three times. I heard a quick movement of surprise within, then silence once more, as if the occupant of the room thought it only the snow drifting. Again I tapped, this time with a sharp knock which men use who wait long outside a gate in a windy night. Now there could be no doubt of the matter. A hand drew the curtains aside, and a timid little face peered out. Then of a sudden the whole folds were swept back and my lady stood before me.

She wore her riding-dress still, but a shawl of some white stuff was flung around her shoulders. There she stood before my sight, peering forth into the darkness with surprise, fright, love, joy chasing one another across her face, her eyes sad and tearful, her mouth drawn as with much sorrow, and her bright hair tossed loosely over her shoulders. It was many lone and dismal months since I had seen her — months filled with terrors and alarms and heart-sickening despair. And now, as she was almost within my reach at last after so many days, my heart gave a great bound, and with one leap the burden of the past shook itself from my shoulders.

'Open the window, dear,' I cried; and with trembling hands she undid the fastenings and swung the lattice open. The next moment I had her in my arms, and felt her heart beating close to mine, and the soft, warm touch of her neck. 'Darling,' I cried—'Marjory lass, how I have missed you, dearest! But now I have you, and shall never leave you more;' and I drew her closer to me, while she could only sob the more.

Then with a mighty effort I recalled myself to the immediate enterprise. The sound of the horses shuffling the snow without forced on me the need of action.

'My servant is without with horses,' I said. 'You must go with him, dear. It is our only safety. By to-morrow you will be in Tweeddale, and in a very little while I will come to you.'

'But do you not go just now?' she cried in anxiety, still clinging to me.

'No, Marjory dear,' said I, soothing her as best I could. 'I cannot come yet. There are some things which need my special care. If you think yourself, you will see that.'

'Is it aught to do with Gilbert Burnet? Oh! I dare not leave you with him. Come with me, John—oh, come! I dare not, I dare not!' And the poor child fell to wringing her hands.

'Marjory,' I said, 'if you love me, do as I bid you. I will come to no scaith. I promise you I will be with you at Dawyck ere the week is out.'

So she put a brave face on the matter, though her lips still quivered. I went to the window and looked down to where Nicol stood waiting with the horses. Then I thought of a plan; and, finding none better, I cried to him to mount to the window-sill, for I knew his prowess as a climber, and the uncommon toughness of his arm. The horses were too jaded and spiritless to need any watching.

I caught up my lady in my arms and stepped out upon the ledge. Then very carefully and painfully I lowered myself, still clinging to the sill, till I found a foothold on a projecting stone. Below us were Nicol's arms, and into them I gave my burden. I heard him clambering down by degrees, and in a very little—for the height was not great—he had reached the ground. Then I followed him, slipping the last few feet and burying myself in a bank of snow.

I had brought a heap of warm furs from the room, and these I flung round my love's shoulders. My heart ached to think of her, weary from the day's hard riding, setting forth again into the cold of a November night.

'Oh John,' she said, 'no sooner met than parted! It is ever our fate.'

'It will be the last time, dear,' I said, and I kissed her face in her hood.

Then, with many injunctions to my servant, I bade them good-bye, and watched the figure which I loved best in all the world disappear into the darkness. With a sad and yet cheerful heart, I turned back and clambered again into the chamber.

There were Marjory's things scattered about, as of one who had come from a long journey. Something on a table caught my eye, and taking it up, I saw it was a slip of withered heather. Then I minded how I had given it her one summer long ago on the Hill of Scrape.

I again kicked off my boots, and in utter weariness of body and mind, I flung myself on the bed and was soon asleep.

THE MONEY-LENDING INQUIRY.

No one can scan the columns of any newspaper without being invited, by puffing advertisements, to apply for a loan to some generous individual who seems anxious to bestow his money on the first-comer. Every week brings its batch of circulars, marked private, and addressed to us at our homes, soliciting us to borrow money from gentlemen whose system ensures the most absolute secrecy. Any one who has read the evidence given before the select committee of the House of Commons on 'Money-lending' can no longer doubt that professional money-lenders are thriving in all parts of the country. Mr Farrow, one of the principal witnesses before the committee, wished to ascertain whether the demand for money was great. He advertised as a philanthropist in four London dailies, and agreed to offer money at 10 per cent. to respectable borrowers. On one day he received as many as two hundred and eighty-three replies.

The Inspector-General in Bankruptcy confirms our view as to the prevalence of professional money-lending. In a report which he presented to the committee, he stated that the number of 'receiving orders made during the two years (1895 and 1896) was 8500, and in these there were about 3160 claims by money-lenders which may fairly be described as of an usurious nature. The amount of these claims was approximately £445,000, or about 3½ per cent. of the total liabilities scheduled by the debtors, amounting to £12,400,000. The rates charged, as stated by the official receivers, and when reduced to percentages upon the amounts actually paid to borrowers, range from 10 to 3600 per cent.' Indeed, the fact that a select committee has been appointed to inquire into the alleged evils attending money-lending transactions is an eloquent testimony to the range of this business. We do not purpose to forestall the report of the committee; but it is evident to any one that the two great questions which this body must answer are: (1) Is it for the benefit of the borrowing public that these transactions should be carried on? If not—(2) Can their objectionable features be repressed or modified? We appreciate the danger of drawing conclusions from isolated cases; but a perusal of the evidence convinces us that there cannot be the slightest doubt that roguery, deceit, and oppression are brought into requisition to the disadvantage of the unhappy borrower. Shylock is, and ever has been, more than a match for Bassanio.

As an instance of how respectable and temporarily embarrassed tradesmen are ruined by the money-lender, we may cite the case of a Leicester butcher. This man, in reply to a rosy and tempting advertisement, applied to a money-lender for the loan of £20. The money was required to purchase a load of hay for the butcher's stock. The money-lender, who for the purposes of gaining his clients' confidence was trading under the style of a bank, promised to go over and see the butcher and to grant him the loan, but required a preliminary fee of 10s. 6d., which was duly paid. The valuer came, and, in the absence of the butcher, went round the premises and noted in his memorandum book the particulars of the stock. The butcher having in the meantime arrived, the valuer promised to advance the money, but suggested that the butcher should take £30 and not £20. The butcher signed a document which was never read over or explained to him. The document was in fact a bill of sale, and was afterwards registered. The result was, as the butcher himself complained, 'his character was ruined, and nobody would let him have a carcass.' The whole thing was a 'plant.' £20 was the amount of the loan asked for; but, as the

money-lender knew that a bill of sale for this amount was not valid, he, by giving his client a false reason for making the suggestion, induced the borrower to take £30. The butcher was completely outwitted; he had wished to obtain the money secretly, but instead was publicly gazetted as a man who had a bill of sale on his goods. He imagined that the money was lent at 5 per cent. per annum, but afterwards discovered that 5 per cent. per month was the amount charged. The annual interest paid by this borrower on such a small sum as £30 amounted to £16, 12s. 4d., and this notwithstanding that good security was taken.

Another instance was related before the committee of the manner in which money-lenders by sharp practice induce foolish persons to borrow money at ruinous rates of interest. The witness was a solicitor. A client of his, who was temporarily in want of money, applied to a money-lender for £100. The latter immediately made inquiries, and found that the borrower, who was a lady, had an annuity of £600. Without any further interview, but with the purpose of securing a nice catch, he 'rushed' the proposed borrower by sending a letter to her enclosing a Bank of England note for £100 and a promissory note for her signature for £200 payable to him in three months. In the letter to the lady was a promise 'that if at the end of three months it would not be quite convenient for you to meet it (the promissory note), we can make other satisfactory arrangements; and if at any time when the note falls due you should be only prepared to pay a part of the capital, interest will only be charged on that part of the capital remaining, in proportion to the above terms, which I think is very fair and reasonable.' The lady was foolish enough to snatch at the bait. Once on the hook, she found escape impossible; the loan was renewed on the most inequitable terms; and although considerably more than the amount actually lent was repaid, she was driven into the bankruptcy court, and one of her largest creditors was the scheming money-lender who had entrapped and ruined her by charging her interest at the rate of 400 per cent. per annum.

Mr Farrow complains of another dodge which is a part of the stock-in-trade of these professional money-lenders. At the time of signing the promissory note the money-lender says: 'I am sorry I cannot make out my note for a longer period than three months; but that is my custom. But,' he says, 'the loan is for twelve months.' The borrower may then hesitate, and the money-lender replies: 'Oh, it is all right; there will be no difficulty about the renewal of it. You may rest assured that it will be all right, and that 15 per cent. is the rate of interest.' The borrower, who has been kept in hand until he really requires the money, signs the document, and at the end of three months the whole amount is demanded. In cases of bills of sale the bailiff is instantly put in, and the belongings of the borrower sold at a sacrifice. Mr Farrow asserts that in many cases the borrowers, who are frequently clergymen and doctors, find that they cannot get away from their signatures without local exposure, which would ruin them, and they are bound to submit to go on renewing or to pay extortionate interest. This practice, which is frequently indulged in, enables the money-lender to obtain a rate of interest four times larger than the rate which the borrower imagines he has contracted to pay. The Inspector-General in Bankruptcy (whom we have quoted before) avers that 'the average ostensible rate of interest is from 60 to 70 per cent. per annum on the original advance;' but the actual rate paid would much exceed this rate if regard is had to the periodical reduction of principal by the weekly or monthly instalments. To explain: a person may borrow £80 repayable by ten monthly instalments of £10 each. The interest in such a case amounts to much more than 20 per cent., since the whole of the principal will not be outstanding for the ten months, but is being repaid by instalments.

These money-lenders also find it advisable and advantageous to conceal their identity under fictitious names. Indeed, the same individual has frequently a separate trade-name for each town or district in which he carries on business. As an instance of this practice: Some time ago a lady living in Llangollen borrowed £50, and agreed to pay £70 in ten monthly instalments. After paying four instalments she found herself unable to continue the payments, and applied to another money-lender in another district for a loan. She obtained £70, and signed a promissory note for £100, repayable in seven equal monthly instalments. Out of this advance she paid off the prior loan. The first money-lender received £20 as interest for the loan of £50 for four months. She paid three of the instalments in reduction of the second advance, but then made default, as she was unable to continue the payments, and so the second loan was called in. She then obtained another loan of £50 from a money-lender in a different district, and from this money she repaid the second loan. She eventually made default again, and, in the bankruptcy which followed, it was discovered that these loans had been obtained from one and the same person trading under different names. Here again it was discovered that, although the money-lender had been repaid a sum much in advance of the amount actually lent, he was a creditor for a sum in excess of that amount. This state of things was owing to fines being imposed for the slightest delay in the payment of interest. This money-lender trades under seven or eight *aliases*, and is by this means enabled to 'bleed' his clients to the disadvantage of the general body of creditors. It should be remarked that the money-lender is careful to

choose such names as give entire confidence in the localities in which they are used. When a money-lender trades under the style of a bank, he selects as the name of the bank a title as similar as is safe to one of the leading and well-known banking establishments trading in that locality. By this means he deceives a great number of ignorant persons, and so increases his connection by going before the public in a false garb. Another of this fraternity has established a connection with clerks in the Bank of England and other leading banks. This has been accomplished by sending the following letter to clerks immediately before going on their holidays: 'SIR,—As you will probably be taking your holidays before long, it may be convenient to you to anticipate your salary for a short time. I am prepared to advance you £10, £20, or more (according to your position or requirements), on your post-dated cheques, at the moderate interest of 2s. 6d. per month for each £5. I do not think you will meet with easier terms, and I may add that, having already a connection among gentlemen in the Bank of England, I am perfectly acquainted with the rules and regulations. Your transaction would be known only to myself, as I keep my own books and am not a professional money-lender.' This system unmistakably places the borrower completely in the hands of the money-lender, as instant dismissal is the result of it becoming known that clerks have any dealings with a money-lender.

The character of the professional money-lender is so shady, and the tricks to which he resorts are so many, that there has been a demand, both inside and outside the Houses of Parliament, to interfere by legislation for the benefit of the borrower and his creditors. It is not for us, however, to suggest remedies. The select committee will no doubt do that. It has been suggested that professional money-lenders should be licensed somewhat in the same way that publicans are; and, although there are many difficulties in the way, we cannot understand why this trade should not be regulated as is the trade in intoxicating liquors. Persons may urge that this would be an unjust interference with trade; but it must never be forgotten that, as at present carried on, this trade is a source of benefit to no one except the money-lender.

To speak the truth, the trade is a positive injury both to the borrowers and the general body of their creditors.

This is shown by the defence that money-lenders have pleaded before the select committee. Mr Samuel, a leading money-lender, and one of the most respectable members of the trade, said in his evidence 'that charging 60 per cent. leaves us (the money-lenders) 11 per cent. profit, and that is not unreasonable for the risk and labour attached.' No one can deny that the money-lender has great losses, owing to the fraud of many of his clients; but the fact that the honest but financially embarrassed borrower must therefore pay interest at 60 per cent. renders the trade worse than useless. No one can afford to borrow money at such rate; and we can believe Judge Owen of the Cardiff County Court when he says 'that my experience is that when a decent man gets into the hands of a money-lender he never gets out of them.'

It is evident that by borrowing at such a rate as this the crisis can only be temporarily delayed, and that the crash is inevitable, and will, by reason of the delay, be all the greater. This system tempts a man to trade long after he has become insolvent. Every lawyer knows what that means. Many a man would have been able to save himself from commercial ruin had he, when he discovered that he was insolvent, called his creditors together and made an arrangement with them. But another and a worse course is pursued. It constantly happens that when a man is hopelessly insolvent he goes to a money-lender for the sake of enabling him to maintain his position for a few months or even weeks, and gives a bill of sale as security for a loan at usurious interest. Presently he makes default in payment of an instalment, and the whole, or at all events the greater part, of his estate is swept away to the exclusion of the rest of his creditors.

Money-lenders are also a scourge to the man who is short of ready cash to meet pressing liabilities, but whose condition has not arrived at an acute stage. Should men in such circumstances go to the money-lender they will never escape from his grip until they have become absolutely penniless.

Among other reforms proposed, Judge Owen advocates the fixing of a maximum rate of interest and the granting of powers to county court judges to set aside money-lending agreements on the ground that the money-lender has been guilty of fraud, or the borrower has been labouring under a mistake. They have not at present these powers; and if the agreement, bill of sale, or promissory note is in proper form and valid, they must give judgment for the money-lender, and must refuse to go behind any of these documents and hear evidence proving that the money-lender has tricked or defrauded the borrower. We are quite aware that there are circumstances in which a loan at a fair rate of interest, and from a respectable lender, may be of substantial assistance to a person temporarily embarrassed. Such a loan may, indeed, enable the borrower to permanently repair his position; but the one great lesson taught by the evidence before the committee is that, unless a man can borrow in such a manner, he had far better 'face the music' by calling his creditors together for the purpose of making an arrangement with them than resort to the professional money-lender who has under his control

a highly-perfected system of roguery daily practised for the undoing of unhappy borrowers. The wisest thing for a man embarrassed by pecuniary difficulties is to give no heed to money-lending advertisements, to cast them aside as false, and not to look in that direction for relief.

Since this was written, the *Times*, commenting on the work of the Money-lending Committee, believes that a judicial discretion will be suggested as to what is a reasonable rate of interest, but that the Committee will scarcely recommend the total abolition of bills of sale; and mentions that it is not unlikely that a proposal will be formulated that the execution of bills of sale shall depend upon orders made by registrars of county courts after explanation of the whole circumstances, and that no seizure or sale shall be permitted without the consent of a county court judge.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER II.

THE next day I spent wandering through the quaint streets of Lapsburg, admiring the old-fashioned gables and queer jutting roofs that gave an air of mediævalism to the town. No less attractive were the pretty girls, in their picturesque dresses, who clacked past in wooden sabots.

At about noon I went into a little café standing off one of the smaller thoroughfares, and ordered a bottle of wine. I invited the proprietor to help with his own vintage, to which he readily agreed.

I commenced our conversation with an Englishman's *bêtise*, which caused the shopkeeper's bland smile to disappear with a rapidity I found amusing.

'Are you a partisan of the Count or the Queen?' I said.

Over his face an expression of horror dawned.

'Sir!' he stammered.

I regarded him calmly.

'Don't you understand my question? Whom would you prefer to reign over you?'

He glanced at me suspiciously. 'Who are you?' he asked.

'Oh,' I replied, 'I am merely a travelling Englishman.'

He wiped his forehead with a not too clean napkin.

'Let me advise you, my friend,' he said severely, 'not to ask that kind of question, or you may find yourself escorted to the frontier.'

'Why?' I asked lightly.

He made a gesticulation of hopeless exasperation.

'In England,' he asked, 'do you go into a public place and ask the first man you meet, in a loud voice, whether he has been guilty of a crime punishable with death?'

It began to dawn on me that things were taken seriously in this absurd little state.

'Surely you could reply in a loud voice you were not guilty?'

He looked at me pityingly. 'That might not help me—next week.'

Another customer coming in, he got up rather hastily, and came no more near me.

I fear I shall give the impression that I am a somewhat tactless, even witless, person. In truth, I am not sure that this is not the case, for at dinner that same evening I behaved again like the typical Englishman abroad. Prince Slavoski, the Russian ambassador, a little, undersized man, with small searching eyes and a skin like parchment, had just been introduced to me, and we were standing together in the drawing-room awaiting the announcement of dinner.

'I hear there is a regular Tartar of a Queen here,' I remarked casually.

'Walter!' interposed my uncle, warningly.

The Prince looked at me and smiled.

'Our young friend forgets he is not in London, where all things are considered fit subjects for criticism,' he observed. 'But I wonder who has been giving him so adverse an opinion of her Majesty.'

'Oh, common gossip,' I said a little hastily, for I saw anxiety on my uncle's face. 'But I shall form my own opinion later on.'

'You are going to the ball to-night?'

I nodded. 'To hear the announcement of the Queen's betrothal,' I added a little maliciously.

The Prince's eyebrows descended over his eyes, which I discovered later was a common trick of his when annoyed. 'I fear you may be disappointed,' he said sharply. 'I have not heard that her Majesty contemplates any such step.'

'Haven't you?' I responded, with an air of surprise. 'How very odd!'

'Walter!' There was obvious annoyance in my uncle's voice.

'I fear our young friend puts too great trust in common gossip,' said the Prince, eyeing me with some disfavour.

I shrugged my shoulders. 'I dare say you know more about the matter than I do,' I said indifferently.

At that moment dinner was announced, and we descended to the dining-room. I found myself opposite to Prince Slavoski.

'So you have not yet met the Queen?' he observed.

I shook my head. 'My uncle has promised to present me this evening.'

'You will find her a most charming woman,'

he said, with some emphasis. 'In fact, I should warn you not to lose your heart to her.'

'There is no fear of that.'

'Oh, you are too confident.—Lord Carton,' he went on, suddenly turning to my uncle, 'I shall be forced to leave you the moment we have dined, for I have an audience with the Queen. Will you permit your nephew to escort me, so that I may give him the privilege of an early presentation to her Majesty?'

My uncle looked a little puzzled. 'You are very good, but'——

'I should like to go,' I put in.

'Oh, then we will consider it settled,' responded Slavoski urbanely.

My uncle looked at me a trifle anxiously.

'You will say nothing likely to offend her Majesty. It will quite spoil my evening if I find you being led out to execution as I enter.'

'I am always discreet,' I replied coolly.

My uncle laughed vexedly. 'An undergraduate at court reminds me of a bull in a china-shop. But if you will go, I don't doubt the Prince will see you behave yourself.'

'I have already warned him not to lose his heart to the Queen,' said Slavoski.

'It will be enough if he does not make an avowal before I arrive,' replied my uncle.

Dinner had hardly ended before Slavoski rose. I made a movement to do likewise, but he stopped me.

'I am not yet ready to start,' he said. 'There is a letter I must write. If I may be permitted, I will go to the library. Perhaps you will join me in a quarter of an hour.' He left the room with a low bow to the assembled guests.

The servants were handing round cigars, when my uncle beckoned me to his side.

'I don't know what Slavoski means,' he said in a low tone. 'He evidently has some purpose in asking you to accompany him. Just be cautious, there's a good boy.'

I nodded. As the quarter of an hour was up, I went out of the room and found the Prince ready to start.

'Shall we walk?' he asked. 'It is only a quarter of a mile to the palace.'

I assented, and he took my arm. We walked together down the avenue that led towards the town, in the centre of which the palace stands. We had not gone far before a figure stepped out of the dark shadows and confronted us. The movement had been so sudden that I drew back. The figure was that of a man, heavily shrouded in a dark cloak, for all the world like the villain in a transpontine melodrama.

'What do you want?' asked Slavoski sharply.

'Forgive me, your Excellencies,' came the reply in a gruff voice; 'but if you are going to the palace I would beg you to deliver a letter to the Queen's own hands.'

'Nonsense,' replied Slavoski; 'deliver your own letter.'

'It is a matter of life or death,' said the man.

'Your life or death?' asked Slavoski. 'That is a matter of no consequence.'

The man bowed himself almost to the ground.

'It is of the Queen I speak.' He held out a letter.

Slavoski took it contemptuously between his finger and thumb and looked at it in the dim light.

'A begging-letter, I suppose. A petition of some kind. Take it.' He returned it to the man, who received it back reluctantly.

'I would beg that you would deliver it to the Queen's own hand.'

'It is impossible,' said Slavoski. 'I cannot be the letter-carrier of every knave I meet in the highways.'

The man raised his hands imploringly. 'I swear that it means much to the Queen; and he who hands it to her will merit her gratitude.'

'I know all about that,' said Slavoski derisively.

The man turned to me. 'Will not this high-born young gentleman do me this signal favour?'

I hesitated a moment. 'All right,' I answered. I took the letter from the man and shoved it into my pocket.

'The Queen's hands alone,' said the man warningly as we passed on.

Slavoski took my arm again, and for a little while we walked on in silence. When he spoke I thought I noted a ring in his voice that had not been there before.

'No,' he said, 'I don't expect any announcement of a betrothal to-night.'

As we approached the palace there was already a stream of carriages passing through the iron gates that divided the grounds from the road. A block had brought the string of vehicles to a standstill; and as we passed through the side gate the lights over the entrance threw into strong profile the faces of the inmates of one of the carriages. I uttered a sudden exclamation.

'Bless my soul—the vintner's daughter!'

'What do you mean?' asked Slavoski.

'Did you not notice the lady in that carriage? I had the pleasure of officiating at her marriage yesterday. A most romantic affair!'

'I did not notice the lady,' he replied; 'but you are evidently making a mistake. There are no vintners' daughters who have the *entrée* to the palace.'

'Oh, but I am certain!' I protested. I told him in a few words of the marriage that had taken place.

He laughed incredulously, telling me I was mistaken. 'It is apparent that a vintner's daughter who marries a corporal would not be on the Queen's list of guests.'

'I am perfectly sure I am right,' I persisted, annoyed at his incredulity. 'I could not possibly

forget the lady's face; she is the most lovely creature I have ever seen.'

'My young susceptible friend——' he began unbelievingly; and then he stopped short, turned on his heel, and bounded with surprising agility back to the entrance of the gardens. I watched him peer into the carriage window, and waited till he rejoined me.

'Well,' I asked, 'who is she?'

'You are quite sure of your story?'

'Certain,' I replied.

We were ascending the flight of steps that led up to the entrance of the palace. The place was brilliantly lighted. Glancing at Slavoski's face, I was surprised to see that it had turned to a yellower hue than ever, and his eyes were glittering strangely.

'The lady whom you mistake for a vintner's daughter,' he said slowly, 'is the Princess Kata, the Queen's cousin.'

We had passed into the entrance-hall, and I confess to being impressed by the brilliance of the scene before me. A magnificent marble staircase ran up through the centre of the hall, lined on both sides by the soldiers from the Queen's bodyguard. As we slowly ascended they came to the salute. It was a case of reflected glory, no doubt; but a sense of exhilaration came over me. Here was I, an undergraduate who, a few months ago, had been forced to bolt down an alley to escape the unwelcome attentions of a proctor, walking between a double line of blue-coated warriors who saluted as I passed.

At the top of the staircase we passed through the ballroom, which was as yet but very scantily filled.

'Tell me,' said the Prince, 'if you observe your friend the corporal.'

I nodded, determining, with sudden caution, to do nothing of the kind. I was annoyed that my want of thought should have been the means of revealing to Slavoski a marriage which was evidently intended to be secret. The Prince, too, was the centre of many a plot and counterplot, and his designs might be assisted by the information which I had unwittingly afforded him. Certainly I had noticed a scarcely concealed jubilation about his manner, which made me fear I had been the means of giving him information which he esteemed of value. I ground my teeth at my own want of care; for I need hardly say all my sympathies were with the pretty girl and the so-called corporal whose marriage I had witnessed the previous day.

We went down a corridor into an anteroom. Slavoski beckoned to a page in waiting.

'Kindly let her Majesty know I am in attendance.'

The page bowed and vanished.

'I must ask you to be good enough to wait here for a few minutes,' said Slavoski. 'It is essential that I speak with the Queen in private; but I will not keep you long.'

The page was beckoning him. He left me and entered the Queen's apartment.

I looked round. With the exception of the youthful page, who was pirouetting on the tiled floor to the strains of the distant band, there was no one in the room. On the walls were some marvellous frescoes depicting events in the history of Herzoglia, and I made the circuit of the room scrutinising them. I would have entered into conversation with the aforesaid page if he had not seemed so absorbed in the practice of his steps.

At length the Prince appeared at the door.

'Come,' he said abruptly. Evidently his interview had not been satisfactory, for his eyebrows were drawn down and there was a savage gleam in his eyes.

I went to him. He held back the curtain from the door.

'Enter,' he said; 'the Queen has graciously consented to receive you.'

THE 'SKY-SCRAPERS' OF NEW YORK.

By Frederick Black.

THE present century has witnessed the accomplishment of many marvellous undertakings, and the ancient Seven Wonders no longer may lay claim to a prominent place in the world's list of greatest works. If one were asked to-day to enumerate the most notable modern wonders, the task would not be easy. Not least, however, among the many claimants for the honour of inclusion in such a category would rank those colossal structures of steel and stone that the enterprise (and audacity, one is tempted to add) of our Transatlantic friends is causing to multiply in the larger cities of the Western continent.

In New York and Chicago these latter-day Towers of Babel — yclept 'sky-scrapers' in the expressive vernacular tongue—are becoming more and more numerous. Boston and Philadelphia also are able to count an increasing number amongst their buildings. The statement has been made more than once that the majority of these monster exhibitions of the architect-engineer's skill owe their existence chiefly to the urban rivalry that finds expression amongst the peoples of the great commercial centres of the West; and

though there may be just the least grain of truth in this, a reason of much greater weight lies in the universal tendency of American business interests to centralise in the smallest possible area, thus affording the utmost facilities for conducting a maximum of transactions and negotiations in a minimum of time.

The modern tall building of 'sky-scraper' type may be said to have originated in New York when the 'Washington' of thirteen stories was erected in 1884. Chicago at that time had nothing over eight stories; but the grass was not long allowed to grow under her citizens' feet, and building after building continued to rise, each one a little higher than New York's last, until at length the municipal authorities felt impelled to restrain the soaring ambitions of the designers by imposing a limit above which they considered human beings should not be expected to ascend for the performance of their daily business. To this day, however, the New York law remains without any prohibition of the same nature, an omission of which due advantage is taken, as testified by the building of twenty-nine stories and total height of 386 feet from pavement to lantern, now in course of construction at Park Row, near the City Hall.

Owing to the peculiar geographical position of America's commercial capital—the city is built upon a river-island fourteen miles in length and but three in average width, the business quarter being confined to the southern end—there is much to be said in favour of its 'sky-scrapers' that will not apply with the same force to other and differently situated towns. To accommodate the enormous number of firms who require city offices it is evident that building must either go on extending along the island—'up town,' as the inhabitants term it—or, on the other hand, it must needs rise in a perpendicular direction. The problem is being solved by building upwards, a solution only rendered possible by the modern achievements of science in steel construction and hoisting apparatus. In the other cities before mentioned, the guiding motive originally was simply the demand for centralisation, with its accompanying facilities and convenience. This in turn caused the value of land to appreciate enormously, and now the two factors reacting upon each other have fairly perpetuated the 'sky-scraper.'

Let us suppose ourselves upon the deck of a steamer having just passed in through the Narrows from the ocean and proceeding towards the city that constitutes America's front-door. Stretched away in front for some six miles lies a broad sheet of water—more sea than river, though bordered by land on either side. The surrounding scene is one of great beauty; but from it our eyes wander back again and again to the picture ahead that is rapidly becoming more distinct as the vessel's bows cleave the waters of the bay. Against a sky of Italian blue we see ten, fifteen, twenty—we know not how many—buildings towering aloft to a tremendous height, scarce two of the same shape, some square-topped, some surmounted by domes, but all alike clear and well defined to our vision in an atmosphere of marvellous purity. There is no order about their grouping; each appears to have arisen where it listed, springing up from among its more lowly neighbours as a monarch tree of the forest rears its head far above its less sturdy fellows. If it be winter-time, a dense white cloud of steam will be issuing from the highest point on the roof of each, twisting and swirling in the wind, always pouring forth, but melting into nothingness after rising a few feet into the clear air. This visible token of the imprisoned forces of Nature that man has chained in the nethermost part of these buildings to do his bidding in lighting, heating, and the performance of other tasks might be taken, with very little effort of the imagination, for the breath of so many giants, each fulfilling within those lofty walls the behests of his lord and master.

Arrived off the Battery, the southernmost point of Manhattan Island and the city, we now can see up two great waterways—that to the right the East River, spanned by the great suspension-bridge, and separating Brooklyn from New York, thence leading to the Sound that flows between Long Island and the mainland; and that to the left the Hudson, along which our course lies for a couple of miles. At this point we may notice that, tall though the towers of the famed bridge are, many a building is now able to look down upon them with ease. For the remainder of our journey the steamer is passing the business portion of the 'Empire City,' never more than a few hundred yards from where the streets terminate at the numerous wharfs; and, as one by one the tall buildings appear to glide by, we are afforded a perfect view—one that enables proper perspective to have full play while still including all the architectural detail that graces the exterior of the structures.

The famous thoroughfare, Broadway, in its lower or 'down-town' part, is the locality where the majority of the 'sky-scrapers' are situated. Going on a tour down it, and omitting to specially notice buildings of twelve stories or less, we come to the offices of the New York Life Insurance Company—but recently completed—at the corner of Leonard Street. This structure is of thirteen stories, surmounted on the main front by a clock-dome equal in height to another four stories, and is remarkable for the great area it occupies, extending back to Elm Street. Then, farther down, facing the City Hall Park, is the Home Life Building of sixteen stories and gabled superstructure, completely dwarfing the little fellow of five stories adjoining it on the north side, and even rising above its southern neighbour, the Postal

Telegraph Building, which counts but fourteen stories. On the opposite side of Broadway, at Anne Street, stands the St Paul, one of the most noticeable of all the gigantic office buildings in the city, consisting of twenty-five stories, and having in addition the customary basement. From its roof we might drop a plumb-line 307 feet in length to the pavement beneath! Situated on the corner and without any of its tall brethren very near, its limited area at first conveys to the mind the impression of a huge chimney-stack pierced by windows and adorned with stone frills and furbelows. One other building in New York reaches to a greater height (excluding the Manhattan Life, the front of which is capped by dome and lantern)—namely, the American Surety Company's home at Pine Street and Broadway. On a site only 84 feet 6 inches by 85 feet 6 inches, this building rises to a sheer height of 314 feet, and yet contrives to look graceful! Though practically a box of square section, flat-ended and having nearly four times the length of its width, the cunning of the architect has relieved its white sides by stone ledge and gilded corona, so that somewhat of the ornamental is imparted, in addition to strength. It contains twenty-one stories, nearly four hundred rooms, and cost £300,000; the land upon which it stands costing a like amount. The Manhattan Life Building, to which reference has just been made, is a short distance farther south and close to Wall Street. It has a frontage into which rows of only five windows are let. The site measures 67 feet by 125 feet, and cost slightly over £270,000. Its seventeen stories attain to a height of 254 feet, and the fine dome adds another 94 feet. The Bowling Green and the Washington Buildings, the last two on Broadway, are side by side; the former's sixteen stories of glazed white brick constituting a most admirable background, when viewed from either Battery Park or the harbour, for its more picturesque neighbour, whose thirteen stories of red brick relieved by white facings show to the greatest advantage against it. The Washington, as mentioned before, was erected in 1884, when thirteen stories was deemed high. Its commanding situation, looking out over the harbour, and its striking appearance entitle it to notice, though as a tall building it has been forced long since to take a secondary place.

Of other buildings, brief mention need only be made here of the National Bank of Commerce, nineteen stories; the Commercial Cable, twenty-one stories; and the Gillinder, nineteen stories *plus* a tower, and possessing only three windows in the end-width of each floor. In the well-known Printing House Square on 'Newspaper Row' stands the *World* Building (294 feet), practically a four-sided shaft of fourteen stories, on which rests a very high dome, so that in outline the whole structure resembles a Titanic potato-masher stood on end, with the handle uppermost; the *New York Times* offices, thirteen stories, and the other more or less elevated headquarters of the city's daily press, as well as the American Tract Society's Building, which is twenty-three stories and 290 feet high, being in the same vicinity.

All the foregoing buildings have been designed for office purposes, and in many instances the owners themselves occupy at least two floors, generally including the ground one when this is not given up entirely to main hall, stalls for shops, elevator entrances, and so on; the remaining floors being let in suites of two, three, or more rooms to various commercial companies and individuals. Offices having a total area of 150 to 250 square feet are not uncommon units, and usually rent without difficulty.

The completion of a new building in the business district—and all new ones are by virtue of necessity tall, for otherwise interest on the capital sunk in the land could never be earned—is the signal for an exodus of scores of firms from old and less perfectly equipped offices to the latest addition to the ranks of the 'sky-scrapers.' Indeed, it not infrequently occurs that long before the workmen have applied the finishing touches the tenants have entered and are busy transacting business. This continual desertion of the older premises is partly responsible for the existence of the great and increasing number of new structures; the former cannot be allowed to stand empty, and consequently are pulled down to give place to the latter. That there must be some limit to this peculiar phase of municipal development is evident, though to define exactly what is that limit would be a matter of considerable difficulty.

The capacity (if such a term may be permitted) of the 'sky-scraper' is prodigious. The majority that have come into being during the last few years possess about four hundred rooms each. One hundred firms, individually occupying on an average three to four apartments, perhaps will not appear to be a very goodly company; but there are few cities in the world able to offer proper accommodation to an equal number on a plot of ground only 85 feet square! Where the space has been available, some buildings contain from thirty-five to forty, and even more, offices per floor, so that one roof actually covers nearly a thousand separate rooms. Surely centralisation could go no farther!

That the comfort and convenience of the big population thus gathered within four walls require an ample supply of thoroughly modern appliances goes without saying, and when it is explained that the landlord undertakes to provide these and keep them in operation, it will be clear that system and perfect order reign in every department of the vast establishment, owing to the absence of any divided control, and the uniformity of all apparatus employed. Lighting, heating, ventilating, and cleaning of offices are attended to for the tenant; the elevator service, and a tele-

phone system connected through from the building exchange to the central exchange in the district, are always at his command; and without leaving the premises he may post his letters in a government mail-box, lunch and dine in a restaurant, forward telegrams, despatch messengers, and do much else besides.

A tour of inspection through one of these nineteenth-century wonders is a fascinating experience. Entering from the street through a handsome portico, flanked on either hand by large pillars of polished granite, we find ourselves in a spacious hall, with tiled floor, marble walls, and highly ornamented ceiling. On one side stands a row of neat 'stores,' where cigars and tobacco, fruit and confectionery, newspapers — the American is the most inveterate newspaper-buyer in the world— stamps and postcards, may be purchased; while not infrequently fancy goods and small articles of clothing are offered for sale. A continuous throng of people is passing to and fro between the main doorway and the elevator entrances—a throng that seems to suffer no diminution in numbers throughout the whole day. Pressing along past the elaborate wrought-iron grille that guards the base of the seven elevator shafts, we come to a wide flight of stone steps, down which let us descend to the basement where is situated the machinery that ministers to the wants of the tenants overhead.

These basements are well entitled to rank amongst the 'sights' of the New World city. Spotlessly clean, practically odourless—their white-tiled walls and floors reflecting back the flashing light thrown upon them by the rapidly moving polished rods and cranks of the engines, while on every side the soft rays from the electric lamps illuminate the scene—they indeed form a spectacle of real beauty.

In this abode of Vulcan we see the engines and dynamos that generate the current for lighting every room and passage in the mammoth structure above us, and that supply power to the elevators (if these are of the electric type) and the ventilating fans which in the heat of summer propel refreshing breezes throughout the offices. Here also are the steam pumps that deliver water to the tanks high up in the building, and maintain a constant hot and cold service to the multitude of radiators and lavatory taps respectively. Should the elevator installation work upon the hydraulic principle, the powerful pumps and rams that impart the necessary pressure to the water and thence motion to the cars will be found here also. In the cellar below us are the boilers—five or six in number and of a water-tube pattern—furnishing between 700 and 800 horse-power. The whole of this extensive plant is arranged in duplicate, so that no suspension of any function it has to perform may reasonably occur. The fuel employed is a 'hard' description of coal, extensively used all over New York, from the combustion of which the smoke is practically *nil*. Though the temptation to linger is strong, we must now retrace our steps to the ground floor, for there is much to see above.

The ascent of a 'sky-scraper' is obviously accomplished by only one practical method—by means of the elevator, or lift, as it is called in England. That iron lattice-work we see before us contains the sliding doors admitting to seven different cars, and the placards above each entrance indicate their respective numbers, and in the case of the farther three the fact that they are 'Express to 15th Floor,' the explanation of which is that these cars make no stop between the ground and 15th story, but serve from that one to the top. The four other elevators are 'locals,' calling at all floors up to and including the 14th. By this arrangement the traffic is prevented from becoming unduly congested, and crowding of the cars is minimised. Just above each door is placed, on the metal screen, a glass tube or gauge about a foot in length, and marked with a scale whose divisions correspond to the various floors above. Within the tube a coloured liquid reveals the exact position and direction of movement of the controlling car by rising and falling in synchronism with it. These ingenious indicators are fitted on every floor, work with the greatest precision, and are an indispensable convenience.

Previous to stepping into one of the 'Express' elevators, we may notice the large directory of the building let into one side of the hall. On its white marble face appear in black lettering an imposing collection of names, arranged on a system that is simplicity itself. Each floor is allotted one hundred numbers—though it never has rooms to receive them all — the hundreds signifying the floor, the tens and units the room. Thus, if the address of the New York X Company is '1735 Clouds Building,' we know at once that their office is on the 17th floor, and the further determination of its position is a matter of ease. Other systems of numbering are in use in some buildings, but this one is the best.

Now let us take our places in the car. The constant influx of people from the street quickly fills each one as it returns to the ground level and empties its living freight, and the 'starter'— a uniformed official whose duty is to give each attendant the signal to start up—having passed the word, the light iron door is shut-to with a click, the lever actuating the wire cable that communicates with the power apparatus is pushed forward, and immediately we rise with a rapidity that gives us the impression of having painlessly parted company with our stomachs. Floor after floor appears to fly down, and through the interstices of each elevator door that we pass a momentary glance is obtained—too brief, however, to even enable the names painted on the offices that face towards us to be read. Up, up we noiselessly rise, the white-tiled spaces on the walls

of the shaft alternating with the stone-gray-coloured iron doors at every story. One marvels that the attendant can tell the approach of the 15th floor, for so quickly do the distinguishing figures vanish that our untutored eyes fail to read them. But with accurate judgment he brings the car to a standstill, its floor on a level with that of the story. The door is opened with the usual click, some passengers step out, a few perhaps enter who have business to transact with firms higher up, another click, and our upward journey is resumed, this time with stoppages where required. In another two or three moments we arrive at the 23d floor, and, stepping out, are on the top story of a veritable 'sky-scraper'—one of the highest in the world.

Being provided with the *entrée* to one of the offices, we walk in, and on proceeding to the windows find a prospect of extraordinary magnificence lying stretched out 300 feet below. Directly underneath is Broadway, on which dwarfed cable cars go gliding slowly by, and Lilliputian beings move in and out amongst each other. Streets extending for miles are plainly discernible, the roofs of buildings we look down upon as on a map, while almost within the reach of a stone-throw flows the majestic Hudson, bearing upon its broad tide many a lordly liner, whose funnels—when it comes to rest at the pier—show to our gaze yawning chasms of Stygian blackness. Here and there in the vicinity rise other 'sky-scrapers,' towering above their surroundings and seeming to be endowed with an individuality that is for the most part lost to the observation when they are viewed from *terra firma*. Most peculiar sight of all, perhaps, is the beautiful spire of Trinity Church, though we may be sure that the ecclesiastical architect never contemplated the possibility of its iron cross becoming an object that might be viewed from above. On the western bank of the river are Jersey City and Hoboken, with the Meadows on one side, and the rocky wall of the Palisades on the other; while away beyond, in the distance, the Orange Hills rear their grassy slopes. To the south the whole harbour lies glistening in one beautiful panorama; on yonder island the Goddess of Liberty—looking very diminutive—stands with arm uplifted and face turned seawards; curious ferry-boats surmounted by that survival of a past engineering practice, 'the walking beam,' creep hither and thither over the waters, leaving in their wake an ever-widening path fringed by white foam; while 'stately ships go on,' some just arrived from distant ports, to their haven beside the city; others, laden with the wealth of the Occident, wending their way towards the ocean. Changing our point of vantage so as to command a view to the eastward, we look across the East River to Brooklyn—once called 'the bedroom of New York,' but the name, no longer being applicable, has given place to the more euphonious title, 'City of Churches;' to the left Long Island City, famous for its public men of Irish descent and pugnacious character, as well as for its redolent oilworks; to the right Governor's Island, with its picturesque but harmless fort and the harbour. Regretfully we at length resign the enjoyment of feasting our eyes upon such unparalleled views, to inspect the offices themselves.

In a general sense there is little difference between these on the majority of floors; those on the third story are not very dissimilar to the ones on the twenty-third; and hence, if we explore any suite, the prevailing character of all will be sufficiently indicated. Directing our attention, then, to the office in which we stand, it will be observed that it is a clean, well-lighted, airy apartment of about the average height. Neat desks of oak—all American office furniture seems to be constructed of oak—line the walls, and on a table in the centre of the room is placed the portable telephone communicating with the central exchanges. Incandescent electric lamps, for use at night or during the winter hours of darkness, are suspended overhead and cunningly arranged on the desks so that their light will fall upon the books and papers rather than upon the eyes. Typewriters are strongly in evidence; and perched in a convenient position is a revolving electric fan, which may be set working and turned to face in any direction at will. Even in the excessive humid heat of summer, however, these contrivances are not always required, for through the opened windows a delicious breeze of air will generally flow. There is no grate or fireplace, but a radiator, in which hot-water supplies the necessary heat for winter warming, occupies a corner. Leading off from this general office, and accessible from the corridor hall as well, is a manager's private room, fitted up in a somewhat similar style, and suitable for his special use. In some cases four, five, or six rooms will be given up to the needs of one firm or company; but as a rule less than the half-dozen suffice.

Returning to the passage, we notice in a prominent position hydrant and coiled hose, also the U.S. Government Mail Chute, in which letters being posted immediately descend to the large collecting-box in the main hall, from whence they are forwarded to the General Post-Office at close intervals. It is a curious experience to stand below in the evening, when the bulk of the correspondence gets posted, and watch this large mail-box swallowing the perpetual stream of letters fed into it from every floor by the chute, through whose clear glass front the missives are plainly discernible in their headlong flight to the pneumatic pillow at the base. It may be mentioned in passing that in not a few instances a postman is detailed off for duty exclusively in one building, and is kept busy the whole day in his frequent rounds of delivery.

And now we are ready for the return trip to

Mother Earth. It will not be amiss to walk down the stairs for a couple of floors, just to convince ourselves that they actually do exist. Following the sides of the elevator shafts, the stone steps—seldom trodden by feet—lead us down in the solitude of our own company, for we meet no one upon them. They exist, undoubtedly—and we are satisfied. An electric call summons the first car descending to where we stand, and in a few moments we are on our downward way. If the sensation felt by the inexperienced on travelling up is peculiar, that on going down is even more extraordinary. The first impression is that we ought to lose both our breath and feet, and yet do not; then our spines become pervaded by a thrilling, creepy feeling, as though they were vainly striving to become spiral springs, and involuntarily we develop a great desire to grip something. The remedy for this is simple, and consists in leaning firmly with the back against the side of the car, whereupon these vertiginous accompaniments of perpendicular travel at once subside. With a cushioning effect caused by the imprisonment of the air beneath it, the car comes to rest at the ground floor, and our brief visit to a typical 'sky-scraper' is concluded.

These structures have only been rendered at all possible by the introduction of the skeleton system of building, which in its turn has depended on the great advances that have been made in the manufacture of steel. To all outward appearance the 'sky-scraper' is a brick and stone erection; in reality it is a gigantic steel frame or skeleton, covered with a weather-proof veneer on the outside, and a fireproof (theoretically so, at any rate) casing on the inside. The Manhattan Life Building, for instance, contains considerably over 5000 tons of iron and steel in its beams, girders, and pillars; its walls vary in full width from but 12 to 16 inches, whereas, according to the laws of most cities, a solid brick wall carried to a corresponding height would require to be at least six feet thick at the base. With land costing at the rate of over £1,500,000 per acre, as it does in Lower Broadway, this margin cannot be disregarded if real estate is to be a profitable investment.

Two questions of great importance are involved in the tall building, neither of which has yet been conclusively settled—one, the durability of the steel; the other, the ability of the 'fireproof' work, should a fire occur, to adequately protect the metal from the terribly destructive effects of expansion followed by the contraction resulting from the application of cold water. The American Institute of Architects is itself divided on these matters; only time can settle the former, and one or two conflagrations occurring in typical high-class constructions the latter. It has been claimed that there are no materials employed in the building that will burn; the walls are steel and stone, the floors steel and hollow fireclay blocks, the roof iron and tiles. But the fact must not be overlooked that each office contains much that is inflammable in the shape of fittings and furniture, and that its floor is generally covered with a light wooden sheath. The point of vital importance is, whether, in the event of these becoming ignited, any part of the steel's protector should prove vulnerable; if so, fire is an ever-present and real danger. Fortunately or unfortunately, the experience of the last few years does not go far towards revealing what result might be expected under such circumstances as might arise at any time. An article in *Cassier's Magazine* for March points out the dangers attendant on the building of such tall street structures, but also shows how these buildings may be rendered fireproof, cyclone-proof, lightning-proof, and earthquake-proof.

Few things in America may be regarded as having even approached a final stage of development, and doubtless the 'sky-scraper' will yet undergo many changes. Let us trust that an increase of area rather than an increase of height will be amongst the most important of these, and that some means will be devised to prevent the streets on which they stand from becoming the civilised prototypes of the cañons of Colorado or California—a fate which would seem to be not at all impossible.

MY GARDEN GATE.

A GREEN LANE winds across the down,
My garden gate without;
It leads away to London town,
With many a twist about!
There to and fro they come and go,
From early until late:
The young, the old, the high, the low,
They pass my garden gate!
They follow Fortune's dancing gleam,
Their hearts with hope elate,
While I sit there alone and dream,
Within my garden gate!

They come and go while I sit there,
I hear their laughter light;
They go with heads held high in air,
And eyes of hope made bright!
Alas! they do not come back so—
'Tis hard to fight with Fate;
But careworn, weary, sad and slow,
They pass my garden gate!
And some of them come back no more
To those who watch and wait.
Pray Heav'n they've found a happy shore
Beyond my garden gate!

The moments pass, the hours decay,
The seasons smile and frown,
And still the green lane winds away
Across the open down!
And still they follow, lad and lass,
Where Fortune beckons fair;
Nor stop to note the waving grass,
Or smell the scented air.
They follow Fortune's dancing gleam,
Their hearts with hope elate,
While I—I sit alone and dream
Within my garden gate!

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

AN HISTORIC NIGHT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

I TAKE it that the pages of *Chambers's Journal* are strictly closed to purely party politics, and that within its leaves we are happily free from the strife of the polemic and the dialectic of the political partisan; but the present article has no political significance, and it espouses the cause of no party in the State.

The centre of the national life, in so far as questions of government or diplomacy are concerned, is generally believed to be the House of Commons; and it may, perhaps fairly enough and without arrogance, claim a pre-eminence as distinctively the 'Witenagemot,' or Parliament of the Nation. The House of Lords lives presumably, and also as a matter of everyday experience, in a calmer air and under serener skies. The solemnity and decorum of its proceedings are seldom ruffled by bursts of impassioned eloquence or storms of party feeling, while the 'other House' is, alas! at times but a tempest-tossed ship of State; it seems to feel more acutely the emotions pertaining to the popular will, and it possesses a temperature which can readily rise to fever-heat and a pulse which beats, on occasion, with the force of cyclonic systems.

Yet, be that as it may, the centre of political interest was certainly transferred on the night of the 8th of July 1884 from the Representative to the Hereditary Chamber. It was the debate on the second reading of Mr Gladstone's Reform Bill of that year. The bill had been voted, in its successive stages, by considerable majorities in the House of Commons; but its passage through the Lords was more of an uncertainty, and the popular interest was keenly directed towards the action of the Upper Chamber in regard to the measure. An amendment to the second reading had been proposed by the late Earl Cairns, formerly Lord Chancellor of England in the Conservative administration, and it was said that peers who had not even seen the inside of their gilded chamber for years were coming up from the country in force to give it their support. The amendment was to the effect that, while that House would assent to an equalisation of the franchise, this should not be granted unless it were accompanied by a contemporary measure for the redistribution of seats. That, I may observe in passing, was a principle which was subsequently accepted by both parties in the State, and was given effect to by agreement between them in a bill which became law in the following session of parliament, and under which, among other results, the representation of Scotland was raised to its present quota of seventy-two members. But at the time of which I speak it was not admitted by the Liberal government of the day that redistribution ought necessarily to accompany the lowering and equalisation of the franchise, and a fierce controversy was being waged over the question of Reform or No Reform.

The debate had occupied the whole of the previous night, and stood adjourned. I was fortunate enough to secure, through the medium of an influential friend, a seat, or at least a place, under the gallery on the government side of the House near to the division door. Beside me, or rather immediately in front of me, were Mrs Gladstone and her daughter, now Mrs Drew. The House quickly filled, and an atmosphere of unwonted animation and suppressed excitement pervaded the place. All the approaches were thronged, and there were many applicants for admission whose claims had to be denied.

The Lord Chancellor took his seat on the woolsack punctually at half-past four, and by five the debate was in full swing. I am not going to weary my readers with any attempt to follow it. But it was, I believe, almost unique in recent times alike for the number of distinguished politicians and statesmen of eminence who took part in it, and for the serried ranks of peers, on both sides of the House, who came to vote on the question of the hour. The great division of the Liberal party on the question of Home Rule had not then taken place, and the speakers on the government side of the House included the late Lord Granville,

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the Duke of Argyll, the late Lord Selborne, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and several others of the first rank; while on the Opposition side the late Lord Derby, Lord Salisbury, and the late Lord Carnarvon, among others, delivered important speeches. Perhaps two of the best speeches made were those of the late Lord Brabourne (the Knatchbull-Hugessen of fairy-tale fame) and Lord Rosebery, who followed him, and who, although, of course, then well known as a fluent, graceful, and able speaker, and a coming politician of eminence, had not as yet held any high office in the State. In Gilbertian phrase, he likened the coronet of his brother-peer to a crown of thorns, 'for it had been,' he said, 'the noble Lord's consistent and miserable fate, ever since his elevation to that House, to be compelled, evidently against his own most ardent inclinations, always to vote in opposition to the party to which he had always been understood to belong.'

But the hour of dinner has come and gone, and now it is waxing late, while still the debate goes on with unabated vigour. The temper even of that august House is, for the time, keenly set, and there is an undertone of excitement and vital interest in the air, for every one feels that history is most probably even now being made. The galleries of the peeresses have filled to overflowing, and are ablaze with jewels. All the great 'political ladies' of the day are there. So also are full the galleries allotted to distinguished strangers and the diplomatic body. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh, with the old Duke of Cambridge, are in their accustomed seats on the cross-benches; and but yesterday it is said that the well-polished hat of the Heir-Apparent was in serious danger of annihilation from the demonstrative eloquence and perfervid gesticulations of that well-known Scottish peer (speaking from the seat immediately behind His Royal Highness) who Mr Disraeli once said possessed, in an eminent degree, 'the cross-bench mind.' Round the steps at the back and sides of the throne are grouped a large number of privy councillors and Cabinet ministers, in the front rank of whom are prominently seen the alert figure of Mr Gladstone, with the never-forgotten flower in his buttonhole, and the larger frame of Sir William Harcourt, while Mr Chamberlain is not far off. There were no portents *then* of coming separation and the breaking-up of Cabinets, although the seeming desertion of General Gordon in the far Soudan, during five long months of siege and stress, had even now given to the ministry its first keen blow!

The scene is indeed a brilliant one. The bright red-leather benches, the carved and gilded panelling of the walls, the polished candelabra, the crowded galleries, make up a wonderful combination of colour; while the necessary interests of motion and life are found in the gathering of peers temporal and spiritual (for the lawn of the bishop is there in great force) which sits below, and in the speech and action of the statesman and the orator.

The hands of the clock point towards the hour of twelve, and the end seems at last to be drawing near. All that can be said on both sides has apparently been said, the leaders of the House and of the Opposition have wound up the debate, the Foreign Secretary has taken up his royal-red despatch-boxes, Lord Salisbury has gracefully bestowed upon Lord Rosebery the title of 'the patron of Midlothian,' while several well-known peers have hurried in from the precincts in time to record their votes. The division-bell rings, and all strangers, below the gallery at least, have perforce to retire to the lobbies and await there the result of the vote. There is a subdued buzz of excitement and conversation, and one instinctively feels that a question of national import is hanging in the balance and will shortly be decided for good or ill.

The clock strikes one, and now a small group, joined for a few moments by the Prime Minister, and in which he is naturally the central figure, sits on the stone seats in one of the inner lobbies or stands about and waits. Somebody remarks—I think it is Mrs Gladstone to her husband—'What will the country say of this to-morrow?' when suddenly the doors are thrown open, and there is an excited rush, in which we all join. But it is soon followed by a pervading silence as the figures of the division are read out, and the Lord Chancellor announces in stately tones that the 'Not Contents' have it. Nobody is surprised at the result, for the Opposition benches have been thickly peopled all through the night, and the weight of argument did seem also, somehow, to rest with them; but some of us wonder, nevertheless, with Mrs Gladstone, how the country will take it 'to-morrow.' The audience, however, quickly melts away, most of us glad to find, after the strain of listening to an eight-hours' debate, the seductions of a hansom homeward and a speedy repose, but the press-man and the journalist to his 'copy' and his 'leader-writing,' and to tell the British public, some four hours later—'How the Lords threw out the Franchise Bill.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XLI.—I MAKE MY PEACE WITH GILBERT BURNET.

I SLEPT till dawn the dreamless sleep of those who have drowned care in bodily exertion. It was scarce light when I awoke, and with the opening of the eyes there came with a rush the consciousness of my errand. I leaped out of bed, and sitting on the edge, considered my further actions.

First I sought to remove from my person some of the more glaring stains of travel. There was water in the room, bitter cold and all but frozen, and with it I laved my face and hands.

Then I opened the chamber door and stepped out into one of the long corridors. The house was still, though somewhere in the far distance I could hear the bustle of servants. I cast my mind back many years, and strove to remember where the room was in which the morning meal was served. I descended the staircase to the broad, high hall, but still there was no sign of other occupants. One door I tried, but it was locked; another with no better fate, till I began to doubt my judgment. Then I perceived one standing ajar, and, pushing it wide, I looked in. Breakfast was laid on the table, and a fire smoked on the hearth. I entered and closed the door behind me.

There was a looking-glass at the far end, and as I entered I caught a glimpse of my figure. Grim as was my errand, I could have laughed aloud at the sight. My hair unkempt, my face tanned to the deepest brown, my strange scarlet clothes, marred as they were by wind and weather, gave me a look so truculent and weird that I was half-afraid of myself. And then the humour passed, and all the suffering of the past, the hate, the despairing love, the anxious care, came back upon me in a flood, and I felt that such garb was fitting for such a place and such a season.

I warmed my hands at the blaze and waited. The minutes dragged slowly, while no sound came save the bickering of the fire and the solemn ticking of a clock. I had not a shade of fear or perturbation. Never in all my life had my mind been so wholly at ease. I waited for the coming of my enemy as one would wait on a ferry or the opening of a gate—quiet, calm, and fixed of purpose.

At last—and it must have been a good hour—I heard steps on the stair. Clearly my cousin had slept long after his exertions. Nearer they came, and I heard his voice giving some orders to the servants. Then the door was opened, and he came in.

At first sight I scarcely knew him, so changed was he from the time of our last meeting. He was grown much thinner and gaunter in countenance, nor was his dress so well cared for and trim as I remembered it. The high, masterful look which his face always wore had deepened into something bitter and savage, as if he had grown heart-sick of the world and cared nought for the things which had aforetime delighted him. His habit of scorn for all that opposed him and all that was beneath him had grown with his years and power, and given him that look as of one born to command—ay, and of one to whom suffering and pain were less than nothing. As I looked on him I hated him deeply and fiercely, and yet I admired him more than I could bear to think, and gloried that he was of our family. For I have rarely seen a nobler figure of a man. I am not little, but in his presence I felt dwarfed. Nor was it only in stature that he had the pre-eminence, for his step was as light and his eye as keen as those of a master of fence.

He had expected a very different figure to greet him at the other side of the table. In place of a lissome maid he saw a grim, rough-clad man waiting on him with death in his eyes. I saw surprise, anger, even a momentary spasm of fear, flit across his face. He looked at me keenly; then with a great effort he controlled himself, and his sullen face grew hard as stone.

'Good-morning to you, Master John Burnet,' said he. 'I am overjoyed to see you again. I had hoped to have had a meeting with you in the past months among your own hills of Tweedside, but the chance was denied me. But better late than never. I bid you welcome.'

I bowed. 'I thank you,' I said.

'I have another guest,' said he, 'whom you know. It is a fortunate chance that you should both be present. The old house of Eaglesham has not held so many folk for many a long day. May I ask when you arrived?' The man spoke all the while with great effort, and his eyes searched my face as though he would wrest from me my inmost thoughts.

'An end to this fooling, Gilbert,' I said quietly. 'Marjory Veitch is no more in this house. With the escort of my servant she is on her road to Tweeddale. By this time she will be more than half-way there.'

He sprang at me like a wild thing, his face suddenly inflaming with passion.

'You, you'—— he cried, but no words would come. He could only stutter and gape, with murder staring from his visage.

As for me, the passion in him roused in me a far greater.

'Yes,' I cried, my voice rising so that I scarce knew it for mine. 'You villain, liar, deceiver, murderer, by the living God, the time has now come for your deserts! You tortured my love and harassed her with hateful captivity; you slew her brother, your friend—slew him in his cups, like the coward you are; you drove me from my house and

lands; you made me crouch and hide in the hills like a fox, and hunted me with your hell-hounds; you lied and killed and tortured. But now I am free, and now you will find that I am your master. I have longed for this day—oh, for so long!—and now you shall not escape me. Gilbert Burnet, this earth is wide, but it is not wide enough for you and me to live together. One or other of us shall never go from this place.'

He made no answer, but only looked me straight in the face, with a look from which the rage died by degrees. Then he spoke slowly and measuredly. 'I think you are right, cousin John,' said he. 'The world is too small for both of us. We must come to a settlement.' And in his tone there was a spice of pity and regret. Then I knew that I had lied, and that this man was stronger than I.

For a little we stood looking across the table at each other. There was an extraordinary attraction in the man, and before the power of his keen eyes I felt my wits trembling. Then, with his hand, he motioned me to sit down. 'The morning air is raw, cousin John. It will be better to finish our meal;' and he called to his servant to bring in breakfast.

I have never eaten food in my life under stranger circumstances. Yet I did not fear aught, but satisfied my hunger with much readiness. As for him, he toyed and ate little. Once I caught him looking over at me with a shade of anxiety, of dread, in his gaze. No word passed between us, for both alike felt the time too momentous for any light talk. As the minutes fled I seemed to discern some change in his manner. His brows grew heavier, and he appeared to brood over the past, while his glance sought the pictures on the walls and my face in turn with something of fierceness. When all was over he rose and courteously made way for me to pass, holding the door wide as I went out. Then he led me to a little room at the other side of the hall, whence a window opened to the garden.

'You wish to be satisfied,' he said, 'and I grant you that the wish is just. There are some matters 'twixt me and thee that need clearing. But first, by your leave, I have something to say. You believe me guilty of many crimes, and I fling the charge in your teeth. But one thing I did unwittingly, and have often repented of. Michael Veitch fell by his own folly and by no fault of mine.'

'Let that be,' said I. 'I have heard another tale.'

'I have said my say; your belief matters nought to me. One thing I ask you: Where has the girl Marjory gone? If fate decides against you, it is but right I should have her.'

'Nay,' I cried passionately, 'that you never shall. You have caused her enough grief already. She hates the sight of you even as I, and I will do nothing to make her fall into your hands.'

'It matters little,' he said, with a shrug of his great shoulders. 'It was only a trifling civility which I sought from you. Let us get to work.'

From a rack he picked a blade, one such as he always used in any serious affray, single-edged and basket-hilted. Then he signed to me to follow, and opened the window and stepped out.

The morning was murky and damp. Fog clothed the trees and fields, and a smell of rottenness hung in the air. I shivered, for my clothes were thin and old.

Gilbert walked quickly, never casting a look behind him. First we crossed the sodden lawn, and then entered the pine wood which I had skirted on the previous night.

In a little we heard the roaring of water and came to the banks of the stream, which, swollen by the melting snows, was raving wildly between the barriers of the banks. At the edge was a piece of short turf, some hundred yards square, and drier than the rest of the ground which we had traversed. Here Gilbert stopped and bade me get ready. I had little to do save cast my coat and stand stripped and shivering, waiting while my enemy took his ground.

The next I know is that I was in the thick of a deadly encounter, with blows rattling on my blade as fast as hail. My cousin's eyes glared into mine, mad with anger and regret, with all the unrequited love and aimless scheming of months concentrated in one fiery passion. I put forth my best skill; but it was all I could do to keep death from me. As it was I was scratched and grazed in a dozen places, and there was a great hole in my shirt which the other's blade had ripped. The sweat began to trickle over my eyes with the exertion, and my sight was half-dazed by the rapid play.

Now, it so happened that I had my back to the stream. This was the cause of my opponent's sudden violence, for he sought to drive me backwards, so that when I found myself near the water I might grow bewildered. But I had been brought up to this very trick, for in the old days, in Tweeddale, Tam Todd would take his stand near the Tweed and strive to force me back into the great pool. In my present danger these old memories came back to me in a flood, and in a second I was calm again. This, after all, was only what I had done a thousand times for sport. Could I not do it once for grim earnest?

In a very little I saw that my cousin's policy of putting all his strength out at the commencement was like to be his ruin. He was not a man built for long endurance, being too full in blood and heavy of body. Soon his breath came thick and painfully; he yielded a step, then another, and still a third; his thrusts lacked force and his guards were feeble. He had changed even from that tough antagonist whom I had aforetime encountered, and who taxed my metal to the utmost. Had it not been that my anger still held my heart, and admitted no room for

other thoughts, I would even have felt some compunction in thrusting at him. But now I had no pity in me. A terrible desire to do for him as he had done to my friends gripped me like a man's hand. The excitement of the struggle, and, perhaps, the peril to my own life, roused my dormant hate into a storm of fury. I know not what I did; but, shrieking curses and anathemas, I slashed blindly before me like a man killing bees. Before my sword-point I saw his face growing grayer and grayer with each passing minute. He was a brave man—this I have always said for him; and if any other in a like position, with an enemy at his throat and the awful cognisance of guilt, still keeps his stand and does not flee, him also I call brave.

Suddenly his defence ceased. His arm seemed to numb and his blade was lowered. I checked my cut and waited with raised point. An awful delight was in my heart, which now I hate and shudder to think on. I waited, torturing him. He tried to speak, but his mouth was parched, and I heard the rattle of his tongue. Still I delayed, for all my heat seemed turned into deadly malice.

Then his eyes left my face and looked over my shoulder. I saw a new shade of terror enter them. I chuckled, for now, thought I, my revenge had come. Of a sudden he crouched with a quick movement, bringing his hands to his face. I was in act to strike, when from behind came a crack, and something whistled past my ear. Then I saw my cousin fall groaning, with a bullet through his neck.

In a trice my rage was turned from him to the unknown enemy behind. With that one shot all rancour had gone from my heart. I turned; and there, running through the trees up the river-bank, I saw a man. At the first look I recognised him, though he was bent well-nigh double and the air was thick with fog. It was the fellow Jan Hamman.

I ran after him at top speed, though he was many yards ahead of me. I have never felt such lightness in my limbs. I tore through thicket and bramble, and leaped the brooks as easily as if I were not spent with fighting and weak from the toils of months. My whole being was concentrated into one fierce attempt, for a thousand complex passions were tearing at my heart. This man had dared to come between us; this man had dared to slay one of my house. No sound escaped my lips; but silently, swiftly, I sped after the fleeing figure.

He ran straight up-stream, and at every step I gained. Somewhere at the beginning he dropped his pistol; soon he cast away his cap and cloak; and when already he heard my hot breathing behind him, he cried out in despair and flung his belt aside. We were climbing a higher ridge, beneath which ran the stream. I was so near that I clutched at him once or twice; but each time he eluded me. Soon we gained the top, and I half-stumbled, while he gained a yard. Then I gathered myself together for a great effort. In three paces I was on him and had him by the hair. But my clutch was uncertain from my faintness, and with a wrench he was free. Before I knew his purpose he swerved quickly to the side, and leaped clean over the cliff into the churning torrent below.

I stood giddy on the edge, looking down. There was nothing but a foam of yellow and white and brown from bank to bank. No man could live in such a stream. I turned and hastened back to my cousin.

I found him lying as I had left him, with his head bent over to the side and the blood oozing from his neck-wound. When I came near he raised his eyes and saw me. A gleam of something came into them; it may have been mere recognition, but I thought it pleasure.

I kneeled beside him with no feeling other than kindness. The sight of him lying so helpless and still drove all anger from me. He was my cousin, one of my own family, and with it all a gentleman and a soldier.

He spoke very hoarsely and feebly.

'I am done for, John. My ill-doing has come back on my own head. That man'——

'Yes,' I said, for I did not wish to trouble a man so near his end with idle confessions; 'I know; I have heard; but that is all past and done with.'

'God forgive me,' he said. 'I did him a wrong, but I have repaid it. Did you kill him, John?'

'No,' I said; 'he leaped from a steep into the stream. He will be no more heard of.'

'Ah!' and his breath came painfully. 'It is well. Yet I could have wished that one of the family had done the work. But it is no time to think of such things. I am going fast, John.'

Then his speech failed for a little, and he lay back with a whitening face.

'I have done many ill deeds to you, for which I crave your forgiveness.'

'You have mine with all my heart,' I said hastily. 'But there is the forgiveness of a greater, which we all need alike, you would do well to seek.'

He spake nothing for a little. 'I have lived a headstrong, evil life,' said he, 'which God forgive. But it is not meet to go canting to your end, when in your health you have crossed His will.'

Once again there was silence for a little space. Then he reached out his hand for mine.

'I have been a fool all my days. Let us think no more of the lass, John. We are men of the same house, who should have lived in friendship. It was a small thing to come between us.'

A wind had risen and brought with it a small, chill rain. A gust swept past us, and carried my cast-off cloak into the bushes. 'Ease my head,' he

gasped, and when I hasted to do it I was even forestalled. For another at that moment laid his hand on him, and with a little shudder his spirit passed to the great and only Judge of man's heart.

I walked off for help with all speed, and my thoughts were sober and melancholy. Shame had taken me for my passion and my hot fit of revenge —ay, and pity and kindness for my dead opponent. The old days when we played together by Tweed, a thousand faint, fragrant memories, came back to me; and in their light the last shades of bitterness disappeared. Also the great truth came home to me as I went, how little the happiness of man hangs on gifts and graces, and how there is nought in the world so great as the plain virtues of honour and heart.

DENT'S.

NEW towns of its size possess the same world-wide celebrity as sleepy old Worcester, noted alike, as our geography books used to say, for its porcelain, its sauce, and its gloves, and contributing to the enjoyment of the gourmet, the delight of the art-collector, and the satisfaction of the fashionable world. It is in keeping with the character of the town, with its fine cathedral and its general air of old-worldness, that all its three famous products are of the nature of luxuries, rather than necessaries of life.

Dent's great glove factory (which, by the way, has no longer any connection with the family whose name it still bears) claims to be the largest as well as the oldest business of the kind in the world. For well over a century it has held a foremost place in the trade, and it still shows no sign of giving way before its numerous competitors. The firm employs in Worcester some twelve hundred indoor workers, and from fifteen hundred to two thousand outdoor, besides many others, who in the outlying villages, and even as far as distant Devonshire, are engaged in the production of hand-made goods.

The visitor to the factory, which is a veritable hive of busy industry, steam-power being used to only a very slight extent, is sure of a courteous reception; and although there is not here, as in the Porcelain Works, an official specially detailed to attend to strangers, he will have every facility afforded him for making himself acquainted with all the processes of manufacture going on within the huge four-storied building.

First, in the stock-rooms, he will see pile upon pile of skins of all sorts, stored as they have been received, in their half-dressed condition, from the leather-workers of the Continent. For most of these—chevrettes, kids, and lambskins—the chief sources of supply are Russia and the highlands of Germany. Then there are the reindeer-skins, with their beautifully soft texture, and the heavy Cape sheepskins used in the manufacture of driving and riding gloves. English leather, of any kind, is of very little value for glove-making, being generally too porous. Indeed, it is almost a pre-requisite that the skins to be used should, in the living animal, have been covered with hair rather than wool.

After having been stored for some months to allow the dressing thoroughly to permeate them, the skins are carefully assorted according to size and quality, and are then subjected to a thorough washing in enormous rotary vats, from which they are removed to be again dressed with water in which the yolk of eggs has been mixed. This process is necessary to give them the required softness, and several hundred thousands of eggs are thus used every year.

The skins are now ready for dyeing, which is done either by immersion in great revolving cylinders, or 'tumblers,' where they are kept in continual motion till the required shade has been obtained, or by the much more delicate process of brushing, which demands a considerable amount of skill, and is employed only when it is desired to keep the inner side of the glove white, as for the lighter and finer kinds of goods.

After dyeing, the skins are quickly dried at a temperature of about 120°, and are then said to be 'in the crust,' a technical term which very well describes their hard, shrivelled appearance. In this state they are much darker in colour than the finished glove is intended to be, a medium shade of brown being, in the crust, scarcely distinguishable from a soot black. But now the staker takes them in hand, and, by drawing them in all directions over a rounded metal edge, he soon restores them to their natural elasticity, and at the same time very greatly reduces the depth of colour. Taking up a dirty-looking bit of leather, which to the unpractised eye seems absolutely worthless, he turns out, in less than two minutes, an exquisitely soft skin of the most delicate fawn or pearl-gray hue.

The skins are now ready for paring, or doleing, a process which requires great skill and care on the part of the operator. Indeed, all the labour in connection with this industry is of a highly skilled character, the apprentices, in some branches of the work, being strictly indentured for seven years. By the paring, which is done with a keen-edged knife of a special shape, the thickness of the skin is reduced and made uniform over the whole surface; and, at the same time, the roughnesses of the under side are removed, so that it presents a smooth and pleasant surface to the hand. The very large amount of waste from this process is collected, and forms a valuable dressing for the land, readily bought up by the farmers in the neighbourhood.

This is the last of the preparatory processes, and

the skins, having been again assorted according to size and quality, are now ready to pass into the cutting-room, where the actual glove-making begins. There they are first of all cut into 'tranks,' or square pieces of the size of a glove, the back and front being in one piece, and from the scraps remaining the thumb-pieces and fourchettes are taken. The tranks, with their fittings, then pass into the punching-room, where, by one movement, the glove is punched out by means of a press bearing a block-knife of the required shape. The thumb is then similarly punched out from its own piece, an ordinary kid skin of average size giving usually three complete gloves.

The cut gloves again pass through the sorter's hands, and from him they are sent on to the women's side of the factory. Here one is struck at once with the cleanness and freshness of the workrooms, as well as with the cheerful and neat appearance of the workers, and the frank relations that seem to exist between them and their employers. Indeed, this last-mentioned point is observable over the whole factory, the entire freedom from restraint of the operatives under the manager's eye, and the perfectly respectful frankness with which they supplement his explanations, being pleasantly noteworthy.

The first process in the women's department is the 'pointing,' or ornamental stitching generally seen on the backs of gloves. Most of this is done by hand, and with a dexterity that is simply bewildering to the unskilled onlooker; the glove, previously pierced by machinery, being held firmly on a cleverly devised frame, and the needle working back and forward more rapidly than the eye is able to follow. It would be difficult to imagine anything more nearly approaching the precision and quickness of a delicate machine than is exhibited by the fingers of some of the girls engaged in this work. The writer, standing with watch in hand, saw the three double lines of heavy tambouring on the back of a dogskin driving-glove begun and finished within two minutes.

After the pointing comes the closing, which is done by sewing-machines of special and most ingenious design, several different kinds being used for different classes of work. As unlike as possible to the familiar family 'lock-stitch' are these bits of curious, and even dainty, mechanism, some of which are positive triumphs of the inventor's art. Especially fascinating is the machine used for closing the fingers of one class of gloves. In this machine the needle works into the point of an upright steel finger, which carries within itself a shuttle of diminutive size, and the glove, fitted over this finger, is fed automatically upwards.

The finishing, which is the next process, and includes button-holing, binding, &c., is mostly done outside; then follows the final examination and sorting; next the stamping and boxing; and then the finished gloves pass into the warehouse, from which they are sent out to every corner of the civilised world, having gone through between twenty and thirty pairs of hands before they are ready to adorn those of the fortunate person for whom all this labour and skill are expended.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER III.

I ENTERED the Queen's apartment feeling a little nervous on being for the first time in my life ushered into the presence of royalty.

'You had better take this opportunity of handing her that letter,' whispered the Prince.

'All right.'

We passed through a room in which several ladies were sitting. They cast down their eyes modestly as we passed. And then I came into the Queen's presence. She was sitting in a chair by the side of her writing-desk, her cheek on her hand, her eyes looking into vacancy. As we entered she rose with an air of weariness.

She was undoubtedly a magnificent specimen of womanhood, and I could understand the warning I had received not to lose my heart; but, though I am susceptible enough, in all conscience, to female charms, I could see at the first glance that there need be no fear for me in this case. It is not only beauty in woman which attracts a man; and beyond Queen Elma's physical attractions I could see no sign of others of a more alluring kind. She was tall and voluptuous in appearance, with black hair, full red lips, and dark, stormy eyes. Her complexion had a dusky tinge, which added to her gipsy-like appearance. She looked a woman to be feared rather than loved.

She received me most graciously.

'Welcome to Herzoglia,' she said.

I bowed and kissed her extended hand. She regarded me somewhat critically.

'You are a very apparent Englishman,' she was pleased to say, 'and the English are our traditional friends. I can always depend on your uncle for good, sound advice.' I thought she looked at the Prince with defiance in her air. 'He, at any rate, has no ulterior ends to serve.'

The Prince smiled a little forcedly.

'I trust I may be allowed to reckon myself one of your Majesty's friends,' I murmured.

'I have need of them, God knows,' she replied, almost passionately, and speaking, as it seemed to me, at the Prince.

'He is not always the friend who advises

according to one's inclinations,' observed the Prince, with some sententiousness. He spoke urbanely enough, but there was a look of irritation on his face.

The Queen made a little impatient movement. 'If we could only distinguish between friends and enemies! But when they are indistinguishable it is best to take no advice at all, but to act according to one's judgment.'

The Prince shrugged his shoulders. 'The few words of caution I have ventured to address to your Majesty have been prompted by a single-hearted desire for your welfare.'

'No doubt,' said the Queen. The irony in her tone was apparent. 'And yet I am as strongly advised by others to the course from which you endeavour to dissuade me.'

'I am convinced that the step you contemplate is a false one, and I can only hope that this may be made clear to you before it is too late.'

'Who will make this clear to me?' asked the Queen scornfully.

The Prince looked at her steadily.

'I hope to be able to do so,' he replied slowly.

The Queen looked up at him quickly.

'Speak out,' she cried. 'For the last few days you have hinted mysteriously at something in your knowledge. Now is the time to disclose it. Tell me now, or be for ever silent.'

'You mistake me,' replied the Prince hastily. 'I have nothing to tell.'

A look of relief passed over the Queen's face. The Prince went on:

'Your Majesty believes that the Count is influenced solely by his love.' There was an almost imperceptible sneer in his voice; but, although slight, it was not unnoticed by the Queen. She sprang to her feet—a tall, queenly figure.

'Is that so surprising?' she asked proudly.

'It is surprising it is not so,' said the Prince; 'but it is not so, or common rumour has much maligned the Count.'

The Queen brought her hand down heavily on the table by her side, and a flower-vase that stood on it fell and broke. I remember watching the little stream of water as it made its way to the edge and trickled to the floor.

'Lies!' she said fiercely. 'All lies! He has told me so himself.'

'I am glad,' responded the Prince suavely. Then he looked round and his eye met mine. 'But our conversation cannot interest our young friend.'

The Queen glanced at me with a little start. 'I had forgotten your presence,' she said, turning to me. 'But I know I can trust your discretion.' She smiled pleasantly, and I bowed in reply. 'You are doubtless anxious to attend the ball. Our Herzoglian ladies will not forgive me if I detain you longer.'

The Prince looked at me keenly. 'Have you not forgotten something?' he asked impatiently.

'Forgotten?' I repeated stupidly.

'Have you not a letter for the Queen?' he said, with a touch of asperity.

'Oh yes, of course.' I drew the letter hastily from my pocket. 'It was given me on my way to the palace by a man who begged that I would deliver it into your Majesty's own hands.'

The Queen took it from me carelessly and threw it on the writing-table. 'I will look at it presently.'

'He urged its importance,' observed the Prince. There was a curious look in his eyes which did not escape the Queen.

'How did you know that?' she asked sharply.

'The Prince was with me at the time,' I put in.

'Ah,' said the Queen scornfully; 'no doubt, then, the Prince is already informed of its contents.'

The remark was insultingly spoken, and I was not surprised to see the Prince bite his lips.

'You are mistaken,' he said quietly, shrugging his shoulders deprecatingly; 'but in these times of stress it is unwise to delay reading any communication which may contain tidings of import.'

The Queen picked up the letter with a quick movement and tore it open almost contemptuously.

'This is my cousin Ulric's writing.' She looked over the open page suspiciously at the Prince. 'But it is not addressed to me.'

The Prince eyed her steadily. She sat down, and, pressing her lips together, began to read. I watched her face, and I saw the blood ebb slowly from her cheeks. Before the page was turned she seemed to have aged ten years.

She rose quietly and put the letter into a drawer in her writing-table, which she locked. Then she turned calmly to the ambassador.

'Oh Prince,' she said, 'as a master of artifice, how can I but admire you? You have tried persuasions, reproaches, arguments, entreaties, to prevent my betrothal with my cousin; and now—now you bring me proof of his guilt—proof that would send him to his death, if—if I desired it.'

'Your Majesty gives me credit to which I am not entitled. I am in the dark as to the purport of the letter.'

The Queen laughed contemptuously.

'I wondered at your anxiety that I should read this letter,' she said. 'I wonder no more.'

The Prince stood silent for a moment.

'Suppose I were to admit that I was the means whereby this letter was intercepted in its course, should I not have proved my right to a claim on your Majesty's gratitude?'

The Queen looked at him quickly, and then away; for some time she stood in thought. At last she threw up her arms with a weary gesture.

'Who can say? Who knows? Wherever I turn I seem to be met by intrigue. There seems no honesty of purpose left in the world.'

The Prince came a step closer.

'Am I not right in saying that this letter reveals a dangerous conspiracy against your sovereignty, of which your cousin is at the head? So much I gather from what you have said.'

The Queen's head had fallen forward on her bosom. There was a look of dejection, of wretchedness, about her attitude.

'I do not doubt you know already,' she said in a voice hardly above a whisper, 'that this letter is from Ulric to Herr Friedmann'——

'Friedmann, the Mayor?'

'Yes.'

'Pray go on.'

The Queen looked up at the inscrutable face before her with a wan smile.

'Must we play this dreary drama to the very end? You are aware of the contents of this letter.'

This time her assertion brought no denial from the lips of the Prince. He went a little closer and touched her arm.

'Will you plight yourself to a man whom you know is conspiring against you?'

The Queen stood silent, her lips pressed tightly together.

'And what if he is?' she said at length, almost defiantly. 'Has he not the right? I am the Queen of Herzoglia, but none knows better than I that if he and I had to plead before a just tribunal for the crown of Herzoglia, the award would not be to me.'

'He has sworn loyalty to your Majesty.'

'What man can swear away his birthright? No, Prince; you have launched your thunderbolt, and your victim stands unscathed.'

They seemed again to have forgotten my presence, and I too forgot I was an intruder.

'You mean,' said the Prince—and I wondered if his eyebrows would ever regain their normal altitude—'that you will persist in espousing the Count Ulric?'

'Why not?' asked the Queen.

'He has plotted against you. Even at this moment he is seeking to overthrow your throne. What woman of spirit could forgive this?'

'What will not love do?' There was a quaint tone of wonderment in the Queen's voice. She looked at the ambassador, with a half-smile on her face.

'You forgive him?'

'I—forgive him.'

She turned aside and stood pondering, her hand upon her heart.

Slavoski stood silent for some time. I thought there was astonishment on his face that his calculations, which he had deemed based on a certainty, should have proved erroneous. When he spoke again it was in a high-pitched voice that quivered with rage.

'Take care,' he cried, 'take care! You are exposing yourself to a rebuff. The Count Ulric would not marry you—no, not if you were the only woman in the world.'

The Queen turned to him half-wonderingly. Then I saw the scarlet surge over her face and neck.

'You insult me!' she said. 'How dare you'——

The Prince became calm and cold again.

'I do not insult you,' he said quietly; 'but it is my duty to warn you.'

'How dare you'—— she began again, stamping her foot, and her eyes glowing with almost animal rage. The Prince held up his hand.

'Listen, Madame. My desire is to save you from the cruellest insult that can be paid to a woman—to be jilted by the man she loves.'

She clutched at her breast as if she would have torn to rags the lace that shrouded her bosom.

'Yes, Madame,' the Prince went on calmly, 'the time has come for plain speaking; and never forget I speak in your interest. It has been my duty to keep a watchful eye on the Count, and little he has said or done during recent months has escaped my vigilance. Many a time, to my certain knowledge, he has used words concerning your Majesty which I dare not repeat. Many a time has he complained bitterly to his companions of what he calls your Majesty's persistence in pressing unacceptable suggestions.'

The Queen uttered a half-articulate cry, and the agony and shame of it went to my heart.

'It is a lie!' she cried. 'It is not true. How dare you'——

'Yes, Madame, it is true, as I may be able to prove to you before the evening is at an end. But I fear I have pained you, which is far indeed from my wish. I will not longer detain you.'

He bowed and retreated towards the door. The Queen stood for a moment, the prey to conflicting emotions which seemed to tear her bosom, and then she followed him and laid her hand on his wrist.

'You have proved nothing,' she said hoarsely. 'Without proof I will not believe. Why should I take your word? I believe Ulric is faithful to me; he has promised'——

'I will not ask you to accept anything without proof.'

'Why should I take your word?' she repeated. 'I know he is true to me. I know it! I know it!'

The Prince bent his keen eyes on hers.

'If I prove,' he said in a low voice, 'that he has never intended to carry out his promise, that he has merely played with you, what then?'

'If you prove that,' she gasped, 'then—then'——

'His life is in your hands,' said the Prince almost inaudibly.

The Queen raised her eyes slowly to his, and for a moment they stood silent. Then the Prince bowed again and left the room, and I followed him. I glanced back at the door. The Queen had sunk back upon a chair; her fingers were moving convulsively, and in her eyes there was a look that made me shiver.

I followed the Prince in silence through the anteroom. As we entered the ballroom he grasped my arm.

'Let me advise you to be silent as to what you

have witnessed,' he said. 'Come, I will hand you over to your uncle.'

As we threaded our way through the assembled throng my eye fell on a familiar face. It was my friend the corporal. His glance encountered mine. He did not seem to notice my companion, for he greeted me boisterously.

'We meet again,' he said. 'This is an unexpected pleasure.'

Slavoski stopped abruptly; there was almost a droll expression on his face.

'You are already acquainted with the Count,' he asked, smiling unpleasantly. 'Curiously, I had guessed it.'

'We met in London,' I replied hastily.

'In London? But I understand the Count has never visited your city of fogs.'

'It was in Vienna that we met, was it not?' asked my recent acquaintance innocently.

'Of course, of course,' I muttered hastily.

For the first time I noticed that on his arm was the lady whom the Prince had identified as the Princess Kata. I saw Slavoski's eye encounter hers; I saw her blanch under his gaze. She tugged at her escort's arm, and he, nodding with a slightly disconcerted air to the Prince, passed on and was lost in the crowd. Over Slavoski's face an expression of triumph had dawned.

'Thank you, *mon ami*,' he whispered to me; 'you have given me the trump card.'

'What do you mean?' I asked angrily.

He was smiling broadly. His eyebrows had sprung to the heights again.

'Your friend the corporal is my friend the Count Ulric of Lapsburg.'

'You are making a foolish mistake,' I cried furiously; 'that is not the corporal.'

'Is it not?' he answered, showing his teeth. 'But we shall soon see.' He bowed ironically. 'I must leave you to find your uncle unaided, for I have pressing business elsewhere.'

Half-dazed, I watched him make his way from the room. What would happen now? He had guessed the truth, and it would not be a difficult task for a man of his resources to verify his suspicions. I turned hastily, looking in vain for the Count.

As I stood there in the centre of the ballroom, peering through the dancers for the sight of the couple who had just left me, I felt as uncomfortable as it is possible for a man to feel. The Count was betrothed to the Queen, and the formal announcement was to be made that night. He was, in fact, married to the Princess Kata, and Prince Slavoski, whose one object was to prevent the betrothal and to crush the Lapsburg faction, was in possession of the secret. Nor was that all. The Queen, whose jealous anger I had just witnessed, was in possession of evidence of the Count's complicity in a conspiracy, which, in her own words, was sufficient to send him to death.

And the thing that stung me more than all, that made the cold perspiration bedew my brow, was that it was I who had set in train the series of discoveries that seemed likely to engulf the Count.

As I wandered about miserably, seeking him, he came up to me.

'How came you here?' he asked abruptly. 'I thought we had parted for good on the Lapsburg road.'

'I happen to be Lord Carton's nephew,' I answered. 'But what does a corporal on the floor of the Queen's ballroom?'

'Ah,' he answered, 'that was the curé's invention.'

'I would to God he had told the truth.'

'What do you mean?' he asked quickly.

'I mean that I believed what he said, and, thinking it was an amusing episode, I retailed it casually to Slavoski.'

'But he cannot know that I'——

'He has guessed. He is the devil.'

The colour increased in his face.

'How could he have guessed?' he asked furiously. Then he turned on me with flashing eyes. 'It is to your meddling that we are indebted for this.'

'I have not told you all,' I went on, a trifle brokenly. 'The Queen holds in her hands a letter of yours which proves your complicity in some conspiracy—a letter from you to the Mayor Friedmann.'

He stared at me, with consternation gathering on his face.

'How in Heaven's name could she have got that?'

'I handed it to her. It was given to me by a man in the street.'

He looked at me vacantly. 'You seem my bad genius,' he said dolefully. 'But what happened?'

'The Queen forgave'——

'Oh.'

'Because she loved you.'

He was silent.

'But now! When she hears you are married!'

He looked up and laughed.

'I have come to the end of my tether, I fear; and you, O worthy Englishman! have shortened the rope.'

'I am sorry.'

'An apology is, of course, welcome,' he replied, laughingly; 'but advice would be even more acceptable. What am I to do? Does the Queen know I am married?'

'Not yet; at least, not a moment ago.'

'Probably Slavoski has gone to her, and I will go too, and throw myself on her mercy. Poor Kata!'

'Go at once, then. There is not a moment to be lost.'

'I must see Kata first,' he said.

'You will be too late unless you go at once,' I urged. He shook his head.

'I have promised this dance to Kata,' he said stubbornly, 'and she will think me neglectful if I omit it. A few minutes can't make any difference.'

I made a gesture of impatience, but he turned away, and the circle of dancers shut him from me.

MOULDING MARBLE BY PRESSURE.

EXPERIMENTS of a remarkable character, and which have awakened great interest on the part of scientists, especially geologists, have recently been conducted at M'Gill University, Montreal, by Professors Adams and Nicholson, of that institution. They have demonstrated that, under certain conditions, a hard and brittle substance like marble may be moulded with considerable ease by submitting it to pressure alone.

When the experiments were commenced, the object of those undertaking them was to ascertain if it were possible, by subjecting rocks artificially to pressure under the conditions that obtain in the deeper parts of the earth's crust, to produce in them the deformation and cataclystic structures exhibited by the folded rocks of the interior of mountain ranges and the older formations of the earth. They took into consideration the three factors that combined to bring about the conditions to which rocks are subjected in the lower portions of the globe's exterior covering—great pressure from every direction, high temperatures, and the action of percolating waters.

In the experiments so far conducted it has been attempted to reproduce only the first of these conditions. The substance operated with has been chiefly pure Carrara marble, and the process followed may thus be described: Columns of the marble, two centimetres and two and a half centimetres in diameter, and four centimetres in length, are very accurately turned and polished. Heavy wrought-iron tubes are made by rolling long strips of Swedish iron around a bar of soft wrought-iron, and welding the strips to the bar as they are wrapped round it. The core of soft iron is then drilled out, leaving a tube of welded Swedish iron six millimetres thick, and so constructed that the fibres of the metal run round the tube instead of being parallel to its length. This tube is very accurately fitted on to a column of marble, the process being accomplished by giving a very slight taper to both the column and the interior of the tube, so that the former will only pass about half-way into the latter. When the tube is expanded by heat, however, the marble passes completely into it, and fills it with the exception of about three centimetres, which are left free at each end. When the tube has cooled, perfect contact between it and its contents has been obtained, and it is no longer possible to withdraw the latter. An accurately fitting sliding steel plug is inserted in either end of the iron sheath, and by means of these the marble is submitted to a pressure far above that which would be sufficient to crush it if it were not so enclosed.

The average pressure employed in moulding marble is 80,000 lb. to the square inch, and the machine by which this enormous power is obtained is so constructed that its force can be continuously maintained for weeks, or even months, if required. Under the pressure, which is applied gradually, and in some cases prolonged for several weeks, the tube slowly bulges, until a very marked enlargement of that portion which surrounds the marble takes place. It is then cut longitudinally, by means of a milling-machine, along two lines opposite to one another; but so firmly does the compressed marble hold the cut portions together that they have to be wrenched apart with a wedge.

This squeezed marble differs somewhat from the original. It is not quite so hard, though still firm and compact, especially when its deformation has been carried out very slowly; and it is of a dead white colour, the glistening cleavage faces of calcite being no longer visible. As to its strength, no accurate measurements have yet been made; but it will withstand a very sharp blow. Fragments of it, weighing ten grammes, have been allowed to fall a distance of eight feet on to a wooden platform, from which they rebounded without breaking.

The experiments thus far conducted prove beyond the shadow of doubt that marble, when subjected to long-continued and enormous pressure, may, without increase of temperature or the aid of any other agency, be vastly altered in size, shape, and appearance, and yet remain as solid as it was before the change in form took place. The fact that in one of the experiments the column of marble was reduced from forty to twenty-one millimetres in height will serve to convey some sort of idea of the enormous pressure employed in obtaining these remarkable results.

From the geologist's point of view, the interest in the proof of the plasticity of marble rests on the light that the experiments throw upon certain formations of the earth's crust. They clearly demonstrate that, under the conditions of pressure existing far beneath our feet, stones may be moulded into new shapes without being melted. Indeed, the deformed marble produced at M'Gill University presents, when examined under the microscope, many striking resemblances to rocks that have been squeezed, or folded, in the depths

far below the earth's surface. The experiments show that, however brittle a rock may seem to be, it is in reality a plastic substance, capable of being moulded into new shapes as surely, if not as readily, as 'clay in the hands of the potter.'

As previously stated, Professors Adams and Nicholson have hitherto attempted to reproduce one only of the conditions to which rocks are subjected in the deeper parts of the globe's crust —namely, great pressure from every direction. It is their intention, however, to reproduce more accurately, if possible, the deformation and cataclystic structures of the interior of the earth; and for this purpose they have invented an apparatus capable of generating great heat. With it they purpose to surround the iron tube, and, by means of steam and heat, obtain those conditions which prevail at considerable depths underground. Geologists have shown that stone formations become plastic in proportion to the distance at which they are found beneath the earth's surface, the different degrees of plasticity being due to the fact that those substances lying at the lower depths are subjected to far greater heat and moisture than those at higher levels. Professors Adams and Nicholson are confident that, with their new contrivance, they can reproduce the conditions which obtain far underground; and they await with confidence the results of their future experiments.

AN AMATEUR PROFESSIONAL.

A CRICKETING STORY.

I.

'LONGLEY,' said Smithers, coming up to me one fine Thursday evening in June, as I stood on the Easternshire County Cricket Ground idly watching some of our fellows practising at the nets, 'that wretched fellow Greene has put me in a hole.'

'How so, my worthy captain?' I inquired politely.

'He has had to go up to London to help the police track some swindling company-promoter who employed him as office-boy three years ago—before he deserted finance for cricket. I believe he was the unconscious vendor of several bubble concerns at that time, but he won't give me details. However, all I care about is that it's now impossible for him to keep his promise to go down to Delbury to play in that local match I told you of.'

'The semi-political affair?'

'Yes. It's a horrid nuisance. Colonel Minton is one of my oldest friends, and I'm awfully sorry to have to disappoint him. He has been relying on Greene's help, and in a letter I had from him this morning he says he believes the match will decide the election. They're simply mad about cricket in Willowshire, you know; and—so the Colonel thinks, at least—success at the wickets will mean ditto at the poll.'

'The opposition candidate's captaining the other team, isn't he?'

'Yes; that's what makes the position so acute.'

'Can't you send some other professional down?'

'Unfortunately, no. They've all got engagements for Saturday.'

'Then I'll tell you what, Smithers. If you like I'll take Greene's place. Of course a budding amateur won't be much of a substitute for a famous pro., but I suppose the majority of the players will be chawbacons, won't they?'

'Sure to be.'

'Very well, then; say the word and I'll go.'

'My dear fellow, you will place me under a great obligation.'

'Not a bit of it. I shall enjoy myself immensely, I expect. I always shine when the bowling's weak. When must I start?'

'To-morrow. The Colonel had arranged to put Greene up for the night, and of course he'll show similar hospitality to you. If you can manage to get away by the midday train, you'll arrive just about dinner-time. I'll wire Minton accordingly.'

'Right. You'd better mention that I'm only a duffer, though.'

Smithers laughed. 'I shan't do that,' he protested. 'I've some regard for truth, even by telegraph. Still, I hope you'll be in your best form, Longley, for, between ourselves, a good deal hangs on the Colonel's fate at the election. He has lost more money than he can afford in some foolish speculations lately, and he has been promised a decent appointment in the government if he gets returned.'

'You may rely upon me,' I rejoined; and shortly afterwards we parted.

II.

When, after a slow cross-country journey, I alighted from the train at Delbury on the following afternoon, a tall, well-set-up gentleman of about fifty years of age immediately approached me, and remarked pleasantly as he glanced at my cricket-bag:

'Mr Clifford Longley, if I'm not mistaken?'

'Yes,' I said; 'and you doubtless are Colonel Minton?'

'That is so,' he assented, and, holding out his hand, held mine for a moment in a friendly clasp.

'I had a wire from Mr Smithers saying you were coming by this train,' he went on. 'It is most kind of you—most kind—to throw yourself into the breach caused by the defection of your professional colleague.—This way,' he added breezily. 'I've got a dog-cart here; my place is some little distance off, and I have plenty to say to you as we drive along.'

We left the station together, and when I had taken a seat by my host's side he caught up the reins, and we started off at a quick trot.

'Mr Longley,' he observed after a little indifferent conversation, 'I've a further favour to ask of you—rather a strange one, I fear, but I trust when I've explained myself you won't feel affronted. You know, of course, that I'm one of the parliamentary candidates for this division of Willowshire?'

'Yes.'

'And that I am opposed by a Mr Rupert Gulliver, a well-known London financier?'

'So I understand.'

'Well, sir, this fellow Gulliver is pressing me hard. The majority for my party was only fifty-nine at the last election, and every vote is consequently of the utmost importance. This is a democratic constituency, and, to speak frankly, it is impossible to win the fight without playing to the gallery.'

'That is a frequent necessity in politics, is it not?' I asked, laughing.

'It is indeed. But you are wondering how all this concerns you, I dare say; so I'll come to the point. I hardly like to ask it of you, but I—in short, sir, do you mind keeping your precise identity a secret while you are down here?'

'I'm afraid I don't quite grasp your meaning. I'll oblige you in any way in my power, though.'

'Thank you; I'll make myself clear. The people of this locality have been informed that Alfred Greene, the distinguished young professional, is to play in to-morrow's match, and they are not aware of any change in this arrangement. I am very anxious they should be left in ignorance.'

'Oh, so you want me——?'

'To impersonate your colleague. Just so. Will you?'

'But don't you think, Colonel Minton, the deception may be discovered?'

'No fear of that. The match, recollect, is ostensibly just a friendly knock-up between the two small towns of Delbury and Blankney, and though all the players are enthusiasts, they have none of them, except, of course, Gulliver and myself, had opportunities of witnessing first-class cricket. So they have never seen either you or Greene.'

'But Gulliver?'

'I have found out that he cares nothing about cricket. In fact, he simply threw himself into this affair in the hope of making political capital by identifying himself with the Blankney team, which is much the stronger of the two. As a counter-move I stipulated that our side should be allowed the help of a professional, and I am told the Blankneyites have been much depressed since they heard that Greene was coming. I believe now we shall win. If we do, it will give me, I should say, at least twenty-five votes which would otherwise go to the enemy.'

'But,' I still objected, 'if you will look in a cricket calendar you will see that Alfred Greene is described as a "splendid all-round cricketer," Clifford Longley only as a "fair bat."'

'Never mind that,' said the Colonel heartily. 'I'm sure in a match like to-morrow's you'll be *facile princeps*.'

'Why shouldn't I play under my own name, then?'

'Why? Well, for one thing, because the idea that Greene is against them is in itself likely to demoralise our adversaries, but principally because, to tell you the truth, I want it to be noised abroad that I have accorded hospitality to a professional cricketer, entertained him at my own dinner-table, introduced him to my wife and daughter. As I have told you, this is a democratic constituency, and anything that goes to show an absence of class prejudice on my part means votes, and votes mean the election, and—and more,' he added hastily.

'Very well,' I said, recalling Smithers's words as to the unsatisfactory state of the Colonel's private affairs, 'I will do as you wish.'

'A thousand thanks,' he cried effusively. 'And now for home; there as elsewhere, please, you will maintain secrecy. My wife and daughter are not to be trusted—my daughter especially. Women, my dear sir, cannot keep their tongues from wagging; it is against nature.'

With which trite reflection he flicked the mare with his whip.

III.

'If you have brought dress-clothes,' said the Colonel when we had drawn up at the door of the modern double-fronted villa in which he resided, 'don't put them on, there's a good fellow. It wouldn't be in keeping, you know; and besides—acting on the advice of my agent—I don't wear them myself at present. I have to attend meetings in the evening—got one to-night—and to appear in evening-dress might give offence to those electors who don't possess such a luxury.—Marshall,' he added to the man-servant who had come out to us, 'take Mr—ah—Greene's bag.'

The servant obeyed, and, having dismounted from the dog-cart, we entered the house, the Colonel directing Marshall to escort me to my room, and promising to fetch me down to dinner himself in a quarter of an hour.

I was conducted to a prettily furnished bedroom on the first floor, where in due course my host sought me and led me downstairs to the dining-room, introducing me (as the other fellow) to

his wife, who was tall and dignified and looked anæmic, and his daughter Stella, who was so extremely pretty that I felt my heart beat faster as I returned her rather stiff bow.

There was little conversation during dinner, but when the ladies had left the room the Colonel handed me a cigar and remarked sadly:

'I think I mentioned I'd got a meeting on. I shall have to be off to it directly. I'm going to expound my views on the subject of the "Re-adjustment of Local Taxation."'

'Ah! May I inquire what your views are on the point, Colonel?'

'You may. I have none—none whatever.'

'What will you do, then?'

'I shall do as my opponent does, Mr Gr—— Longley; I shall utter platitudes. At election times they fizz like champagne; afterwards they subside like soda-water.'

'You deserve to be elected, Colonel.'

'I hope so, sir; I hope so,' he replied. Then, when we had smoked and chatted a few minutes longer, he rose from his chair and asked whether I would like a game at billiards.

'Very much; but you have no time to play now, have you?'

'Oh, I meant with my daughter. She's by no means a tyro, I can tell you. She has lived a great deal in the country, and consequently knows more about games than she does about most things. On politics, for example, she has very crude ideas—talks about consistency and so forth. Never mind that, though; come with me and I'll take you to the billiard-room. But you won't forget your *rôle* while I'm out, and give the conversation too academic a turn—eh?'

With this warning, the Colonel led the way to a well-equipped billiard-room, where he left me with a promise that his wife and daughter should join me ere long. I began knocking the balls about, but my thoughts were of Stella, the beautiful Stella!

She and her mother soon entered, and the elder lady, with a polite wish that we might enjoy a pleasant game, settled herself in a comfortable easy-chair at the far end of the room, and opened a volume she held in her hand. Stella and I, not without some constraint, commenced a hundred-up, but before we had scored twenty Mrs Minton had fallen asleep.

'Mother's off for an hour,' observed Stella, speaking with more animation than she had hitherto displayed. 'I—I'm so glad.'

So was I, though I refrained from saying so. 'Perhaps her book is uninteresting?' I hazarded.

'Uninteresting? Certainly not. It's *Diana of the Crossways*, by Meredith. He's a very great novelist, you know.'

'Really! And do his works often affect Mrs Minton in this way?'

'Well, yes; that is'——

'A drawback to an obscure style, is it not?'

She glanced up at me quickly, but did not pursue the subject. 'It's your break,' she said severely.

'You don't play badly,' she resumed when I had scored thirty-three and left her to negotiate a double balk. 'Are you—when the cricket season is not on, I mean—employed anywhere as a marker?'

'A marker!' I began rather indignantly; then recollecting myself, I said smilingly, 'Ah yes, sometimes at least. How did you guess?'

'I have heard that markers can generally play well. But now, Mr Greene, I have something very serious to say to you: I want you to do me a favour.'

'Confound it! more favours,' I thought ruefully. 'Very pleased, miss' ('miss' was decidedly good), I said aloud. 'Of what nature?'

'I want you to do your best to lose to-morrow's match.'

'To lose it!' I cried, astonished. 'This is extraordinary. Your father is most anxious it should be won. You don't differ from him in politics, surely?'

'No, no,' she said. 'I care nothing for politics, but a great deal for truth, and most of all'—she lowered her voice—'for my father's honour.'

She paused. 'You are scarcely explicit,' I submitted.

'I—I cannot explain fully,' she said slowly, 'but you may trust me.'

'And yet you won't trust me?'

'I would if—— But first will you do what I wish?'

'I don't suppose I can influence the result much one way or the other,' I temporised.

'Oh, but you can. Father will only be nominally captain of the Delbury team; he will consult you in everything.'

'You think it will be a case of *Ego et Rex meus* between us, do you?'

She started.

'The expression occurs in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.*,' I went on hastily. 'One winter, when I—I couldn't get a job as billiard-marker, I—I was taken on as a super in a theatre.' (And she had just told me she cared a great deal for truth!)

'Indeed,' she said. 'You have had a varied career. But, again, may I depend on you?'

'I wish I could see how I could serve you.'

'Are you a good batsman?'

'I'm generally considered so.'

'Then go in last. Do you bowl well?'

'Execrably.'

'Then get father to put you on right through the innings. Send along plenty of wides when you bowl; be sure to hit your wicket when you bat.'

'Too crude,' I protested.

'You decline to help me, then?' and, despite her attempted flippancy, there was a tremulous note in her voice.

'I—I must have time to think. Remember, I am at present pledged to help your father.'

'You will help him by doing as I suggest; he —poor father—doesn't know all.'

'Neither do I. Far from it.'

'Perhaps—only perhaps, mind—I will tell you more in the morning.'

'Thank you. You may be certain I'——

'Will put that red in the top pocket; of course you will,' she laughed; and looking up, I noticed that her mother was on the point of waking.

IV.

When, with the rest of the household, I had retired to bed, I lay for hours trying to hit upon some plan whereby I could oblige Stella without breaking faith with her father. But no practicable method suggested itself, and I could only take refuge in the weak hope that the weather might prove so unfavourable as to necessitate a postponement of the match. Then I fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamt I was at the wicket hitting wides bowled by the Colonel straight into the hands of Stella, who stood at long-off. I awoke to find the morning sun streaming in at the window, and the first object that met my gaze was a pink envelope which had been pushed underneath the bedroom door. I jumped out of bed, picked it up, and saw that it was addressed to 'Mr Greene.' Hurriedly tearing it open, I read these words:

'DEAR SIR,—Referring to our conversation of yesterday evening, I have fully considered the question of telling you more, but have come to the conclusion that to do so would not be right. I can, therefore, only appeal again to you to trust me, and assure you once more that in following the course I propose you will be acting in my father's best interests.—Yours sincerely,

'STELLA MINTON.'

'Stella Minton,' I murmured. 'What a pretty signature! What a provoking, stupid, altogether delightful girl! I wonder whether I shall see her at breakfast.'

I did, and she looked wistfully at me out of her large gray eyes, but spoke no more than civility demanded; while the Colonel, on the other hand, annoyed me with a long string of questions as to the best way to make certain of winning his confounded match.

When we had donned our flannels, however, and were about to start for the ground, Stella, taking advantage of her father's momentary absence, ran up to me in the hall, and murmuring softly, 'I shall follow you soon; I rely on you, remember,' was gone before I had time to reply.

Arrived at the field, the Colonel and I found a motley crowd awaiting us, and I was introduced as Mr Greene to at least a score of persons—Gulliver amongst others—who seemed more or less gratified at making my acquaintance. Remembering how nearly I had betrayed myself to Stella, however, I said as little as possible, and merely met compliments on my supposed prowess with a grim smile. Not that, from one point of view, I should have regretted discovery; it would at all events have relieved me from the necessity of giving further offence to Miss Minton, for whose good opinion I already felt that no sacrifice (less than the one she wished me to make) would have been too great. To act falsely towards her father, however, simply because she had hinted vaguely that his honour was involved would be altogether unjustifiable, more especially in view of my knowledge of his straitened finances. In reality—I welcomed the thought—it would be acting falsely towards her. Some day—yes, some day—she would learn this, and judge me accordingly.

The Colonel suddenly broke in upon my meditations by saying gloomily: 'A bad omen, Greene; I've lost the toss. They're going to bat.'

'Indeed,' I said indifferently.

'Will you start the bowling?'

'As you please.'

'Come on, then. I've arranged the field, subject, of course, to any suggestion you may make.'

The match began disastrously for the Blankneyites, for two wickets fell for three in my first over. One of them was Gulliver's, which, considering that he was a heavy, bloated-looking person, was scarcely surprising.

Then, however, as the evening newspapers would remark, there was a useful stand made by two players who, as I afterwards learnt, were, like myself, members of the legal profession. Not till the score was fifty-eight did either of them give a chance, but at that point, while, it not being my over, I stood at long-on, a catch came straight into my hands. That I failed to take it was due to my having just noticed among the onlookers the muslin-clad figure of Stella, and beside her, talking eagerly, Mr Rupert Gulliver. A pang of jealousy shot through me, and—I dropped the ball.

I made up for the error by getting a wicket soon afterwards, but, on the whole, the play was much better than I had anticipated, and the Blankney innings ultimately realised the respectable total of one hundred and sixty-three.

Then came the adjournment for luncheon, and, as was perhaps inevitable, I encountered Stella.

'You did well to miss that catch,' she observed, 'but your bowling was hardly what I had expected.'

'Oh! Surely it was bad enough to please you?'

'By no means. After what you said, I was surprised it was so good. Mr Gulliver was surprised too, but for another reason.'

'Why? What did he know about it?'

'He said he had always understood you were a left-handed bowler, whereas here you were using your right hand.'

Now here was a predicament! Gulliver was correct. How on earth was I to explain the discrepancy?

'The fact is,' I said in a low tone, 'I—I'm ambidextrous.'

'Ambidextrous?'

'Yes. I—I play left-handed in county matches, and right-handed in local matches. It keeps me in form, don't you know?'

'Really? Mr Gulliver said, too, that you weren't at all like the portrait he saw of you in the *Weekly Cricketer*.

'No,' I rejoined desperately. 'It was a—a bad likeness, and I've changed a good deal since it was taken. You'll remember the Latin saw, *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur*'——

'Changed—in three weeks?' she interrupted.

'One ages rapidly in these days,' I said weakly. Inwardly I wished Gulliver—elsewhere.

'Still,' she remarked, 'it has struck me once or twice that you are not acting openly with me, and I—I hate deception.'

It was fortunate that at this point some friends of hers came up and enabled me to beat a retreat.

I need not describe in detail the innings of the Delbury eleven. Suffice it to say that I went in first wicket down, and was still handling the willow when the last man came in. Our score was then eight behind our opponents', and with a view to retaining Stella's favour, I sincerely hoped the fate of the match would not depend on me. I was not to be gratified, however. The other fellow made a lucky snick for three; on the impulse of the moment I sent a loose ball to the boundary for four; and then we ran a bye. A ringing cheer came from our partisans among the crowd. We had tied with Blankney. It was the end of the over, and it would be for me to make the winning hit.

Stella was seated at the far end of the ground, and I trembled as I imagined that even at that distance I could detect the earnest pleading of her eyes as she looked towards me.

I placed myself in position; then with a gasp I withdrew. Coming across the ground was the man I was impersonating—Alfred Greene!

He was accompanied by a tall, sharp-featured individual, dressed in black. They walked briskly towards where I stood. I awaited them as if in a dream.

But, to my astonishment, they passed me by and walked up to Gulliver.

'This is the man,' said Greene, and the sharp-featured person immediately placed his hand on Gulliver's shoulder.

'Mr Rupert Gulliver,' he cried, 'I hold a warrant for your arrest for fraud in connection with the "South Silurian Gold Syndicate." I trust you will come with me quietly and avoid unnecessary trouble.'

So ended the match between Blankney and Delbury—in a tie; and so ended the parliamentary candidature of Colonel Minton's opponent. Gulliver, owing to a legal quibble, eventually managed to avoid punishment; but the gentleman who was put up at the last moment to fight against the Colonel in his stead was unable to avoid an extremely handsome defeat.

As for me, I became a frequent visitor to Delbury; and when, some months later, I had managed to persuade Stella that I had only been guilty of a venial offence in deceiving her, and that I was in every way worthy to become her husband, I asked her once more why it was she had made such a strange request regarding the match. This time she enlightened me.

'It was because,' she said, 'Mr Gulliver had told me that if that match were won by my father's side he would be forced to make public a forgotten but most dishonourable action on father's part.'

'And that was?'——

'When father was in parliament before, he once made a speech attacking his own party, and—and he voted with the other side.'

'Is that all?'

'All? Surely it is enough. What—this is what Mr Gulliver said—is thought of a soldier who, when the drums are beating and the colours flying, and the bugle sounding for the battle, suddenly deserts, and goes over to the enemy? And Mr Gulliver explained that a politician who is false—even temporarily—to his own party is every bit as bad. Was he not right?'

'No, Stella,' I said, drawing her to me. 'He was deceiving you—wilfully, wickedly deceiving you. The desertion of a soldier proves him to be a traitor; the desertion of a politician merely shows that he is a man animated by motives of truth, or—there is just the doubt in some cases—of expediency.'

'In father's case there can be no doubt?' she submitted, with some anxiety.

'Certainly not, darling,' I answered, as I stroked her fair hair caressingly.

THE BOOKWORM.

Men call him 'Bookworm'—and he lives alone
Within an old-time mansion, where the doors
Are seldom oped, and where the polished floors
Resound with footsteps rarely, save his own.
One room he loves: and there his years have grown
To winter 'mong his books; and there he pores
Upon those thoughtful friends, who yield their stores,
And ask no questions of a time long flown.
But when the night comes down, and lamps are trimmed
And curtains drawn, he leaves his books and pen,
And seeks the hearth, where o'er a tarnished-rimmed
And faded picture lonely hangs; and then
He sits and smokes; and, through the air blue-dimmed,
He sees and lives his summer o'er again.

J. J. Bell.

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CULROSS.

By JOHN GEDDIE, Author of *The Fringes of Fife*, &c.

CURLED away in the warmest nook of the shores of Fife is an ancient little royal burgh which figures on the maps as Culross, but to its neighbours and familiars is known as 'Coo'ross.' Steep-terraced brae-sides, well clad with wood, fence it in on the land side from the assaults of the angrier winds; and the very sea visits in gentler mood than elsewhere the curve of its beautiful bay. By these placid waters, at the foot of its sunny slope, Culross seems to have dozed off into a dream. A stranger wandering into the maze of its steep and winding 'causeys' might rub his eyes and wonder whether he had not stumbled into a Scottish 'Sleepy Hollow.' In the aspect of these narrow cobble-stoned streets and venerable dwellings there is less to remind him of the end of the nineteenth than of the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was then that Culross came to its full growth; since, it has stood still or has 'crined' away. Perhaps a Culrossian of those palmy times would wonder more at the change that has come over the place than does the modern that so little has changed in three centuries. The old industries on which the burgh throve have taken flight, either to newer centres or off the face of the earth. The streets once 'dirled like a Cooross girdle' to the cheery ring of hammer on anvil from its sixteen smithies; now the hand-made girdle itself is fast becoming, like Culross, a piece of antiquity.

More than a hundred sail of vessels, it is said, were wont once on a time to crowd the bay, waiting to load coal or salt. The town had fifty salt-pans at work. There were other thriving industries in the old burgh—shoemaking and gardening among them. Cooross brogues and Cooross leeks were almost as well known as Cooross girdles or the Cooross salt-pans and coal-heughs. But trade has well-nigh deserted town and bay for many a year. The germ of more than one great modern invention first sprang to notice in this quiet nook by the Forth. Culross has planted, in such matters as the mining of coal under the sea-bottom and the illuminating power of coal-gas, but others have reaped. It has fallen out of the track of progress, whether by water or land. The railway has passed it by, keeping the high ground well in rear; it is two or three miles' walk uphill to the nearest station. So, too, the lines of traffic by sea have left it on one side; only at certain tides can steamers venture into the shallow bay as far as Culross pier, which, after all, is little more than a 'rickle of stones' rising at low-water out of a dismal expanse of mud.

Then, the town is 'on the way to nowhere.' Those who go to Culross go 'aince errand' to see it; and having gone once, they are pretty sure to return again and again. There is an air of quaint seclusion about the place that is restful and soothing, especially to the eyes and thoughts of those who go thither out of the bustle of modern town-life. Here is a little eddy where some of the forms and fashions of an older society, which elsewhere have been swept out of sight and mind, have survived and make their slow and quiet round affected but little by the scour and rush of the 'struggle for existence' outside. Something of the spirit, as well as of the domestic architecture, of the days when James VI. was king, and did not disdain to taste of the burgh's hospitality and mark its growing trade, must surely linger around the Cross and beside the 'causeys' of Culross. The inhabitants, like the houses, have leisure and opportunity each to develop an individuality of his own, instead of having character and features rubbed down to a common likeness, as in the younger places which have outstripped the old town in the race.

Even in matters municipal or political Culross has until the other day suffered, or enjoyed, a curious isolation. Although by history and situation attached to the west of Fife, the parish and burgh, before the Boundary Commission took the anomaly in hand, formed a sporadic fragment of the great shire of Perth—'Perth upon Forth.' It

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was a mark upon the map that Culross dwelt alone; that it had an age and character of its own that distinguished it even from the long and ancient line of its neighbours, the quaint coast burghs of Fife. But not only have its frontiers been rectified; Culross is threatened with the invasion of that fellest of all the agents of change, the railway. There is a bill in the present session of parliament, and about to become law, which will draw a line from the main system of north and south traffic into the heart of Old Culross — a dividing-line, as is feared as well as hoped by many, in the fortunes and history of the place. The scar of a railway-cutting will disfigure those verdant slopes and hanging woods of Torry and High Valleyfield which dwellers by the bay of Culross have fondly likened to the surroundings of the 'Cornice Road' at Nice. A huge cantle will be cut from the gardens and orchards of gray old houses in Newmills and Low Valleyfield, once the young and successful rivals in trade of their neighbour Culross. Along the shore, within the burgh bounds, over the grassy flat of the 'Pow' which once served the town as a harbour, and over the spot where St Thenew must have landed from her crazy shallop to bear St Mungo and to begin Culross history, will rise a railway embankment, shutting out the view of the bay and of Preston Island and the opposite shore of Lothian from the road. The station will be planted where now stands the 'Fishing Cottage' and its pond—itself the site of the 'bucket-pat' of one of Culross's old salt-pans—raised by Sir Robert Preston, the friend of Pitt, as 'a memorial of the symposia at Dagenham Reach,' where he was wont to hold what has since become one of our political institutions known as the Ministerial Whitebait Dinner at Greenwich.

This is but the beginning of the removal of old landmarks which the coming of the railway to Culross must necessarily bring about, as the line is carried along the sea-front of the town, by the Sand Haven, the West Green, and the Playfield, and under the Hanging Gardens, round the rocky bluffs, and below the plumed and towered height of Dunimarle towards Kincardine. No doubt the intrusion is inevitable, and in many ways will be beneficial. It should bring back some traffic and movement to the deserted streets. Culross will become more known and frequented as a seaside resort and as a museum of the Scottish house architecture of other centuries; it is promised, also, an 'esplanade' and other modern amenities hitherto beyond its reach and thought. But lovers of the old town will not regard the coming revolution without a feeling of wistful regret; the New Culross will never be to them as the Culross they have known.

Let us hope that Time, even with the railway as the instrument of his changes, will continue to deal tenderly with the place. It is not every burgh even in Fife that can boast, and produce memorials, of fourteen centuries of history. Better vantage-ground for looking down this long vista of years than the shore-level, where the new line is to break its way through what were once the East and West Ports of the town, is the approach to Culross from the north. This North or Abbey Gate was probably where now stands the Chapel Barn, on the road from East Grange Station; and a little farther on, at the brow of the slope, where the steep causeway runs down and spreads among the houses of the burgh, one comes to the gray tower of the Abbey Church. Only fragments remain of the cloisters and other monastic buildings belonging to the Cistercian Abbey which Malcolm Earl of Fife founded here in 1217—enough, however, to show that they possessed beauty of architecture as well as beauty of situation. The nave of the church has almost wholly disappeared; but the massive central tower, crowned with modern pinnacles, still rears itself intact; and the choir continues to be the parish place of worship. From the summit of the tower, or from the platform surmounting the groined cloister vaults, in the manse garden, a glorious prospect of land and water is unfolded. The burgh huddled below is revealed only in glimpses of red roofs and quaint gable-ends. The Abbey Gardens, still well planted with orchard trees, diversified here and there with the thick plumage of the plane or the dark silhouette of a cedar, are spread over the spacious brae-side. Crowning the slope, and ranked alongside the church, the stately façade of the mansion or 'palace' of Culross Abbey appears through the trees. It is nearly three centuries since the first Lord Kinloss, Master of the Rolls to the 'wisest fool in Christendom,' reared this fragment of a great design; but it looks almost of yesterday beside its neighbour, the Norman tower.

Tower and braes hang half-protectingly, half-threateningly, over Culross. Throughout the greater part of its history the burgh has been thus dominated by the church. At the founding of the Abbey—even at the reputed date of the battle fought hard by between King Duncan's host and the Danes, we are but half-way to the beginning of Culross annals. Down near the shore the foundations of St Mungo's Chapel, built by that Archbishop Blackadder who was a pupil of Dunbar, and who raised the Blackadder Crypt at Glasgow, remain to remind us of the story of the miraculous birth by the water-side of Glasgow's patron saint. No doubt the famous Culdee seminary and religious house, where Servanus entertained Palladius and brought up young Kentigern, stood where afterwards rose the Abbey of the White Monks. They were great in gardening, illuminating, and other crafts, were the members of the later religious fraternity. But they had their hours of relaxation, in which the townsfolk had a share; and Mr Beveridge, the historian of Culross, believes that their miracle and mystery plays were performed on the green

platform by the sea, still called the 'Playfield.' The burgh, too, had its 'gaudé-days;' and until ill-fortune and stern Presbyterian discipline had curtailed its property and sobered its spirit, it spread the street with green branches on St Serf's Day, and rode in procession, led by the 'captain-ensign' and attendant musketeers, with the burgh colours displayed, and 'busked' the Cross and the Tron with flowers, at the annual riding of the marches on Whitsun-Monday.

Mighty, too, was the power of the pulpit in Culross in Reformation, in Covenanting, and in Secession times, and notably when James Fraser of Brea or Dr John Erskine, the leader of the 'Evangelical' party in the Kirk, were ministers of the parish, or when Row or Gillespie, from the neighbouring Carnock, or Boston of Ettrick, came to preach in the Abbey Church. But in its best days Culross had its resident landed magnates, its well-to-do merchants, and its thriving guilds and crafts, whose influence balanced or supplemented that of the clergy. It was in those days—the closing years of the sixteenth and the early part of the seventeenth century—that most of the fine old private dwellings which are the characteristic glory of Culross arose around the Cross or along the 'causeys' leading to the Great and the Little Sand Haven. One is pointed out as the house where Bishop Leighton the saintly was wont to lodge; another, beside the ancient building with the flanking tower known as the 'Study,' is surmised to have been the heritage of Duncan Primrose, the worthy Culross girdlesmith, who became ancestor of the Earls of Rosebery.

But none other of the venerable edifices in which Culross is so rife is so full of character, and at the same time so battered and woebegone in aspect, as the pair that bear the name of the 'Palace' or the 'Colonel's Close.' They stand back in their courtyard as if shunning observation, and are little better than empty shells. But the older of the two, which has on it the date 1597 and the initials of the first Sir George Bruce of Carnock, has still in one of its mouldering rooms the remains of painted wall decorations and half-obliterated black-letter devices that are probably nearly three centuries old. The builder was the founder of Culross's fortunes in industries that grew and decayed long before some of the great modern centres of trade had come into being. His wonderful 'Moat,' from which he worked the minerals lying under the bed of the Forth, brought hither, among other admirers, James VI. and the Water Poet. It was 'drowned;' and most of the stones of it left by the 'Borrowing Days storm' are said to have gone to build Leith Pier. Traces of it may still, however, be seen above low-water mark, near the pier of Culross, which, on the other side, is flanked by the 'Blue Boulder' where the town thrust out of sight those who died of the plague.

It is a curious fact that from this old Culross magnate are descended most of the present proprietors of land in the neighbourhood. After him and his son and namesake, who has a stately monument in the North Chapel of the Abbey Church, his house was occupied by the Earls of Kincardine until they flitted to the more imposing pile of Culross Abbey, where by-and-by they were succeeded by the Cochranes, Earls of Dundonald, one of whom was the famous naval hero, who spent there an adventurous and neglected boyhood. But much more closely associated with the 'Colonel's Close' was 'Black Colonel John Erskine,' father of the great authority on Scots law, and grandfather of the eloquent divine of the same name—a pious and conscientious but somewhat peppery-tempered old soldier and laird, who is said to have dearly loved a law-plea, and who on occasion has sallied forth, literally sword in hand, to do battle for his rights against the council and bailies. Ralph Erskine tutored his sons here when the last century was young; and his cousin, the 'White Colonel John,' of Carriden, was his neighbour in the adjoining house.

We might linger long about Culross, and tell much about its old customs and old crafts and craftsmen, especially of the rise and fall of its fame in the making of girdles; of the visitors who have bent their steps thither—among them, it is known, or said, James Duke of Monmouth, Daniel Defoe, William Cobbett, Scott in his failing years, and Turner the painter; of the Tolbooth, whose picturesque bell-tower overlooks the Tron, the open space of the Sand Haven, and the harbour, with all of good or ill omen to the town that has happened within or beside it; and of a score of other memorials of the burgh and its past life written on the fronts of its ancient houses. But enough has perhaps been said to show how much it is worth a visit before the hands of time and change are laid on it more heavily.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XLII.—OF A VOICE IN THE EVENTIDE.

OF the events of the time following there is little need to give an exact account. There was some law business to be gone through in connection with my cousin's death and the disposing of the estate, which went to an east-country laird, a Whig of the Whigs, and one like to make good and provident use of it. Then, when I would have returned to Tweeddale, I received a post from my good kinsman, Dr Gilbert Burnet, which led me first to Edinburgh, and then so far afield as London itself. For it was necessary, in the great confusion of affairs, that I should set myself right with the law, and gain reparation for my sometime forfeited lands.

So to the great city I went, posting by the main road from Edinburgh, and seeing a hundred things which were new and entertaining. I abode there most all the winter, during the months of December, January, February, and March, for there was much to do and see. My lodging was in my kinsman's house, near the village of Kensington, and there I met a great concourse of remarkable folk whose names I had heard of and have heard of since. Notably there were Master John Dryden, the excellent poet; my Lord Sandwich; and a very brisk, pleasing gentleman, one Mr Pepys of the Admiralty. Also, I had many chances of meeting with gentlemen of like degree with myself, and many entertaining diversions we had together.

But when the spring came, and there was no further need for tarrying in the south, with a light heart I set off homewards once more. I journeyed by Peterborough and York, then came northwards by the great Northumberland road, through the towns of Newcastle and Morpeth, and crossed the Cheviot Hills, which minded me much of my own glen. At Coldstream I crossed the Tweed, and rode over the Lammermoors to Edinburgh. I stayed there no longer than my duty demanded; and when all was settled, one bright spring day just after noon, set out for Barns.

The day, I remember, was one of surprising brightness, clear, sunshiny, and soft as midsummer. There are few ways I know better than that from the capital to my home—the bare, windy moorlands for one half, and the green glens and pleasant waters for the other.

At Leadburn was the inn where I had first met my servant Nicol, my trusty comrade through so many varying fates. I drank a glass of wine at the place for no other cause than a sentimental remembrance.

When I rode through the village of Broughton, and came to the turn of the hill at Dreva, the sun was already westering. The goodly valley, all golden with evening light, lay beneath me.

Down the long winding hill-path I rode, watching the shadows flit before me and thinking strange thoughts. Fronting me over the broad belt of woodland I saw the gray towers of Dawyck and the green avenues of grass running straight to the hill. By-and-by the road took me under the trees, among the cool shades, and the smell of pine and budding leaves. There was a great crooning of wood-doves and the sighing of the tenderest breezes. Shafts of light still crept among the trunks, but the soft darkness of spring was almost at hand. My heart was filled with a great exaltation. The shadow of the past seemed to slip from me like an old garment, and I hummed as I rode:

'There 's an eye that ever weeps, and a fair face will be fain.
When I ride through Annan Water with my bonny bands again.'

Suddenly I stopped, for somewhere I heard a faint melody, the voice of a girl singing. 'Twas that voice I should know among ten thousand, the only one in all the world for me, which had so often spoken brave, kind words.

I stood in shadow and watched her as she came in sight, sauntering up the little green glade with a basket of spring flowers swinging on her arm. Her hat of white satin hung loose over her hair; and as she walked lightly, now in the twilight, now in a sudden shaft of the western sun, she looked fairer than aught I had ever seen.

'Oh, you have come back at last,' she cried; 'and I have looked so long for you.'

'Indeed, dear lass, I have come back, and, by God's grace, to go no more away.'

Then, leading my horse, I walked by her side down the broad path to the house. We spoke nothing, our hearts being too busy with the delights of each other's presence. The crowning stone was added to my palace of joy, and in that moment it seemed as if earth could contain no more of happiness, and that all the sorrows of the past were well worth encountering for the ecstasy of the present.

At the lawn of Dawyck I stopped and took my love's fair hands in mine.

'Marjory,' I said, 'once, many years ago, you sang me a verse and made me a promise. I cannot tell how bravely you have fulfilled it. You have endured all my hardships, and borne me company where I bade you; and now all is done with, and we are returned to peace and our own place. Now it is my turn for troth-plighting, and I give you it with all my heart. God bless you, my own dear maid.' And I repeated softly a verse of her song:

'First shall the heavens want starry light,
The seas be robbèd of their waves;
The day want sun, the sun want bright,
The night want shade, and dead men graves;
The April flowers and leaf and tree,
Before I false my faith to thee.'

And I kissed her and bade farewell, with the echo still ringing in my ears, 'To thee, to thee.'

I rode through the great shadows of the wood, scarce needing to pick my path in a place my horse knew so well; for once again I was on Maisie. The stillness clung to me like a garment; and out of it, from high up on the hillside, came a bird's note, clear, tremulous, like a bell. Then the trees ceased, and I was out on the shorn, green banks, 'neath which the river gleamed and rustled. Then all of a sudden I had rounded the turn of the hill, and there before me in the dimness stood the old gray tower, which was mine, and had been my fathers' since first man tilled a field in the dale. I crossed the little bridge with a throbbing heart, and lo! there was the smell of lilac and gean-tree blossom as of old coming in great gusts from the lawn. Then all was confusion and much hurrying about, and a thousand kindly greetings. But in especial I remember Tam Todd, the placid, the imperturbable, who clung to my hand and sobbed like the veriest child, 'Oh laird, ye've been lang o' comin'!'

CHAPTER XLIII.—HOW NICOL PLENDERLEITH SOUGHT HIS FORTUNE ELSEWHERE.

NOW at last I am come to the end of my tale, and have little more to set down. It was on a very fresh, sweet May morning that Marjory and I were married in the old kirk of Lyne, which stands high on a knoll above the Lyne water, with green hills huddled around the door. There was a great concourse of people, for half the country-side dwelled on our land. Likewise, when all was done, there was the greatest feast spread in Barns that living man had ever seen. But in a little all was over, the last guest had clambered heavily on his horse and ridden away, and we were left alone.

The evening, I remember, was one riot of golden light and rich shadow. The sweet-scented air stole into the room with promise of the fragrant out-of-doors, and together we went out to the lawn, and thence down by the trees to the brink of Tweed, and along by the great pool and the water-meadows. And as we walked together, I and my dear lady, in that soft twilight in the green world, a peace, a delight, a settled hope grew upon us, and we went in silence, speaking no word the one to the other. By-and-by we passed through the garden where the early lilies stood in white battalions, and entered the dining-hall, where hang the portraits of my folk. Then, while the light faded, the old, stately dames looked down at us from their frames with an air, as it seemed to me, all but kindly, as if they laughed to see us playing in the old comedy which they had played themselves.

I turned to her with whom I had borne so many perils.

'Dear heart,' I said, 'you are the best and fairest of them all. These old men and women lived in other times, when life was easy and little like our perplexed and difficult years. Nevertheless, the virtue of old times is the same for us, and if a man take but the world as he find it, and set himself manfully to it with good heart and brave spirit, he will find the way grow straight under his feet. Heaven bless you, dear, for now we are comrades together on the road, to cheer each other when the feet grow weary.'

On the morning of the third day from the time I have written of I was surprised at seeing my servant Nicol coming into my study with a grave face, as if he had some weighty matter to tell. Since I had come home I purposed to keep him always with me, to accompany me in sport, and see to many things on the land which none could do better than he. Now he sought an audience with a half-timid, bashful look, and when I bade him be seated he flicked his boots uneasily with his hat, and looked askance.

'I ha'e come to bid ye fareweel, sir,' at length he said slowly.

I sprang up in genuine alarm.

'What nonsense is this?' I cried. 'You know fine, Nicol, that you cannot leave me. We have been too long together.'

'I maun gang,' he repeated sadly. 'I'm loath to dae't, but there's nae help for't.'

'But what?' I cried. 'Have I not been a good friend to you, and your comrade in many perils? Is there anything I can do more for you? Tell me and I will do it.'

'Na, na, Maister John. Ye've aye been the best o' maisters. I've a'thing I could wish. Dinna think I'm no' gratefu'.'

'Then, for Heaven's sake, tell me the reason, man. I never thought you would treat me like this, Nicol.'

'Oh sir, can ye no' see?' the honest fellow cried, with tears in his eyes. 'Ye've been sae long wi' me that I thocht ye kenned my natur'. Fechtin' and warstlin' and roamin' aboot the warld are the very breath o' life to me. I see ye here settled sae braw and canty, and the auld hoose o' Barns lookin' like itsel' again. And I thinks to mysel', "Nicol Plenderleith, lad, this is no' for you. This is no' the kind o' life that ye can lead. Ye've nae mair business here than a craw among throstles." And the thocht mak's me dowie, for I canna get by't. I whiles think o' mysel' bidin' quiet here and gettin' aulder and aulder, till the time passes when I'm still brisk and venturesome, and I'm left to naething but regrets. I maun be up and awa', laird—I carena whither. We're a' made different; and I was aye queer and daft, and no' like ither folk. Ye winna blame me?'

'But where would you go?' I asked.

'I kenna yet,' he said. 'But there's aye things for a man like me somewhere on the earth. I'm

thinkin' o' gaun back to the abroad, whaur there 's like to be a steer for some time to come. It 's the life I want, and no' guid-fortune or bad-fortune, so I carena what happens. I trust I may see ye again, Maister John, afore I dee.'

There was nothing for it but to agree, and agree I did, though with a heavy heart and many regrets. I gave him a horse to take him to Leith, and offered him a sum of money. This he would have none of, but took instead a pair of little, old pistols which had been my father's.

I never saw him again, though often I have desired it; but years after I heard of him, and that in the oddest way. I corresponded to some little extent with folk in the Low Countries, and in especial with one Master Ebenezer van Gliecken, a learned man and one of great humour in converse. It was at the time when there was much fighting between the French and the Dutch, and one morn I received a letter from this Master van Gliecken, written from some place whose name I have forgot, a rascally little Holland town in the south. He wrote of many things, of some points in Latin scholarship, of the vexatious and most unpolitic state of affairs in the land, and finally concluded with this, which I transcribe:

'Lastly, my dear Master John, I will tell you a tale which, as it concerns the glory of your countrymen, you may think worth hearing. As you know well, this poor town of ours has lately been the centre of a most bloody strife, for the French forces have assaulted it on all sides; and though, by God's grace, they have failed to take it, yet it has suffered many sore afflictions. In particular there was a fierce attack made upon the side which fronts the river both by boat and on foot. On the last day of the siege a sally was made from the gate of the corner tower, which nevertheless was unsuccessful, our men being all but enclosed and some of the enemy succeeding in entering the gate. One man in particular—a Scot, as I have heard, Nicolo Plenderleet by name—with two others who were both slain, made his way to the battlements. The gate was shut, and to all appearance his death was certain. But they knew not the temper of their enemy, for, springing on the summit of the wall, he dared all to attack him. When the defenders pressed on he laid about him so sturdily that three fell under his sword.

'Then, when he could no longer make resistance, and bullets were pattering around him like hail, and his cheek was bleeding with a deep wound, his spirit seemed to rise the higher. For, shouting out taunts to his opponents, he broke into a song, keeping time all the while with the thrusts of his sword. Then, bowing gallantly and saluting with his blade his ring of foes, he sheathed his weapon, flung it from him, and, joining his hands above his head, dived sheer and straight into the river, and, swimming easily, reached the French lines. At the sight those of his own side cheered, and even our men, whom he had so tricked, could scarce keep from joining.

'As regards this Scot, I may mention for your satisfaction that in person he was tall and thin, with black hair and the most bronzed skin I have ever seen on a man.' . . .

When I read this letter to Marjory her eyes were filled with tears, and for myself I could speak to no one on that day.

WHAT IS AN EDGE?

THE edge of a tool has two parts—firstly, the wedge-like slope of the blade in general; and, secondly, the slight bevel given as a finishing-touch to make the edge proper. The one is formed by grinding, the other by sharpening on the oilstone, or setting. A blade is, in fact, nothing but a long, thin wedge or inclined plane—with this condition: that, whereas the resisting substance is generally driven up an inclined plane, the substance in this case remains stationary and the plane is driven between its particles. It is given an edge for the same reason that a ship has a sharp bow—to make the friction as small as possible.

Take the case of a knife cutting a piece of wood. In order that a small amount of pressure may force it through, two things are necessary: the slope of the blade must be gradual and its edge must be sharp. It is evident that the latter is far the more important. The bulk of the blade is employed only in splitting the wood; it is the edge which first separates the particles, and most of the friction takes place here. The operation of cutting is simply the pushing aside the particles of the substance. These particles have a natural tendency to cling together. A blunt edge presents to them a larger face, and will have to push aside a greater number.

The cutting substance itself, also, must be strongly cohesive; otherwise its own particles would be turned aside, or, in the vulgar tongue, it would lose its edge. For this reason steel and diamond are preferable. Every one knows that in a surgical operation a sharp lancet causes the least pain; and it is evident from what we have said that it is because it produces less jarring in the resisting nerves while separating them.

Little scientific knowledge is required to be aware that the harder steel is the better it cuts. What makes steel hard is not so well known. The manufacture of tool-steel is, indeed, interesting. There is a common impression that iron and steel are the same metal, only one is

tempered. As a matter of fact they are different chemical substances. Tool-steel is a combination of iron and carbon, which can be welded and which will harden in cold water. The more carbon there is the harder the steel will be; and it might be thought that by increasing this element the steel might be made indefinitely hard. But there is a limit. To make a tool you must be able to weld the steel into shape. The more carbon is employed the less the temperature to which the whole can be raised without crumbling when welded. It has to be raised to a red-heat, and consequently only about 1·1 per cent. of carbon can be usually combined. With 2 per cent. the steel cannot be forged.

'Cementation' is the process by which steel is made. Wrought-iron bars are raised to a very high temperature, and in this condition the carbon is absorbed. This makes 'blister-steel.' From 'blister-steel,' again, 'shearing steel' is manufactured. This steel, while being of good quality, will stand no sudden shock such as chisels or axes are liable to. But most tools are of 'cast-steel,' to form which bits of blister-steel are melted in a crucible. This is then run into moulds and cast into ingots, after which the cooled metal is hammered and rolled.

There are many other kinds of steel; but it would be uninteresting to enumerate them all. There are as well many ingredients of steel besides iron and carbon, such as manganese, silicon, and nitrogen, which last is invariably present. But these are only combined in small quantities, and, except in a scientific journal, it would be unnecessary to enlarge upon this. Of course, they all influence the quality of the steel.

There are popular misconceptions on the subject of the tempering of steel. Steel is heated and then suddenly cooled in water or oil, in two quite different ways. In one case it is raised to a very high temperature; in the other, to a low one. The latter alone is 'tempering,' and alters the hardness of the steel. The same term is popularly applied to the other process, which simply makes the combination of iron and carbon a *chemical* combination, for it is not so till this is done.

On the subject of razor-edges we consulted a barber the other day, as he is the final authority on the subject. The cutler does not set a razor half as well, and charges more. 'People expect too much from their razors,' was the barber's verdict. 'They neglect the razor and only half-soap the beard, and then expect a shave which the best steel and the best barber in the world could not give.' All grit should in the first place be washed from the face (a very necessary precaution sometimes in a big city), the soaping should be carefully done, and invariably followed by rubbing with the hand, without which proper shaving is impossible. Last, but not least, the razor must be taken care of. It should naturally be kept dry, and warmed before use, if possible; and if stropped at all, let it be done little and carefully. We say this, as it is better in nine cases out of ten to leave the stropping alone altogether, and take it to the barber's to be done when necessary. Stropping is a fine art, only gained by constant practice. It is a matter of common experience that a razor left for a while unused becomes blunt. Rust caused by the moisture in the atmosphere is quite enough to account for this. Shearers, for instance, who have to use particularly sharp instruments, never set their shears till just before using. What is not so generally known is that a razor which will not cut will become sharper sometimes by being left aside for some time. The only explanation of this is that the electrical properties of the metal in the edge become changed.

A 'wire edge' is commonly put on a tool by amateurs. The steel turns and folds back on itself. It is owing to the edge being made too long and thin, or the metal being too soft. The only cure for a wire edge is to break off the bent portion, and grind and set again.

'A knife that cuts butter when it is hot' (and under no other circumstances) we sometimes meet with. We have been going into the reasons of things, and the reason of this is easily explained. Heat expands metal, and in proportion to the amount of metal which is heated. There is more metal in the breadth of a blade than in its thickness, and the former, therefore, is expanded immensely more than the latter. In other words, the wedge-like shape is lengthened, and the tool becomes 'sharp.'

Many people have seen the following trick: A broomstick—a common or garden broomstick, as explained by the conjurer—is placed with its ends resting on two razors, their edges upwards of course. The conjurer takes another stick, strikes the broomstick in the middle, and breaks it in two. The razors do not mark the ends of the broomstick, nor are they themselves injured. The result is due to the well-known principle of 'inertia,' and has little to do with the substance of the razors. Pretty much the same could be done if the stick were lightly supported on a paper foundation, or swung in the air. The broomstick has a tendency to avoid motion of any kind when struck, and breaks. It is necessary that it be hit directly in the middle, and very sharply.

We have spoken of the electricity of an edge. The part it plays in making a tool sharp is probably considerable; but the point is, we believe, little understood, and certainly less written about. The importance of the proper sharpening of tools in carpentering can naturally hardly be exaggerated; workers in some departments of the art have told us that it is the whole secret—the work itself is easily learned. A good rough test of the sharpness of a tool—in carving, for example—is to take a piece of common deal, and cut at right angles to the grain. If in proper condition the blade will cut the wood clean, not splinter it.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER IV.

IT was nearly half-an-hour before I saw the Count again.

'I am now just off to the Queen,' he said, with an air of great virtue.

'Haven't you been yet?' I cried. 'It is useless now.'

'Kata would not let me go,' he replied. 'When Slavoski left us he went straight to Kata, and congratulated her on her marriage, of which he said you had told him. What could the poor child do in the hands of a man like Slavoski? She has admitted the whole thing.'

'You should have gone to the Queen at once,' I said. 'It was your only chance.'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'Kata was a little inclined to be hysterical, and of course I could not leave her. Poor little Kata!'

'Heaven knows what will happen,' I murmured. There was in my mind a vivid recollection of the look I had seen in the Queen's face.

'What can't be helped must be endured,' he responded lightly.

'What madness to play with a woman like Elma!' I ejaculated.

'So I have always said,' remarked the Count casually, and nodding smilingly at the same moment to an acquaintance who passed; 'but they insisted on it. They said it was necessary for the success of our plans.' He pulled at his moustache.

'Who are "they"?'

He waved his hand vaguely. 'It is useless to give names,' he said. 'I allude to the friends with whom I have been acting.'

'Did they also insist on your marrying the Princess Kata?'

He smiled readily. 'Ah, no,' he said; 'that was an interpolation of my own.'

I was not a little exasperated at his composure. He seemed to be throwing away his chances in the most unconcerned manner.

'I don't believe you appreciate the gravity of the situation,' I said sharply.

'I think I do,' he answered. 'And in proof thereof I will go at once to the Queen.'

He made a movement as if to leave me, when, at that moment, the folding-doors were flung open, and the appearance of four footmen in the royal livery betokened the approach of the Queen. The dance in progress stopped at once. The Queen, on the arm of Slavoski, followed by her maids of honour, entered, and slowly made the circuit of the ballroom. Her face was deadly pale, and her eyes seemed alive with a strange light. As she passed us her gaze rested for a moment on Ulric, who bowed profoundly. No sign of recognition passed over her face. She swept on, bowing right and left to her guests, who fell into two lines as she passed.

She then took her place on the dais at the end of the room, and signalled that the dance should be resumed. But before it had reached its end another interruption occurred. From the outer room we heard, above the strains of the band, the clank of swords and the sound of marching feet. The dance stopped in confusion as a party of armed guards appeared in the doorway. The officer in command saluted the Queen, and then passed up the hall to where we were standing, followed by his men. The dancers fell aside with pale, frightened faces, and a feeling of general consternation reigned.

When they had come up to the Count the officer halted them.

'I am instructed to arrest you, sir, on a charge of high treason,' he said. 'I would ask you for your sword.'

'Oh, certainly,' replied the Count, with an air of absolute good-humour. He unbuckled his belt and handed the equipment to the officer.

'You will be good enough to fall in,' said the officer.

The Count placed himself between a file of men, and the officer gave the command to march. The party passed out of the hall.

There was a panic-stricken silence in the room, and I saw a lady faint. Then the Queen stood up.

'Let the dance be resumed,' she said calmly. 'I will take my part. Come, Prince, we will dance together.'

The ambassador bowed, and taking her hand, led her to the centre of the floor. The dance began again.

When at length it had dragged through its mirthless course the Queen retired to her apartments, and the assembled guests began to take a hasty departure.

As I wandered forlorn through the quickly emptying rooms I met my uncle.

'You had better go home,' he said abruptly.

'And you?'

'Oh, I must try and see the Queen, and if possible stem her folly.'

'Is there any news?'

'Nothing; except that a court-martial has been summoned for midnight in the Queen's apartments. The mischief of it is, that Ulric, being in the army, comes under military and not the civil law. The officers are nearly all under Russian influence.'

He hurried on, and I fell back with a palpitating heart. I determined to follow my uncle's advice, and I made my way to the staircase.

As I passed a little recess I heard the sounds

of a woman sobbing. I drew aside the curtain that half-concealed the opening, and beheld a woman's form huddled upon a couch. I touched her gently on the arm.

'Can I help you?' I asked.

She looked up, startled. It was the Princess Kata. I pray God I may never see again on the face of a woman the look of loathing with which she regarded me.

'You—you—spy!' she gasped.

'Don't,' I cried, with sudden anguish.

'What harm had he done you? Why did you betray him?'

'Before God, it was unintentional. If I had but known'——

She flung up her arms with a despairing gesture.

'They have taken him away, and I shall never see him again. Elma will kill him; I saw it in her eyes.'

I tried to console her, but in vain.

'Save him, save him. Save my husband,' she kept moaning.

'By God, I will do so, or die myself!' I cried aloud, for all the world like the hero of an Adelphi melodrama. I was half-distraught by her tears and my own wretchedness. The intensity of my cry made her look up.

'Promise me you will save him,' she said, her blue eyes staring up into mine; and I—the absurdity of it strikes me now—swore solemnly he should not die. What she expected me to do I do not know. What I intended to do I had not the slightest conception; but at her words I sprang out into the passage, and ran like one possessed through the empty ballroom into the Queen's antechamber. Here I found a crowd of anxious waiters. I saw my uncle in earnest conversation with a tall, pale man I knew to be the Austrian ambassador. Slavoski was also here, standing apart, a smile of conscious triumph on his thin lips. As I passed I happened to brush against him. He turned, and his eye met mine.

'Am I not a true prophet?' he said. 'I have heard no announcement of the Queen's betrothal.'

I turned away silently. My uncle beckoned me to his side.

'What are you doing here?' he asked.

'I want to see the Queen.'

'What for?'

'The Lord knows—I don't,' I replied. The absurdity of my own position forced itself on me, and I nearly choked with foolish laughter.

My uncle looked at me steadily.

'You are overstrung, my lad,' he said. 'You had better go home to bed.'

'What is happening?'

'The court-martial is sitting.' He nodded towards the Queen's rooms. 'We are waiting to hear the result.'

'What will it be?'

He shook his head gloomily. 'Slavoski seems to have no doubt.' And, indeed, there was on his face at that moment a look of diabolic triumph.

'Does it mean'—— I began; but something in my throat checked me.

'I fear it means Ulric's death. An outraged woman is not likely to be inclined to mercy, and it is only her direct intervention that can save him. But we must hope for the best.'

I grasped my uncle's arm. 'He must not die,' I whispered. 'I shall feel I am his murderer.'

'Nonsense,' rejoined my uncle sharply. 'Don't let your brain get full of these morbid fancies.'

At that moment the doors opened and the guard came out. In the centre was Ulric, as gay and confident as ever. He nodded to my uncle as he passed through the anteroom, and then his eye fell on my face. I dare say I was looking pale and troubled, for he stopped.

'You must not fret, my friend,' he said kindly. 'No one can blame you.'

'What is the sentence?' asked my uncle. Every one stood in painful silence awaiting the answer. The officer in charge had been summoned back to the Queen's room; otherwise I doubt if any reply would have been allowed.

'To-morrow at daybreak, or, to be accurate, to-day at daybreak, I am to—die.'

He spoke lightly, but faltered at the last word. An indescribable hush fell over all in the room and every face paled.

Then Ulric turned to me.

'Will you send Father Wiemann to me? You will find him at the Jesuit College in the Goethe Strasse. Do not delay.'

'I will go at once,' I cried, thankful that he should have given me this task to perform. It seemed to seal his forgiveness.

'I suppose I must make my peace with Heaven. That is, I understand, the correct thing to do.' He looked round the room half-whimsically. 'There is not much time.'

The captain emerged from the Queen's apartment, and the word was given to march. Ulric waved his hand as he passed out of the room.

I made a movement to follow, but my uncle stopped me.

'Fetch the priest at once,' he said. 'Waste no time. Remember he dies in a few hours.'

'I know, I know,' I answered, choking with emotion. 'What awful cruelty!'

'You had better have an order for the priest's admittance.' My uncle crossed to a page who was standing by the door, and whispered to him. The latter disappeared into the Queen's room, and in a few minutes returned with the necessary order. It was brief enough—'Admit priest to Count Ulric of Lapsburg,' and then the Queen's seal. 'He is to be confined in one of the cells of the Rathhaus,' said my uncle, handing me the order.

I took it, and hastened from the anteroom, through the deserted ballroom, where the electric lights were glowing as brilliantly as ever, down

the marble staircase, where little groups of pale-faced attendants were talking together in uneasy whispers, through the massive doors, out into the cool gardens. I was without hat or overcoat, but, heedless of all, I hastened into the town. The streets were full of people, who were gaily chattering together, waiting no doubt for the termination of the royal ball. So far as I could judge in my hurried rush, the news of the dire events of the last few hours had not transpired. Many curious looks were cast on me as I hastened on, only stopping once to inquire the way to the Goethe Strasse. At last I found it, and easily enough gained the college to which I had been directed.

I hammered at the door, but for some time there was no response. At length I heard a window open, and a nightcapped head protruded from an upper story.

'What do you want? Who are you?' asked a voice.

'I must speak with Father Wiemann,' I shouted in reply.

'I am he.'

'Let me in. I must see you privately,' I shouted again.

'There is no necessity to speak so loud,' said the father in mild reproof, for indeed, whether from nervousness or from what cause I know not, I had been bellowing in a stentorian voice calculated to wake the dead.

'Hasten,' I said in a lower key. 'I come from the Count Ulric.'

The reverend father uttered an exclamation of surprise, and slammed to the window. In a few minutes I was admitted by the father, who stood shivering in the draughty passage, a lighted candle in his hand.

'Come upstairs,' he said, and led the way, I following him. He was an old man, and I noticed he walked feebly.

I blurted out my story. I sometimes wonder he was able to understand my incoherent words; but when he did, he hid his withered face in his hands and wept.

'Oh Ulric, my boy Ulric, that you should have come to this!'

I touched him on the shoulder. 'There is need of haste,' I observed.

'Yes, yes.' He looked wildly round, and seizing the first article of attire that came to hand, began hastily to dress himself.

I watched him for a few minutes. 'Surely your legs are not meant to go through that?' I remarked in wonder, after I had seen him vainly endeavouring to draw over his feet an article of dress obviously intended for another portion of his body.

'Oh no,' he agreed, after a scrutiny. 'I fear I am a little confused. My poor Ulric!' He broke down again; it was a pitiful sight to see the poor old man weeping.

'You knew him well?' I asked.

He looked up with streaming eyes. 'I brought him up. He was almost a son to me. But I must go to him! He must not die without me.'

I hesitated a moment, and then I crossed to him, and, with my hand on his shoulder, pressed him back to his seat.

'Listen,' I said. 'Why should he die at all?'

His eyes sought mine, but there was no intelligence in his look.

'What do you mean?' he asked.

'As a priest, they will let you see him alone.'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Why not change clothes with him, and so let him escape in your place?'

I saw the light of hope shining in his eyes. He thought a little. 'It is impossible,' he said at length, sadly. 'How could I pass for him?' He took off his nightcap, and the white hair tumbled about his brow. 'It is out of the question.'

I nodded quickly. 'That is obvious,' I said. 'But why should I not take your place? Disguise me in your clothes. The order for admission does not mention any name. Is it not worth trying?'

He shook his head. 'Ulric is too noble to allow another's life to be risked in his stead. What might not happen to you?'

'Nothing,' I replied impatiently. 'I am the nephew of the English ambassador. What could they do to me?'

He sat there mournfully shaking his head. 'If you are not successful, Ulric will die without the last offices of the Church.'

'We must risk something,' I replied. 'Come, help me. It is at least worth trying.'

It was not much aid he was able to give me, but at length I was dressed in clerical clothing. I glanced at myself in a glass, and drew back with a feeling of despair. My somewhat boyish face and close-cropped head looked ridiculous emerging from the sombre raiment of the priest.

'The largest hat you have,' I exclaimed. He gave me a soft felt, into which I buried my head. I wrapped a large scarf round my neck, covering up the lower part of my face.

'The rest I must leave to Providence,' I said.

'I will pray for you,' said Father Wiemann, standing regarding me with clasped hands.

'No, no,' I replied hastily. 'You have something else to do. See that a horse awaits the Count at the bridge on the Lapsburg road. He must get across the frontier to-night. Dress quickly; there is not a moment to be lost.'

With a manifest effort the poor old man pulled himself together, and began to dress himself with some degree of intelligence.

'Good-bye,' I said. 'You must hasten. All depends on you.'

'I will not fail,' he answered. 'May God prosper you.'

I went down the stairs again, and out into the street.

SOME EPIGRAMS.

A PROVERB, according to Archbishop Whateley, is 'the wisdom of many and the wit of one;' and maxims have been described as 'the distilled drops of the experience of nations;' but what phrase can most effectively give a definition of an epigram? According to Dr Johnson, an epigram is 'a short poem treating only of one thing, and ending with some lively, ingenious, and natural thought;' but this is surely too cumbrous a definition. The distinguishing characteristic of an epigram is its terse conciseness. An epigram should be at once graphic and laconic, pointed and poignant: a brilliant brevity. It is a quip and a quiddity, a pun, a parody, and a paradox, a repartee, *jeu d'esprit*, and a *bon mot*. It may be gay, like the flashes of Sydney Smith; cynical, like the acidities of Talleyrand; arrowy, like the drolleries of Charles Lamb; bitter, like the acerbities of Douglas Jerrold; broad, like the humours of Butler and the two Colmans; alliterative and antithetical, like the brilliancies of Lord Beaconsfield. But an epigram must be centrifugal and concentrated: a kind of Liebig's Extract of Literature. There must be no flourishes, no embroidery; 'no flowers, by request.'

Let it be the congenial concernment of the present annotator to recall a few famous epigrams of the past, both in verse and prose. Epigrams were wont to coruscate like the facets of diamonds at the dinner-parties given by Rogers the banker, and by the beautiful Marguerite Countess of Blessington; while in French *salons* Talleyrand, Piron, Fontenelle, Rivarol, and Chamfort supplied the colloquial scintillations of wit that were as dazzling and sharp as the scimitar of the Turk who could pass his weapon through a man's neck without hurting him. The victim used to grin with delighted surprise. 'Sneeze,' said the *sabreur Turque*. The executed one did so, and his head rolled on the floor.

But the old art of talking is extinct. Our dialogue has degenerated into a series of meteorological observations. It is not of the easy give-and-take order described by Dean Swift, who explains the whole art and mystery of conversation:

> Conversation is but carving;
> Give no more to every guest
> Than he's able to digest;
> Give him always of the prime,
> And but little at a time:
> Carve to all, but just enough;
> Let them neither starve nor stuff;
> And, that you may have your due,
> Let your neighbours carve for you.'

In *Epigrams, most Elegant and Wittie*, by Sir John Haryngton, published in 1633, occurs one of the neatest of that order:

> Treason doth never prosper; what's the reason?
> For if it prosper, none dare call it treason.

Lord Byron thought Samuel Rogers's epigram on Ward (Lord Dudley) inimitable:

> Ward has no heart, they say; but I deny it.
> He *has* a heart, and gets his speeches by it.

Another Byron, Mr H. J. Byron of *Our Boys* fame, is responsible for the following military epigram:

> Smart soldiers like to be well tightened in:
> Loose habits would destroy all discipline.

Fontaine, the architect, who built the triumphal arch in the Carrousel in Paris, placed upon it an empty car drawn by the famous bronze horses of Venice. Talleyrand asked him, '*Qui avez vous l'intention de mettre dans le char?*' The answer was, '*L'Empereur Napoléon, comme de raison.*' Upon which Talleyrand said, '*Le char l'attend.*'

Thomas Hood came out with this loyal effusion:

> Three traitors—Oxford, Francis, Bean—
> Have missed their wicked aim;
> And may all shots against the Queen
> In future do the same.
> For why—I mean no turn of wit,
> But seriously insist,
> That, if her Majesty were hit,
> No one would be so missed.

Laman Blanchard showed a pretty wit in the ensuing impromptu on Maclise's portrait of Macready as 'Macbeth:'

> Maclise's 'Macready's Macbeth'
> As a picture defies all attacks;
> Yet, uniting these three in a breath,
> It is only a view of *Al-macks*.

Poor Fritz in the *Grande Duchesse* acted an epigram when he took to the trade of teaching in order to learn something. Sydney Smith once said that clergymen might be divided into three classes: Nimrods, Ramrods, and Fishing-rods. It was not a bad epigram; but it has been beaten by an American, who, with special reference to the Erie Line, said that railways are built upon three gauges: Broad Gauge, Narrow Gauge, and Mortgage. The antithesis to an epigram is an euphemism which hides a disagreeable fact in a cloud of words. Here is one, also of American parentage: A man was asked the cause of his father's death, and replied that 'while addressing a large outdoor assemblage of people, who were listening to his remarks with the greatest interest, a portion of the platform upon which he was standing gave way beneath him, whereby he was precipitated several feet with such violence as so break his neck.' The man's father was hanged.

Here is a somewhat ill-natured epigram:

> If a twin,
> A Greek will at the breast begin
> To rob his sister of her share
> Of mother's milk with smiling air,
> And less because he finds it sweet
> Than from the deep instinct to cheat.

Let us return to the witticisms of Sydney

Smith. 'The whole story of my life,' he says, 'has been passed like a razor—in hot water or a scrape.' 'There is the same difference between his tongue and mine as between the minute and the hour hand; one goes twelve times as fast, and the other signifies twelve times as much.' 'My house is just now full of cousins. They are all first cousins, and I wish them—once removed.' 'The Church's ordinances of feasts and fasts are tolerably well kept up. The rich keep the feasts and the poor the fasts.' 'If you masthead a sailor for not doing his duty, why should you not weathercock a parishioner for not paying his tithes?' 'Gout is the only enemy which I don't wish to have at my feet.'

The following epigrams were exchanged between James Smith and Sir George Stewart Rose on the subject of Craven Street, Strand, where the former was then residing:

James Smith.

At the top of my street the attorneys abound,
And down at the bottom the barges are found.
Fly, Honesty! fly to some safer retreat,
For there's craft in the river and craft in the street.

Sir George Rose.

Why should Honesty fly to some safer retreat,
From attorneys and barges? odd rot 'em!
For the lawyers are *just* at the top of the street,
And the barges are *just* at the bottom.

Lord Erskine fathers the following:

The French have taste in all they do,
Which we are quite without;
For Nature, that to them gave *gout*,
To us gave only gout.

Mr J. Outram, on hearing a lady praise a certain reverend doctor's eyes, exclaimed:

I cannot praise the doctor's eyes;
I never saw his glance divine.
He always shuts them when he prays,
And when he preaches he shuts mine.

Francis Fuller, *apud* Nicholls, has an ambidextrous couplet on a left-handed writing-master:

Though Nature thee of thy right hand bereft,
Right well thou writest with the hand that's left.

Mr Austin Dobson is always dainty:

You snared me, Rose, with ribbons,
Your rose-mouth made me thrall.
Brief, briefer far than Gibbon's
Was my *Decline and Fall*.

Mr Shirley Brooks puts the following in the mouth of Jenner on hearing in Elysium that complaints had been made of his having a statue in Trafalgar Square:

England, ingratitude still blots
The escutcheon of the brave and free:
I saved you many million spots,
And now you grudge one spot to me.

The following on the marriage of a Mr Lot and a Miss Salter is by Mr J. C. Young:

Because on her way she thought proper to halt.
Lot's wife, in the Scriptures, was turned into salt;
But though in her course she never did falter,
This young Lot's wife, strange to say, was Salter.

At some country house, where a dramatic piece founded on *Ivanhoe* was to be performed, Lord Alvanley was requested to play the part of Isaac of York. He declined, saying, 'I never could *do* a Jew in my life.' Theodore Hook was dining at Powell's one day, says H. F. Chorley in his *Life and Letters*, and the talk fell upon *feu* Jack Reeve. 'Yes,' said Hook, when they were speaking of his funeral, 'I met him in his private box going to the pit.' Once more Thomas Hood—this time on the Art Unions:

That picture-raffles will conduce to nourish
Design, or cause good colouring to flourish,
Admits of logic-chopping and wise-sawing:
But surely lotteries encourage drawing?

One from the Greek:

A viper bit a Cappadocian's hide;
But 'twas the viper, not the man, that died.

Oliver Goldsmith has the same idea in his *Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog:*

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied;
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

James Smith, joint-author of the *Rejected Addresses*, contributes to our collection:

As late the Trades Unions, by way of a show,
Over Westminster Bridge strutted five in a row,
'I feel for the bridge,' whispered Dick, with a shiver;
'Thus tried by the mob it may sink in the river.'
Quoth Tom (a Crown lawyer), 'Abandon your fears;
As a bridge it can only be tried by its piers.'

Concerning Socialism, Sir William Leng paraphrases Ebenezer Elliott:

What is a Communist? One who has yearnings
For equal division of unequal earnings;
Idler, or bungler, or both, he is willing
To fork out his penny and—pocket your *shilling*.

Bushe, the Irish Chief-Baron, made this impromptu verse upon two agitators who had refused to fight duels, one on account of his affection for his wife, and the other because of his love for his daughter:

Two heroes of Erin, abhorrent of slaughter,
Improved on the Hebrew command—
One honoured his wife, and the other his daughter,
That his days might be long in the land.

James Smith again obliges us:

'To this night's masquerade,' quoth Dick,
'By pleasure I am beckoned;
And think 'twould be a pleasant trick
To go as Charles the Second.'

Tom felt for repartee athirst,
And thus to Richard said:
'You'd better go as Charles the First,
For that requires no head.'

The same author responds to our *encore* with these lines:

To Flavia's shrine two suitors run
And woo the fair at once;
A needy fortune-hunter one,
And one a wealthy dunce.

How, thus twin-courted, she 'll behave
Depends upon this rule—
If she 's a fool she 'll wed the knave,
And if a knave the fool.

'The prospect 's always fine in the prospectus!' is the epigrammatic reflection of J. R. Planché.

Mortimer Collins is droll at the expense of Charles Darwin in the following:

There was an Ape in the days that were earlier;
Centuries passed, and his hair became curlier:
Centuries more gave a thumb to his wrist—
Then he was a Man, and a Positivist.

A beautiful woman, who wore on her bosom a miniature of her husband, a very ugly man, asked Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, what he thought of it. 'I think,' said he, 'that it is like the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill.' Lord Brougham defined a lawyer as 'a legal gentleman who rescues your estate from your enemies and keeps it himself.' Hicks and Thackeray, walking together, stopped opposite a doorway over which was inscribed in gold letters these words: 'Mutual Loan Office.' They both seemed equally puzzled. 'What on earth can that mean?' asked Hicks. 'I don't know,' answered Thackeray, 'unless it means that two men, who have nothing, agree to lend it to another.' One would almost as soon expect to see Thomas Carlyle at Cremorne Gardens as Dr Johnson among the Epigrammists, yet the ponderous lexicographer penned this pretty trifle:

If a man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he would rather
Have a turnip than a father.

Stay! Dr Johnson was, after all, not wanting in the *vis comica*. When he had finished the work which laid the foundation of most English dictionaries, he asked the man who had carried the last sheet to Millar, the publisher, 'What did he say?' 'Sir,' said the messenger, 'he said, "Thank God, I have done with him!"' And Ursa Major, in his grandest style, replied, 'I am glad he thanks God for anything.' The mention of dictionaries recalls a reminiscence of one of H. J. Byron's plays. The point lies between a play upon words and an expression of opinion. Two rival names are mentioned in it, both so good that the one complements the other, like two harmonious colours on a painter's palette. The heroine of the comedy is a bright American girl, full of fun and patriotism. Praising her own country at the expense of the hero (her lover, by the way), she tells him that America has had even to undertake the task of teaching England how to spell; *apropos* of which she triumphantly demands: 'What do you say to Webster?' 'Walker!' replies the Englishman.

The wedded state is a favourite subject with the epigram-makers. From a very old ballad we take this:

There was a criminal in a cart
A-going to be hanged;
Respite to him was granted,
And cart and crowd did stand,
To know if he would marry a wife
Or rather choose to die;
'T' other 's the worst—drive on the cart!'
The criminal did reply.

More modern is this verse:

I would advise a man to pause
Before he takes a wife;
In fact, I see no earthly cause
He should not pause for life.

Who, by the way, is the author who describes a second marriage as being 'the triumph of hope over experience'?

Samuel Lover's matrimonial epigram is very apposite:

Though matches are all made in heaven, they say,
Yet Hymen (who mischief oft hatches)
Sometimes deals with the house t' other side of the way,
And *there* they make Lucifer matches.

'Marriage,' says Selden, 'is a desperate thing. The frogs in *Æsop* were extremely wise; they had a great mind to some water, but they would not leap into the well, because they could not get out again.' 'They say a parson invented gunpowder,' observes Douglas Jerrold; 'but one cannot believe it till one is married.' The same lively wit tells us: 'My notion of a wife at forty is that a man should be able to change her, like a bank-note, for two twenties.' Somebody told George Colman that a certain actor, by the death of his wife, 'had suffered a loss he would not soon be able to *make up*.' Colman dryly said: 'To tell you the truth, I don't believe that he has quarrelled with his loss yet.' Samuel Foote was much bored by a pompous physician at Bath, who told him that he thought of publishing his own poems, but had so many irons in the fire that he really didn't know what to do. 'Take my advice, doctor,' said Foote, 'and put your poems where your irons are.'

Garrick's happy lines on Sir John Hill in his double faculty of physician and playwright are well known:

For physic and farces his equal there scarce is;
His farce is a physic, his physic a farce is.

Some other wit thus supplemented the couplet:

The worst that we wish thee, for all thy vile crimes,
Is to take thine own physic and read thine own rhymes.

Nor did it end here. Malice, like echo, caught up the perishing strain, and the last epigram was the best of the three:

No! let the order be reversed,
Or he 'll not rue his crimes;
For if he takes his physic first,
He 'll never read his rhymes.

Very pungent indeed was the remark of the old Scotchwoman who, when advised by her minister to take snuff with her to keep her awake

in the kirk while he was preaching, replied: 'Why dinna ye put the snuff in the sermon, mon?' 'Some men preach,' said Sydney Smith, 'as if they thought sin was to be taken out of a man as Eve was taken out of Adam—by casting him into a profound slumber.' 'I wonder, Mr Spurgeon,' said an old, respected minister to the orator of the Tabernacle, 'that you allow yourself such freedom, and discredit your calling by making so many jokes in the pulpit.' 'Ah!' replied Mr Spurgeon, 'you would not wonder at all if you knew how many more I kept to myself.' The Rev. Rowland Hill said once to some people who had entered his chapel to avoid the rain: 'Many people are to be blamed for making religion a cloak; but I do not think those much better who make it an umbrella.'

A cunning choice of texts has always been a favourite device with quaint preachers. Of two rival candidates for a lectureship on trial, the one preached in the morning on '*Adam, where art thou?*' His rival, in the evening, capped the text with '*Lo! here am I,*' and his ready wit is said to have won the scholarship. The late Bishop of Worcester hated church congresses and all similar assemblies, and never allowed one to be held in his diocese. One day one of his chaplains told his lordship that he had been invited to preach at a congress, and was busy getting ready his sermon. 'What text have you chosen?' asked the bishop. 'In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom,' was the reply. 'Oh, indeed,' said my lord. 'Allow me to suggest another: "The talk of the lips tendeth to penury."'

ACONCAGUA.

ACONCAGUA is probably the highest mountain in the New World. Moreover, it stands within a hundred miles of the Pacific, from which it is often visible to those who pass in ships, and within eighty miles of the capital of Chili, the most advanced and prosperous of the South American states. There is, therefore, nothing to surprise us in the fact that two important scientific expeditions have in recent years attacked it, one German and one English. It is proposed to give a short account of each.

Dr Paul Güssfeldt's name is known to all readers of Alpine literature, and he was already familiar with the chief summits of the Alps when in the autumn of 1882 he landed at Valparaiso, accompanied by a well-known Swiss guide. Unfortunately the guide fell ill on the voyage, and soon after their arrival in Chili insisted on returning to his native land. Dr Güssfeldt recognised at once that the loss of his European companion would probably make it impossible for him to accomplish the high ascents that he had planned. Yet he determined to make the best of a bad business, compelled as he was to depend altogether on the natives for assistance, and to be his own guide in a district of which no reliable map existed.

In December and January he made expeditions in the mountains to the south-east of Santiago, crossing the Cordilleras into Argentine territory by passes of 13,000 and 11,000 feet, and returning by a route farther north by passes of 12,000 feet besides ascending the volcano of Maipo, 17,717 feet. It was in February 1883 that he set out on his chief enterprise, the ascent of Aconcagua. Crossing the western Cordillera by a pass lying to the north-north-west of the mountain and about thirty miles distant from it, he made his way up the Valle Hermoso and established his camp at a height of 11,750 feet. Leaving this base at 4 P.M. on February 20, he was able to ride for three hours farther up the valley. Then, with two natives as companions, favoured by a brilliant moon, he first climbed a long *couloir*, or gully, near the foot of which lay an unknown skeleton with a few tattered rags clinging round it. The *couloir* presented no difficulty, and thus he gained the summit of the ridge at the head of the valley up which he had been travelling. A glacier two miles wide now lay before him, and beyond it the slopes of the great mountain, bare of snow for the most part, and rising at an angle of from 30° to 40° to a height of more than 6000 feet above the ground on which he was standing. The crossing of the glacier offered no serious difficulty, free as it was from snow and 'resembling a ploughed field;' indeed, during the whole expedition the travellers never had occasion to rope themselves together. At 1.50 A.M. they set foot on the mountain itself, and thenceforward the ascent was characterised by its extreme monotony. Moving slowly and with frequent halts, they followed a sort of broad ridge. Of climbing strictly speaking there was none. But the farther they advanced the greater became the difficulty of breathing, and all suffered from pains in the legs. The cold was severe—14° Fahr.—but not excessive, and the wind began to rise. At 10 A.M. one of his companions gave up, at a height of over 20,000 feet; but Dr Güssfeldt went on with the other, in ever-increasing distress, until at 12.30 they had reached a height of 21,523 feet, by boiling-point observation. Clouds now settled on the summit that seemed so near, and sleet began to fall, and very soon they were assailed by a 'tourmente,' or whirlwind of snow, the most dreaded of all dangers on high mountains. To persist would have been madness; so they descended in haste,

picking up on the way the comrade who had stayed behind, and regained their camp in the valley after an absence of thirty-one hours.

On March 3 the attempt was repeated. With the same companions and following the same route, Dr Güssfeldt crossed the great glacier above mentioned, and bivouacked among the rocks, without light or fire, at a height of 17,390 feet, all three packed into a sleeping-bag that was made to hold two. Next morning they resumed their slow and painful march; but about noon bad weather once more compelled them to retreat before they had attained so great a height as on February 21. That they should have accomplished what they did is indeed remarkable, seeing that the two Chileños were unused to mountaineering, and that Dr Güssfeldt was suffering during his second attempt from a raging toothache, which robbed him of rest at night and made it impossible for him to take any solid food. And there can be little doubt that he would have succeeded in ascending the great mountain if he had had the moral and material support of even one European companion, such as the Swiss guide of whose services he had been so unfortunately deprived. For the scientific results of his journey, his geological and botanical collections and the careful series of observations on which his maps are based, the reader must consult his book, *Reise in den Andes von Chile und Argentinien* (Berlin, 1888). Twenty admirable photographs at the end of the book give a vivid picture of the dreary scenery of this portion of the Andes. Thus, while the aspect of the mountain as seen from the east is exceedingly grand, reminding one of the southern face of Monte Rosa, from the west it is disappointing; and the moderate angle at which its stony slopes rise, together with the remarkable absence of snow on its upper parts, make it difficult for the observer to believe that he has actually before him the loftiest summit of the Andes. This is well brought out in a paper by Mr W. E. Hall that appeared in the *Alpine Journal* in 1869. 'Looking out of my window,' he writes, 'the morning after my arrival at Valparaiso, my eye rested on a considerable peak rising conspicuously in the direction of the Andes. It had large patches of snow upon it' (this was in October, the beginning of summer), 'but, on the whole, it was rather a rock than a snow mountain; and as its contour was not precipitous, this, together with the extraordinary degree to which its details were distinctly visible, made me suppose it was some outlying buttress of the chain. It was only in the evening, when I chanced to be on board the English surveying ship *Nassau*, that I learned that I had been staring all day from ninety-five miles off at a mountain of 23,600 feet, through an air so disagreeably harsh that I was able not only to draw the outline accurately, but to mark the exact forms of snow and rock.'

Mr E. A. FitzGerald's well-equipped expedition landed at Buenos Ayres in November 1896. Besides his English companions, he had with him several Swiss porters and the famous Alpine guide, Matthias Zurbriggen, who had accompanied Sir Martin Conway in his Himalayan expedition in 1893, and had climbed the highest peaks of the New Zealand Alps with Mr FitzGerald himself in 1895. Early in December they reached Punta de las Vacas, 8000 feet above sea-level, the farthest point to which the Trans-Andean Railway had been carried, and established their base of operations for the next five months at Puente del Inca, twelve miles farther up the valley, a remarkable natural bridge that crosses the Rio de las Cuevas a short distance below its junction with the stream from the Horcones valley. An excellent idea of the scenery of these valleys and their glaciers, lying to the south of Aconcagua, can be gained from the large series of beautiful photographs reproduced in collotype in Habel's *Ansichten aus Südamerika* (Berlin, 1897). The book also contains a good sketch-map by the author, but his work was unfortunately cut short in 1895 by the Argentine authorities, who considered further explorations inexpedient, pending the settlement of their dispute with Chili regarding the frontier.

On December 23 Mr FitzGerald and Zurbriggen, with four Swiss porters and ten mules, made their way up the Horcones valley and passed round to the west side of Aconcagua, camping at a height of 14,000 feet. On Christmas-day they camped at 18,700 feet; and next day, while exploring, Zurbriggen found Dr Güssfeldt's card in a tin box left by him at the highest point he had reached fourteen years before. Bad weather and want of supplies then forced them to descend. A second attempt, undertaken a few days later, failed from the same causes, and they went down to Puente del Inca to recruit, Zurbriggen being nearly drowned in a torrent on the way. Returning to the attack a week later, they succeeded, on January 14, 1897, in reaching the *arête*, or ridge, between the two summits. Here Mr FitzGerald was forced by severe illness to turn back, and Zurbriggen struggled on alone, reaching the top at 5 P.M. He is Italian by nationality, his home being at Macugnaga, to the south of Monte Rosa; and the Italians may well be proud of the fact that in the same year men from Italy have achieved the first ascent of two such mighty mountains as Aconcagua and Mount St Elias in Alaska.

A month later Mr FitzGerald made his sixth gallant but unsuccessful attempt. The party camped for fourteen days at an altitude of 18,700 feet, in intense cold, with a violent gale blowing. In the London *Daily Chronicle*, in which appeared the first accounts of the expedition, Mr FitzGerald thus describes the pleasures of living at this height in the Andes: 'You pant like a dying consumptive; then the dust, which smothers every-

thing, gets into your throat and chokes you; you cough exhaustingly and pant worse than ever. Every effort, however slight, entails a fresh effort of will, and your only desire in the world is to give up the whole thing and get down. At times the view was indescribably splendid, but as a rule dust-storms blotted out the sky. Rain never falls at these heights.' Starting from this camp at 8 A.M., Mr Stuart Vines, the geologist of the expedition, and an Italian porter, gained the summit in nine hours. Owing to the violence and persistence of the wind, snow only lies in great patches on the peak. Avoiding these, they struggled up through deep masses of rotten, rocky material, slipping back two feet for every three they stepped. During the latter portion of the ascent they were forced to stop every four or five yards for two or three minutes, stooping forward to recover breath. They remained an hour on the summit, which they measured and found to be a small plateau seventy yards square. The view was magnificent, and the Pacific, one hundred miles away, resembled a vast, unruffled pond. In the afternoon, when the sun shone in the west, the ocean appeared like an immense conflagration or tract of fire. The clouds, however, only parted occasionally, and a sort of haziness prevailed throughout the day. Respiration was exceedingly difficult, and finally a gale arose, which prevented a longer stay.

On the east side the mountain falls away in a stupendous precipice of 10,000 feet, with hanging glaciers that feed a considerable glacier below. Two other glaciers occupy the heads of the glens to the south and west, which drain into the Horcones torrent, while to the north-west lies the great glacier crossed by Dr Güssfeldt.

It will be seen from what has been said that the difficulties encountered through bad weather, exposure to severe cold, and above all the dreaded 'puna,' or mountain sickness, were of no ordinary character. To these must be added, at lower levels, the dangers from mountain torrents, in fording which several of the party had narrow escapes from drowning. Add to this that they all suffered more or less from fever, and that the mountain streams were poisonous, owing to the presence of some mineral in the water which caused violent diarrhœa, while before they left the mountains in June heavy snowfalls blocked the ways and made it very difficult to carry out the survey and photographic work. For the scientific results of the expedition we must wait for the appearance of Mr FitzGerald's book, which was unfortunately delayed by the severe illness of the author. In the meantime it is interesting to note that he fixes the height of the mountain provisionally at 'a trifle over 23,000 feet.' The height assigned to Aconcagua by Dr Güssfeldt, after careful trigonometrical measurement, was 22,868 feet. This is higher by 268 feet than the Pioneer Peak, ascended by Sir Martin Conway in 1893, in the Himalayas north of Kashmir. But it would seem that what it is the fashion to call the 'record' in mountain-climbing is still held by Mr W. W. Graham, who, with the late Emil Boss of Grindelwald and a well-known Swiss guide, Ulrich Kaufmann, reached in 1883 a point within thirty feet of the summit of Kabru in the Sikkim Himalayas. It is true that attempts have been made to throw doubt on this achievement. It has been argued, on purely *a priori* grounds, that at such a height the party must have suffered more from the effects of diminished atmospheric pressure than appears from Mr Graham's account, read before the Royal Geographical Society (*Proceedings of the R.G.S.*, Aug. 1884). And, as there is no question as to the height of Kabru, which has been fixed trigonometrically by the Government Survey at 24,015 feet, it has been suggested that they were mistaken in their identification of the peak that they ascended. But the day was cloudless; Mr Graham was familiar with the country (it was his second visit to Sikkim), and he was furnished with the best maps. Moreover, in the familiar panoramic view of the range as seen from Darjeeling, Kabru is a very prominent object, easily identified, to the west of Kinchinjanga, the loftiest peak in the view. In the face of these facts, *a priori* objections of the nature stated can have little weight, especially as what is familiarly known as 'mountain sickness' is as yet imperfectly understood, but is known to be largely dependent on local causes and to affect different individuals in very different ways. The whole question has been very thoroughly dealt with by Mr Douglas Freshfield in the *Alpine Journal* for February 1898, to which readers interested in the question are referred. Mr Freshfield shows that most of the arguments which can be adduced to-day for asserting that the limit of human powers is reached at about 23,000 feet might have been equally well adduced a hundred years ago to prove that the limit lay at about 16,000 feet; and he expresses his belief that in the next century the Alpine Club will carry the limit 6000 feet higher still.

TO ITALY.

O Italy, my country! thou endowed
With hapless gift of beauty, whence arose
The fatal heritage of endless woes
That fill thy lovely eyes with tears and cloud
Thy brow. Ah! wert thou not so fair, or proud
With ancient might to fill with dread thy foes,
Whose heart with all the spoiler's fervour glows,
Yet feels no pity for thee, spent and bowed—
Then ne'er should I behold down Alpine heights
Grim warriors pour, nor see the bloody wave
Of Po quaffed thus by steeds of Gallic knights;
Nor see thee, widowed of thy trusty glaive,
With hireling succour trust to win thy rights,
And, conquering or conquered, bide a slave.

GEO. MONREAL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

A NAVAL OFFICER'S TRIP TO SAN JOSÉ, CENTRAL AMERICA.

'I'VE seen the vice-consul,' he says; 'passes have been obtained, and he has made arrangements for the first batch to go to San José to-morrow morning.'

The above words were spoken by the paymaster of H.M.S. ——, stationed at Port Limon, the Atlantic port of Costa Rica in Central America.

For some weeks we had been sweltering in Limon Bay, the ship rolling continuously to the long eastern swell which sets in along the coast the greater part of the year. Consequently the prospect of a change to the capital, situated among the cool uplands, was received with great satisfaction by all the officers of the wardroom mess.

The next morning at 5.45 A.M. the first batch found themselves seated in one of the cars of the Costa Rica Railway Company—an English company, and managed by Englishmen; but before commencing the journey a few words about Port Limon may not be amiss. The town dates from the opening of the railway in the year 1892. With the exception of a few merchants and railway officials, and the Costa Rican element (consisting of the governor, police, and customs), the population of 3500 to 4000 is made up of negroes from the various West India Islands—by far the greater part from Jamaica. They are nearly all engaged on the railway or in cultivating bananas, an industry which has enormously developed during the last three years, the number of bunches exported during 1897 being about 2,000,000. About two-thirds of the population are loyal subjects of the Queen, and when one of 'de ole lady's' ships appears in the port they become very demonstrative and assume a proprietary right in all that appertains to it, and are rather given to crow over the foreign negro in consequence. One thing they hold as an article of faith—that if any man's hand is against them, 'de man-o'-war buckra' will see them through.

Just as the train was about to start, our genial friend, Vice-consul Lindo, got on board, he having kindly offered to accompany us as guide, philosopher, and friend; and, from his intimate knowledge of the country, very useful we found him, both on the journey and afterwards in the capital. The route for the first twelve miles runs along the coast in a north-westerly direction to Swampmouth. Following the track, the banana plantations approach to within a few feet on either side of it, but they rarely go more than a quarter of a mile or so into the interior, which is a dense tropical jungle teeming with animal and bird life.

At intervals along the line huge piles of hard green bananas are waiting for the banana train to run them into Port Limon, and from thence, by means of fast steamers, they will reach New York in about six days, ripe and ready for use.

Leaving the coast at Swampmouth and branching off nearly due west into the interior, we cross the Matina River (a sluggish, brown, muddy-looking stream), and find ourselves in Matina, a long, straggling village of wooden huts built on piles, and situated on the edge of a swamp. Matina is not a place in which the white man loves to linger; but he whose business avocations call him there must carry his quinine as a smoker does his match-box if he would make a good stand against the malarial fiend. The place does not, however, appear to have a very depressing effect on 'Quashee,' nor, judging by the number of woolly-headed urchins about, does it interfere with the wonderful prolificness which is one of his chief characteristics.

The conditions of the climate and soil of Matina are most favourable for the cultivation of the banana. The plantations are arranged along the banks of the river, which overflows its banks about twice a year; and when it retires to its normal bed it leaves a rich alluvial deposit, which renews the soil and reduces the cost of production, as the plants will go on bearing much longer than

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those in other districts. A friend, himself engaged in the industry, informed us that the banana-farms in this district paid as much as fifty per cent. per annum for capital invested, and that some few years ago they were paying seventy-five per cent.

The next point of interest on the route is La Junta. Here we enter the valley of the Reventazon, and from this point we leave the plains, or *tierra caliente*, and the ascent to the uplands, or *tierras templadas*, may be said to begin. As the train climbs along the northern slope of the valley the scenery is one of unsurpassed beauty. Away down on its stony bed, the Reventazon, with its huge volume of clear, sparkling water, goes rushing and tumbling to the Caribbean Sea. Both slopes of the valley are covered with primeval forests in all the wild luxuriance of tropical growth. No longer shut in by the banana groves, we get the cool, exhilarating breezes which strike along the valley from the uplands.

At Las Lomas, the *bête noir* of the engineers of the line, we see some traces of the recent slides. During the heavy rains the upper slopes of the valley have an unpleasant way of precipitating themselves into the bed of the river, carrying with them half a mile or so of the track, and increasing enormously the working expenses of the company. The slides, however, this season have been very inconsiderable, and it is the opinion of competent authorities that they are working themselves out. So the British investor may take heart of grace; and when Las Lomas no longer figures largely in the balance-sheets of the company his heavily-discounted shares will begin to soar.

Continuing along the upper slopes of the valley, we come to the Turrialba district. Here the land is more undulating, and sweeps up towards the northern base of Mount Turrialba, the most eastern of the chain of volcanic mountains which trend in a westerly direction towards the Pacific, and which dominate the uplands of Costa Rica to the south and the lowlands of Nicaragua to the north. We are now in the coffee-growing district, although there are considerable tracts of land given over for grazing purposes, with here and there patches of sugar-cane.

The cultivation of coffee, which was the main article of export before bananas were thought of, is almost entirely in the hands of the *peons*, who are the descendants of the early settlers, and are mostly of unmixed Spanish blood. They have a horror of the plains, and, like their forefathers before them, stick to the coffee and the uplands.

The *peon* varies the monotony of coffee-culture by making a little *guaro*, a spirit distilled from the sugar-cane. This with him is a labour of love; but it has to be done 'under the rose,' as the government has the monopoly of all spirits. Nevertheless, no self-respecting *peon* would be without a little drop in his bottle, wherewith he will always regale a stranger, provided he is properly introduced and the *Guardias* are not about.

The next point of interest is Cartago, the ancient capital, but vacated as the seat of government in favour of San José in 1821, when the Costa Ricans obtained their independence.

To the north, and towering to a height of 11,200 feet above sea-level, stands Mount Irazu, the highest of the Costa Rican cordillera. The summit may be reached on a mule in about eight hours from Cartago, and a view of both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans obtained from it.

After leaving Cartago the grade becomes very severe—about five per cent. The engine struggles up the next two and a half miles to El Alto at the rate of about eight miles an hour; so we have ample time to notice the flora, which has become more familiar to us, and we see several old friends in the honeysuckle, blackberry, elderberry, &c., which grow along the edges of the track.

Arrived at El Alto, 5000 feet above sea-level, we are now at the highest point of the plateau. So, with steam shut off and brakes hard down, we rattle down the first ten miles of the Pacific slope into San José: distance from Port Limon, 103½ miles; time, 8½ hours.

San José is a well-built city of modern construction. There are none of the narrow, tortuous streets, with the heavily iron-barred windows, one sees in the older Spanish-American cities. It stands 3800 feet above sea-level, and its climate has a wonderfully bracing effect on enervated visitors from the plains.

We found the town in a state of war-like preparation. The *peons*, lately called in for military service, were to be seen everywhere being drilled and knocked into shape—swarthy little fellows, clad in Paris-made blue jean suits of the French infantry type, but which, like the garments made by the 'Lilliputian tailors,' appeared to be cut on abstract principles. They were all armed with several types of rifles, and thoroughly well equipped except in the matter of boots, which in most cases were conspicuous by their absence, for the *peon* soldier marches best when his feet are unencumbered by foot-gear. Nevertheless, they seemed hardy little men brimming over with patriotism, and no doubt will give a good account of themselves if brought face to face with their natural enemies, the Nicaraguans.

During our stay in the capital we had the good fortune to hear the president, Don Rafael Iglesias, harangue the troops on the subject of the impending war with their neighbours over the much-vexed question of the San Juan River. He is a handsome, hard-working young man, impatient of leading-strings, and a vigorous opponent of the 'mañana' or *laissez faire* policy which too often obtains in the South and Central American republics. He has already done much for the development of his country by encouraging foreign enterprise; and,

among other services, has completed a contract with an American company for a railway from Titives on the Pacific coast to San José, thus connecting the two oceans by a continuous line of rail. Another scheme he has carried through, though of less public utility than the foregoing, is one of which the San Joséans may well be proud—namely, the recent completion and opening of the new Opera House, built at an enormous cost to the nation. We were enabled to see it under very favourable auspices, as the president not only put his box at our disposal, but sent one of his aides-de-camp to look after us. The building appears to be a small edition of the Paris Opera House, but, with its wonderful wealth of polished marble, frescoes, and gilt, is perhaps even more sumptuously got up. The decorations illustrative of the commerce of the republic are by an accomplished Italian artist; but by far the finest and brightest decorations we noticed were the three front rows of handsome, dark-eyed, well-dressed daughters of the soil lining the three tiers of boxes. The performance, which happened to be *Le Grand Mogul*, was rendered in French by a good company from Paris. The Opera House is said to have cost a million dollars gold currency, or in round numbers two hundred thousand pounds sterling. Taking the population of the republic at two hundred and fifty thousand, this represents sixteen shillings per head of population—an object-lesson to the British paterfamilias who grumbles at the penny in the pound rate for free library purposes.

The four days we remained in San José were made very pleasant for us by several of the members of the English community. Our thanks are also due to the members of the Costa Rican Club for the charming smoking concert they gave us. About the latter we should like to go more into details, but the space at our command in a magazine article will not admit of it. So we must pack up our portmanteaus and be off in the morning train for Port Limon, where, I have no doubt, we shall find the second batch all ready for the road.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XLIV.—THE END OF ALL THINGS.

I AM writing the last words of this tale in my house of Barns after many years have come and gone since the things I wrote of. I am now no more young, and my wife is no more a slim maid but a comely woman. The years have been years of peace and some measure of prosperity. Here in Tweeddale life runs easily and calm. Our little county matters are all the care we know, and from the greater world beyond there come only chance rumours of change and vexation. Yet the time has not been idle, for I have busied myself much with study and the care of the land. Many have sought to draw me out to politics and statecraft; but I have ever resisted them, for, after all, are these things of such importance that for them a man should barter his leisure and peace of mind? So I have ever stayed fast in this pleasant dale, and let the bustle and clamour go on without my aid.

It is true that more than once I have made journeys even across the water, and many times to London, on matters of private concern. It was during one of these visits to Flanders that I first learned the importance of planting wood on land, and resolved to make trial on my own estate. Accordingly I set about planting on Barns, and now have clothed some of the barer spaces of the hills with most flourishing plantations of young trees, drawn in great part from the woods of Dawyck. I can never hope to reap the benefit of them myself, but haply my grandchildren will yet bless me when they find covert and shade where before was only a barren hillside.

Also in Tweed I have made two caulds, both for the sake of the fish and to draw off streams to water the meadows. In the wide reaches of water in Stobo haughs I have cut down much of the encumbering brushwood, and thus laid the places open for fishing with the rod. Also with much labour I have made some little progress in cleaning the channel of the river in places where it is foully overlaid with green weed. The result, I am pleased to think, has been good, and the fish thrive and multiply. My crowning triumph befell me two years ago in a wet, boisterous April, when, fishing with a minnow in the pool above Barns, I landed a trout of full six pounds weight.

The land, which had fallen into neglect in my father's time and my own youth, I did my utmost to restore, and now I have the delight of seeing around me many smiling fields and pleasant dwellings. In the house of Barns itself I have effected many changes, for it had aforetime been liker a Border keep than an orderly dwelling. But now, what with many works of art and things of interest gathered from my travels abroad, and, above all, through the dainty fingers of my wife, the place has grown gay and well adorned, so that were any of its old time masters to revisit it they would scarce know it for theirs.

Of my own folk I have little to tell. Tam Todd has long since gone the way of all the earth, and lies in Lyne kirkyard with a flat stone above him. New faces are in Barns and Dawyck, and

there scarce remains one of the old serving-men who aided me in my time of misfortune. Also, many things have changed in all the country-side, and they from whom I used to hear tales as a boy are now no more on the earth. In Peebles there are many new things, and mosses are drained and moors measured out till the whole land wears a trimmer look. But with us all is still the same, for I have no fancy for change in that which I loved long ago, and of which I would fain still keep the remembrance. Saving that I have planted the hillside, I have let the moors and marshes be, and to-day the wild-duck and snipe are as thick on my land as of old.

As for myself, I trust I have outgrown the braggadocio and folly of youth. God send I may not have also outgrown its cheerfulness and spirit! For certain, I am a graver man and less wont to set my delight in trifles. Of old I was the slave of little things, weather, scene, company; but advancing age has brought with it more of sufficiency unto myself. The ringing of sword and bridle has less charm, since it is the reward of years that a man gets more to the core of a matter and has less care for externals. Yet I can still feel the impulses of high passion, the glory of the chase, the stirring of the heart at a martial tale. Now, as I write, things are sorely changed in the land; for, though peace hangs over us at home, I fear it is a traitor's peace at the best, and more horrific than war. Time-servers and greedy sycophants sit in high places, and it is hard to tell if generous feeling be not ousted by a foul desire of gain. It is not for me to say. I have no love for king or parliament, though much for my country. I am no hot-headed king's man —nay, I never was; but when they who rely upon us are sold for a price, when oaths are broken and honour driven away, I am something less of one than before.

As I write these last words I am sitting in my old library at Barns, looking forth of the narrow window over the sea of landscape. The afternoon is just drawing to evening—the evening of a hot August day, which is scarce less glorious than noon. From the meadow come the tinkling of cattle-bells and the gentle rise and fall of the stream. Elsewhere there is no sound, for the summer weather hangs low and heavy on the land. Just beyond rise the barrier ridges, green and shimmering, and behind all the sombre outlines of the great hills. Below, in the garden, my wife is plucking flowers to deck the table, and playing with the little maid, who is but three years old to-day. Within the room lie heavy shadows and the mellow scent of old books and the faint fragrance of blossom.

And as I look forth on this glorious world, I know not whether to be glad or sad. All the years of my life stretch back till I see as in a glass the pageant of the past. Faint regrets come to vex me, but they hardly stay, and as I look and think I seem to learn the lesson of the years, the great precept of time. And deep in all, more clear as the hours pass and the wrappings fall off, shines forth the golden star of honour, which, if a man follow it, though it be through quagmire and desert, fierce faces and poignant sorrow, will bring him at length to a place of peace.

But these are words of little weight, and I am too long about my business. Behold how great a tale I have written unto you. Take it, and, according to your pleasure, bless or ban the narrator. Haply it will help to while away a winter's night, when the doors are barred and the great logs crackle, and the snow comes over Caerdon.

THE END.

MICROBES IN MILK.

By ERNEST C. FINCHAM, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond.

IT will be readily granted that the inspection of milk and its sources of supply is of even more importance from a public health point of view than the inspection of meat, since milk is so largely used as the food of infants.

Milk, immediately it is taken from the healthy cow, contains no microbes. Hardly has the milk settled in the pail than they abound, so many as 10,000 in one-quarter cubic inch having been detected. The question which naturally presents itself is, 'Where do they come from?' From the soiled teats, from the soiled hands of the workers, from the atmosphere of the milking-shed, and from the pails themselves. They possess the property of propagating very rapidly.

Monsieur de Freudeurich, of the Berne Laboratory, asserts that milk just drawn containing in one-quarter cubic inch 9000 microbes, seven hours later was found to contain 60,000. After a period of twenty-five hours had elapsed, 5,000,000 microbes were present in the same quantity of milk; and if the temperature be raised to ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit, the microbic population of the same milk, during the same time, would reach the enormous total of 812,500,000!

Children appear particularly prone to contract consumption through the agency of milk containing tubercle bacilli.

A Royal Commission appointed 'to inquire into the effect of food derived from tuberculous animals on human health' presented its report to parliament in April 1895. It was therein stated: 'We have obtained ample evidence that food derived from tuberculous animals can produce tuberculosis

in healthy animals. . . . In the absence of direct experiments we infer that man can also acquire tuberculosis by feeding upon materials derived from tuberculous food-animals. Tuberculous matter in milk is exceptionally active in its operations upon animals fed either *with the milk or with dairy produce derived from it.* It cannot, then, be doubted that, in view of the rapidity with which tuberculosis of the udder may become developed, the presence of a tuberculous cow in a dairy is a decided source of danger to the public. No doubt the largest part of the tuberculosis which man obtains through his food is *by means of milk containing tuberculous* matter. . . . We are aware of the preference by English people for drinking cow's milk raw, a practice attended by danger on account of possible contamination by pathogenic organisms. The boiling of milk, even for a moment, would probably be sufficient to remove the very dangerous quality of tuberculous milk.'

When sterilised (boiled) milk has been used a marked diminution takes place in the tendency to infant-cholera during hot weather, which is so terribly fatal to child-life under the age of one year. This ailment in large centres of population is often present to an alarming extent, and it cannot be doubted that injurious conditions represented in the milk form one of the chief causes of this disease. As an active agent in the spread of scarlet fever, diphtheria, and enteric (typhoid) fever, milk is well known, and the risks run by the public in this respect are not imaginary.

A few years ago a man was tried at a London police-court on a charge of stealing milk. In the evidence it transpired that his family was in a state of great destitution, one or more of its members suffering from scarlet fever, and that he had taken a jug from the sick-room, sallied forth, and dipped it into a milk-can. The man was arrested, and the milkman continued his rounds, dispensing the contaminated milk!

An outbreak of enteric fever at Great Harwood, Lancashire, was clearly traceable to the agency of milk infected by human means.

The *Lancet* two years ago cited a case in which a child was attacked by diphtheria at the house of a milkman. The disease was duly notified. The child died in two days. Yet for some days afterwards milk was supplied as usual from the dairy to the customers!

At Finchley a few years ago a somewhat unique outbreak of throat-illness, followed by true diphtheria, occurred. The throat-illness was of short duration, owing to the means taken to combat its appearance. Acute symptoms set in rapidly, the cases were confined to one particular neighbourhood, and in several instances houses were invaded by multiple attacks. Houses of all classes and of different sanitary conditions were attacked, the common factor of the problem being the milk-supply. On the fourth day of the outbreak a handbill was issued warning all persons to boil the milk. Twenty-four hours after the issue of this notice the epidemic was arrested as suddenly as it had commenced. It was noticed that the better-class houses—those using the most milk—were the chief sufferers. A careful examination of the throats of the milkers showed nothing amiss, but three of the cows were found to have diseased teats, and one had a chronic abscess of the udder! The remedy in this case was boiling the milk. However, there are many people who will not adopt this simple plan, either on account of the extra trouble or because an unpleasant taste is imparted to the milk by boiling.

Milk can now be obtained from several large vendors which has been thoroughly and efficiently sterilised by heat applied under pressure; by this means ebullition is prevented, yet the high temperature maintained destroys all germ-life without in any way altering the outward appearance or ordinary properties of the milk. The milk is obtained in the first place from selected farms, and is supplied under a stringent contract. Samples of the milk are taken and submitted to a careful test in order to determine the degree of alkalinity. Should this fall below a certain point the milk is rejected; if the milk, after testing, is found to be satisfactory, it is poured into a 'receiver' capable of holding about 400 gallons. The milk then flows by gravitation through a double filter of swan's-down and muslin into an 'amalgamator.' The filter is a cylindrical vessel of tinned copper about a foot in diameter and two feet high, containing two 'grids' eight inches apart. These 'grids' are perforated discs of tinned iron; the layers of swan's-down being placed upon and secured to the discs by the muslin referred to above. The filtration takes place from below upwards, in order that all sediment may remain at the bottom of the filter. The importance of the filtration process may be gauged from the investigations of Dr Backhaus, who has calculated that the milk supplied to the people of Berlin is so foul as to compel the Berliners to consume in this way three hundredweight per diem of excrementitious material derived from the cows.

The 'amalgamator' consists of a tinned copper vessel with a lid. Through the lid runs a vertical shaft, having at its lower end an apparatus which closely resembles the screw-propeller of a steamer. This screw is kept in constant motion whilst the 'amalgamator' is filling, in order to ensure a thorough admixture of the cream which may have arisen to the upper surface of the milk during the period of filtration. From this vessel the milk flows through a second filter (similar in dimensions and construction to the first) into the syphon bottling-machine, where the bottles are automatically filled with milk to the requisite level. The construction of this machine is ingenious. The syphons are pivoted, and to one end is

attached a weight, so that when the bottle is removed this weight immediately throws the syphon back and *seals it* by bringing an india-rubber ring attached to the end which is immersed in the milk in contact with the containing tank. The bottles are then placed in 'baskets' and conveyed to the sterilising machine. This is a huge tinned copper box, the upper part of which can be raised or lowered at will. When everything is in readiness the lid is closed and securely clamped. Steam generated from absolutely pure water is allowed to flow freely in, and the bottles are left for a prescribed time under a pressure of about 5 lb. per square inch, corresponding to a temperature (nearly) of 219 degrees Fahrenheit. The safety-valve is then gradually opened, and when the pressure has fallen to the necessary extent a crank is turned—this draws the 'closing bars' down—and the bottles are effectually sealed under the exclusion of the atmosphere. In this way all noxious germs in the milk, arising from contact of the raw milk with an impure atmosphere or any other source of contamination, are rendered harmless.

Milk, next to bread, is more largely consumed than any other food-stuff, and it is a notable exception, for almost every other article of food is subjected to a process of sterilisation by heat—namely, cooking—before we eat it.

This article is not intended to stand as a finger-post, pointing the way to a medical bogy, but rather to draw attention to a very real danger which is often ignored either through ignorance or carelessness.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER V.

AS I approached the Rathhaus, I was challenged by a sentry. I presented my pass.

'I am Father Wiemann,' I said as firmly as I could, 'and I have been sent for by the Count Ulric.'

He saluted, and then conducted me to the guard-room, where the order for admittance was scrutinised by the sergeant. I remained as much as possible in the shadow.

'This is a bad business,' said the sergeant, turning to me and shaking his head. 'When the mob hear the Count is dead Heaven knows what will happen.'

'We shall all have our throats cut,' put in a soldier.

'Silence, fool!' thundered the sergeant. 'Who gave you permission to speak? Show the good father to the Count's cell.'

The man picked up a lamp and went out through the door. I followed him.

'If they choose me for one of those to fire on him,' he said to me, 'I'll throw down my rifle, come what may. I'll not have his blood on my head.'

We were passing through a dark passage at the time. I touched the man on the arm.

'Young man,' I said, 'if you raise your hand against the Count you will be damned eternally. I say this by the authority of the Holy Church.'

The light from the lamp fell on his pale, affrighted face.

'I'll not do it, I swear,' he muttered, crossing himself.

'I charge you to tell your companions what I have said,' I went on.

'I will,' he responded fervently.

We had emerged from the gloomy passage into a better-lighted corridor, which, I could see, was patrolled by a sentry. I drew the scarf higher over my face, and for the first time my heart palpitated violently. But no suspicion was aroused. The sentry summoned the janitor, who, after a casual scrutiny of the order for admittance, inserted his key into the lock of a door.

'You are late,' he observed. 'We expected you before this.'

I heard the bolt shoot back, and the door of the cell swung open.

I entered. 'See that I am not disturbed,' I said to the official who had admitted me.

He nodded, and the door clanged to.

The cell was lit by one small lamp. It was a little time before my eyes accustomed themselves to the half-light. At length I was able to make out the form of a man stretched on a mattress upon the floor. I moved the lamp nearer. It was Ulric; he was sleeping as peacefully as a child. Even the noise of my entrance had not disturbed him.

His gorgeous uniform looked out of place in the obscurity of the cell. I crossed to him and put my hand on his arm.

'Wake up!'

He sat up with a sudden start. 'What is it? Is it time?' he said. Then his glance fell on me. 'Ah, father! you have come at last.'

'Yes, I have come.'

A look of doubt swept over his face at the sound of my voice.

'Surely it is not Father Wiemann?' he said, peering at me doubtfully.

'No.' I unwound the scarf from my neck and took off my hat. 'You know me now?'

He looked, and then burst into an uproarious laugh. 'The young Englishman.'

'Hush, hush!' I looked round anxiously. What would the sentry think if they heard sounds of merriment proceeding from the cell where a priest was supposed to be administering the last sacred rites?

'What is the idea?' asked Ulric.

'You and I will change clothes, and you will leave here in my place. Father Wiemann is to have a horse awaiting you at the bridge on the Lapsburg road.'

'And yourself?'

'Oh, I'm all right,' I responded lightly. 'You may be sure I will declare my identity in good time.'

'Yes, but'——

'Don't forget I am the English ambassador's nephew. They can do nothing but escort me to the frontier.'

He looked at me thoughtfully. 'Yes,' he said; 'I suppose you are safe enough.' Then he reached out his hand and took mine. 'It is a plucky thing to do—what one might expect from an Englishman. And I—thank you.'

'I promised Kata,' I murmured.

'Poor Kata!'

'We mustn't waste time,' I said. 'We are far from being out of the wood.'

'We've got to change clothes, haven't we?'

I nodded. He began to strip off his gay uniform. As he took off one of his heavy boots, he let it fall on the ground with a terrible clatter. I threw up my arms appealingly. 'For heaven's sake be careful!'

'I am very sorry.'

In a few minutes I had struggled into his clothes, and he into mine. I wound the scarf round his neck.

'You are a little taller than I,' I remarked. 'You had better stoop a little.'

'Will this do?' He bent himself nearly double.

'I'm not more than half an inch shorter,' I rejoined vexedly. 'And I think you had better be overcome by the sad scene you have left. Cover your face with your handkerchief.'

He went to the door of the cell, and then came back.

'We will meet again, and I will thank you then.'

'You have nothing to thank me for,' I replied hastily, 'except for getting you into this mess.'

'No, no,' he rejoined. 'At the most, you only precipitated matters. The end must have come sooner or later. I have been thinking, and I see I have acted shabbily. I have allowed myself to be a mere tool in the hands of others. Worse than that, I have acted dishonourably in letting Elma believe I loved her when I knew my heart was another's.'

He spoke with a solemnity that I had never before witnessed in him.

'But the crown is rightly mine,' he went on almost defiantly. 'I deny that I have done wrong in striving to gain it. I may have made mistakes, but'——

I was anxious to get him away. Every moment seemed a waste of precious time.

'I hope you will retrieve your mistakes in the future,' I said sententiously. 'But you will have a difficulty in doing so if you are shot at sunrise. Come, hasten. This is no time to moralise.'

'I am going,' he rejoined submissively. He strode to the door.

'Open!' he shouted.

'Be quiet!' I exclaimed angrily. 'They will recognise your voice if you speak. Now, do try and think what you are doing. Remember this is a serious matter for you.'

The door opened; he smiled over his shoulder at me, and then concealed his face in a handkerchief. I flung myself down on my knees in the darkest corner of the cell, my face bowed in my hands. As Ulric went out the janitor entered and moved about the cell.

'It will be daybreak in an hour,' he observed cheerily.

He soon left me, and I heard the door close after him. I sprang up and arranged the lamp so that the mattress was in shadow. Then I flung myself down on it and tried to sleep; but it was impossible. The thoughts went buzzing through my brain like a flock of angry bees. Had Ulric escaped? Had the priest managed to procure a horse? Supposing the guard refused to accept my explanation that I was not their prisoner? It was useless to strive to sleep. I sat up, and, leaning against the wall with my arms folded, resolved to wait till the allotted time should dispose of my questionings.

I had not sat long when I heard the key turn in the lock. Had the time arrived so soon? I felt my heart beating. Or was it the return of Ulric?

I flung myself down on the mattress, with my face to the wall. I heard the door open and footsteps approach my side. I lay still, wondering who the intruder was, and then I felt a light touch on my shoulder.

'Ulric,' said a woman's voice. I did not move, but my heart almost ceased to beat from astonishment. It was the voice of the Queen!

I felt the fingers wander to my cheek, and I turned towards her, praying that the shadow was deep enough to disguise my features.

'Elma!' I ejaculated sleepily, my knuckles in my eyes.

'Yes, it is I.'

'Why have you come?' I murmured.

'I wanted to speak to you.'

'I would rather be—alone.'

She flung up her arms with a wild gesture.

'You hate me?'

I was silent. She commenced to pace the narrow cell restlessly.

'Ulric, Ulric!' she went on excitedly; 'do you remember the days when we were children together? I loved you then. I tried to help you, to protect you, to keep you from sin and sorrow.' A wild sob rose to her lips. 'And now, look at us. You are lying there, and I stand here a miserable woman. This is the end of it all. May God help us both!' She burst into tearless sobs.

I lay still, for if I came within the circle of the lamp's light or spoke much discovery was certain. Suddenly I felt her breath on my cheek and her arms round my neck.

'Ulric,' she whispered. 'Ulric, I love you. I cannot let you die. I was mad last night—mad with rage and jealousy; but now I am calm.' Her arms tightened their clasp. 'I thank God, He has awakened me before it is too late. When the day dawns you will be free to leave Lapsburg and its wretched Queen and all the sorrow and pain of these last days. You will be free to go away into the wide world, where you will never see Elma, whom you hate, and where Kata will always be by your side.'

The pathos in her voice brought the tears to my eyes. Suddenly she broke into wild, hysterical weeping.

'Why could you not have loved me?' she moaned. 'Why did you lie to me? Oh, how cruel you have been!'

I remained uncomfortably silent. What could I do? Suddenly she bent over me, and I felt her passionate kisses on my face. I struggled to free myself. It seemed that I was fated to be put into false positions. I had not betrayed my identity because I feared that Ulric had not had time to make good his escape. But how far was I justified in listening to wild outpourings which were obviously not intended for me? How far was I entitled to receive her kisses?

I sat up. 'Don't,' I cried, full of shame and bewilderment. 'For heaven's sake, stop!'

She was on her knees by my side. I sat up and looked at her. The day had broken, and from the barred window in the wall a faint gray light was feebly making its way. Over the Queen's face I could see bewilderment gathering. She sprang to her feet and turned the lamp, so that its rays fell full on my face.

For some moments she stood silent.

'You are not Ulric?' she said at last, with obvious effort.

'No,' I replied, hopelessly, helplessly. 'I am not Ulric.'

She pushed up the lamp and held it close.

'Who are you? I know your face.'

'I am Lord Carton's nephew.'

'Ah! How came you here?'

I began to tell her, when the blood suddenly rushed to her face.

'How dared you'—— she began. I knew she was thinking of those burning kisses she had pressed upon my lips. She clenched her hands, and for a moment I thought she was going to strike me.

'I am sorry; but I could not help it.'

'Oh!' She ground her teeth.

'I can only express my regret at your unfortunate mistake,' I went on humbly. For a time she was silent, and then, though I may be mistaken, I thought I saw the flicker of a smile pass over her face.

'Where is the Count?' she said, and undoubtedly her voice was softer. She looked round the cell, as if to find him. Then her eyes fell on the clothes I was wearing.

'These are his!' she exclaimed.

I nodded. 'If you will but listen'——

'Go on.'

I told her the whole story in as few words as possible. She listened quietly. When I had finished she held out her hand.

'It was brave of you, and I am glad—yes, I am glad you did it. It will save trouble and possible complication.' She stood thoughtfully silent for a few seconds. 'But when you see Ulric again—if you ever see him—tell him that I had decided not to let him die. Tell him this, for my sake. I cannot bear that he should think I was without mercy.'

I took her hand and raised it to my lips.

'I might have guessed,' I said softly, 'that your heart would relent.'

She looked at me with some favour.

'Perhaps you were wiser not to have trusted to the chance. A woman who has been insulted'——

'Ulric's last words to me,' I interposed hastily, 'were of keen regret that he should have caused you pain.'

She moved a little impatiently. 'Come,' she said, 'there is no longer reason why you should be confined here.'

She pushed open the cell-door and walked out. I followed her. We met the janitor in the passage. When his glance fell on my face he could not restrain a cry of astonishment. The Queen turned at the sound.

'A pretty jailer you have proved yourself,' she said contemptuously. The look of bewilderment on the man's face seemed to strike her as ridiculous, for she gave a short laugh. 'Be more careful another time,' she said, and led the way down the corridor.

At the entrance to the building we encountered the guard. I shall never forget their looks of astonishment. The Queen beckoned the sergeant.

'So you have let the Count Ulric escape!' she said sternly.

'Escape!' ejaculated the sergeant. 'It is impossible.'

'The priest!' exclaimed one of the men.

The Queen turned on him sharply.

'You are clever!' she exclaimed; 'but it is after the event.'

Outside, a closed carriage had been drawn up. The day had not fully dawned, and the boulevards stretched gray and dim in front of us.

I opened the carriage door for her. She made as if to enter, and then stopped.

'Our ways part here,' she said. 'It is probable we shall not meet again.'

'I hope we shall meet again,' I murmured. Her lips parted as if to smile, but she restrained herself.

'You will no doubt leave Lapsburg to-day?' There was a note of command in her voice.

I bowed. 'It will perhaps be best.'

'Much the best.' She again moved as if to enter the carriage, and again turned. She held out her hand.

'Good-bye.'

I took her hand, and raising it to my lips, kissed it several times, with unnecessary fervour. Why I did this I can hardly say. She was handsome, and I am too susceptible. Perhaps her kisses were still warm on my face. At any rate, I kissed her hand with a passion which was inexcusable.

She drew her hand away, and her face reddened.

'Yes,' she said, with no great indignation in her voice; 'you must leave Lapsburg to-day.'

She entered the carriage, and I closed the door. As the carriage drove off she leant forward.

'Good-bye,' she said again with wonderful softness in her voice, and smiled.

. . . . . .

And so, rather urged on by my good uncle, the noon of that eventful morning saw me beyond the frontier of Herzoglia. Now I am back again at Oxford, pursuing the routine of an undergraduate's life. I should be half-inclined to consider the whole matter as a dream if it were not that I received only the other day, through my uncle, a letter from Count Ulric, thanking me for what he called the services I had rendered him. The letter was from Vienna, where he urged me cordially to visit him.

I wonder sometimes whether, in the days to come, Elma, Ulric, and myself will meet again.

FRUIT: ITS CULTIVATION AND SUPPLY.

By Dr A. J. H. Crespi, Wimborne.

A COMPLAINT almost certain to be heard every autumn in the fruit-growing districts is that the abundance of plums is such that it does not pay to gather and send them to market. It is quite possible that in those districts where plums grow and bear luxuriantly there may have been a superabundance, and prices may have been unremunerative. Unfortunately, in most country towns fruit is never plentiful, seldom of good quality, and rarely cheap. Our fruit orchards are confined to certain limited regions—for example, the neighbourhood of Stratford-on-Avon and of Sittingbourne. The country at large knows them not, and it comes about that, while in some of our great towns good plums may sell at two pounds for three-halfpence, or even for a halfpenny a pound retail—they do in Birmingham in plentiful years, and pears have before now been almost unsaleable in some places—in other places, not so very far off, very inferior fruit may be fetching fourpence a pound. It may be perfectly true, moreover, that in the plum and pear districts the prices are too low; but would not the best remedy for this state of things be the combination of fruit-preserving factories with fruit-growing?—while far too little has yet been attempted in tinning vegetables. Last winter strawberry jam sold, in a small country town, at sevenpence-halfpenny, black-currant jam at sixpence, and plum jam, weighed out and sold over the counter, at threepence-halfpenny the pound. It must be perfectly obvious that in abundant years fruit-growers would do far better to preserve a large part of their excess, and not, for a few days or weeks, flood the market with one of the most perishable of all vegetable products. Fruit-preserving factories do not require a very elaborate or costly plant, and can be easily conducted. In some towns they have been tried and have answered.

I quote from a recent issue of the *Journal* of the Board of Agriculture a most suggestive passage: 'Practical men not only hold that the fruit-acreage of this country is not excessive, but that it may be extended, and that fruit-trees and fruit-bushes may, with due regard to the dominating conditions of soil, climate, and situation, and in reasonable propinquity to populous places, still be planted with good prospects of profit. It is essential, however that more care than is often forthcoming should be taken as to details of cultivation, picking, packing, and sale. It should be remembered when planting that it is very desirable to ensure a regular succession of fruit. When fruit plantations are made there should be a due proportion of each kind of fruit tree, plant, and bush suitable to the locality, in order that all the eggs may not be in one basket.

Fruit-farmers, as a rule, consign the whole of their fruit to the nearest fruit-market without any regard to the state of supply and demand. To some extent, it may be said, this is unavoidable in the case of soft fruit, which *must be sold* as it ripens. And as by far the largest part of the fruit grown in this country is produced in counties near London, the three fruit-markets of the metropolis—the Borough, Covent Garden, and Spitalfields—are frequently glutted in seasons like the last, and fruit is occasionally unsaleable, or sold at absurdly low and unremunerative rates, because the supply exceeds the demand limited by the capabilities of the distributing machinery of these three centres. At the same time, in some of the suburbs of London, in many of the large provincial towns, and even in many country towns and villages fruit is either not obtainable or only at prices which make it a luxury.'

Fruit does not require a large outlay nor an extensive plot of land. A most interesting little book by the late Archdeacon William Lea, M.A., entitled *Small Farms: How they can be made to answer by Means of Fruit-Growing*, contains a passage deserving close attention:

'In 1864 I bought three acres; and having long had a hobby in favour of small farms, I commenced to ride it at once, with a view of seeing how far such farms might be made to pay if planted with fruit. One portion I devoted to specimen-trees of various kinds—apples, pears, plums, gooseberries—with a view of ascertaining the sorts which would make the best return if planted in quantities. On another portion I experimented with vegetables, and on a third I made a plantation of gooseberries, black-currants, and plums, and sold the produce. It is of this third portion, as nearly as possible one acre in extent, that I purpose to give an account. I first cleaned and double-dug the land, made a broad walk up the middle, and then planted it with bushes six feet apart, in rows six feet from one another. Among these I planted plums—some twenty-four, others only twelve feet apart. My stock consisted of 800 gooseberries, 320 black-currants, and 110 plums—1230 in all; the exact number to an acre, planting six feet apart, is 1255. For the first three years I had room for three lines of potatoes or other vegetables between the rows; then, as the bushes increased in size, for two; and in the last and seventh year for one line only.' That beautiful orchard is now part of the Droitwich public park.

Fruit-trees, when in full bearing, require comparatively little attention, though they are all the better for some care, and for many years they usually continue bearing more and more abundantly. Four hundred bushels of apples per acre have been gathered, and a single Blenheim pippin has been known to yield from twenty to thirty bushels of excellent fruit; while the number of plums, pears, and cherries to the acre sometimes picked is enormous, and even at low wholesale prices represents many pounds sterling per acre and leaves a handsome balance to the grower. The real difficulty, however, is that nearly all the available fruit is poured into a very few great towns, where the heavy rent and rates leave the fruit-farmer the barest possible margin. This winter much more fresh tinned fruit has come into the market, and here lies the true outlet in seasons of over-abundant fruit crops.

What we urgently need is more orchards in those vast districts where fruit is so scarce as to be seldom seen, and where it does not form any appreciable part of the ordinary food of the population. Much remains to be done before this desirable state of things is brought about. On the whole the area given to fruit is considerable, and is growing, but it is mainly confined to a few counties, or, still worse, to parts of counties.

In 1890, according to the agricultural returns, the area devoted to small fruit-trees was 4300 acres more than in the previous year, while in 1873 there were not 150,000 acres of orchards in Great Britain. Twenty years later the area had reached 203,000 acres. Moreover, in the former year the whole area given to fruit, nursery, and market gardening was little more than 200,000 acres. We are undoubtedly moving, but not nearly fast enough.

The chief stumbling-block to a better fruit-supply in country towns is the difficulty of knowing how to sell the fruit—that is, of reaching or getting at the consumer. This applies, too, to all sorts of agricultural produce, which often costs the small householder, when he is fortunate enough to get any, enormously more than the highest prices he sees quoted in the papers as ruling in the great towns.

One of the easiest ways out of the difficulty would seem to be building, where market-houses do not exist, covered rooms large enough for a dozen or even a score of country-women to stand in and sell their produce. A small charge—a shilling a day—could be made, and in this way, were the place open two days a week, the convenience to residents would be enormous, while sellers and producers would find a ready and remunerative market. Fruit, vegetables, poultry, rabbits, eggs, and flowers could be sold promptly and at good prices, and without the costly intervention of railway charges and middlemen. These women would not only sell the produce of their own gardens and allotments, but in many cases they would also sell that of their neighbours on commission. A great impetus would thereby be given to raising fruit and garden vegetables—a boon to growers not less than to purchasers.

Such market-houses need not be dear. £1000 would build a large one, whilst half that sum would, generally speaking, be sufficient, and would provide ample accommodation for a dozen, or even twenty, women; and at the charge suggested—one

shilling per day—a gross return of from £50 to £100 a year could be counted upon.

Some such plan is urgently needed, because in many small country towns orchard and garden produce can hardly be got at all; or when it is to be bought, it is at prohibitive prices. Most country greengrocers have their own gardens, and will only sell their own produce, for which they charge long prices; while the country folks, even when they have a large surplus to sell, can only do so by walking wearily from house to house on the chance of securing purchasers. Sometimes a dozen higglers will call in a day; at other times not one will be seen for weeks at a time. In short, small country towns have few of the conveniences, and none of the abundance, of great towns.

An abundant and cheap supply of fruit in our small towns would give a much-needed stimulus to fruit and market gardening, and would also lead to much extra labour being utilised. At present the dweller in country towns may hear much of the superabundance of fruit; all he actually sees of it is when he chances to pay a visit to a large town, where he observes every imaginable variety and quality for sale at prices which positively stagger him. A year or two ago in certain country towns in the south of England pears were offered at half-a-crown per dozen, and half-ripe bitter plums at tenpence a pound, though in certain great towns the former were sixpence a dozen, and the latter a penny a pound. Vegetables, too, were as dear; and old tough peas were being sold at one-and-eightpence the peck in a certain important Dorset town, with 120 trains a day, on a particular day when from fivepence to sevenpence was being asked in Birmingham for peas of far better quality.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

By T. W. Wilkinson.

MARK EDMONDSON did not wear his heart on his sleeve, but he started as his eye caught a bill on the notice-board outside Bow Street Police Station. It was headed, in black, aggressive capitals, 'Murder,' and it contained the usual vile reproduction of a photograph—a photograph for which he would, in the days when he cultivated a moustache and small 'side-blinds,' have passed as the original. The portrait was astonishingly like the Mark Edmondson of three years ago.

His companion noticed his momentary surprise, and, following his glance, thought that the cause was the announcement as a whole. 'You're not George Dixon, wanted for the Plymouth murder, are you?' he asked jocularly. 'If you are, I'd better arrest you at once.'

'No; I've done nothing yet to make the police or the public interested in my features,' said Edmondson carelessly. 'The fact is, Mr Dobson'—he paused for a moment, and then continued, obviously as the result of second thoughts—'I once knew a face remarkably like that villainous visage.'

Looking again at the bill, he followed Inspector Dobson into the police-station. After jotting down in his note-book a few details of an arrest, he hurried down to the *Comet* Office in Fleet Street, and was soon closeted with his editor.

'I've just hit on a scheme for proving how grossly incompetent our detectives are,' he began.

'Yes?' observed the chief calmly. He was not prone to fall into raptures over his young men's feats in eccentric journalism. Although he was then publishing a series of scathing articles on the administration of Scotland Yard—sensational 'copy' was uncommonly scarce—he listened with much the same air that he would have assumed if the reporter had asked for an increase of salary.

Edmondson then related how surprised he had been on seeing the Plymouth murderer's portrait. 'Now,' he proceeded, 'what I propose is this: Suppose I go to Clarkson's, get made up as Dixon—that won't be a very difficult matter—and ramble about for a few hours, shoving myself right under the very nose of the police. The chances are that nobody will identify me as the wanted man. If I am not pulled up—well, that will be another proof of the incapacity of the detective force. If, on the other hand, I should be arrested, I can easily regain my liberty by throwing off all disguise and explaining that I wanted "copy." In any case, I can do a personal-experience article.'

'All right,' said the editor, turning to his desk. 'Take the thing in hand at once.'

The reporter left the office in a complacent mood. He thought he saw his way to creating a sensation. Returning to Bow Street, he carefully perused the description of the murderer, and then walked over to Wellington Street and plunged straightway into Clarkson's. When he came out again he was a fac-simile of Dixon, as well as of his former self.

As he walked along the Strand he surveyed the reflection of his figure in shop windows with increasing delight; but when he reached Charing Cross he tried to place himself in the position of the hunted man. First he circled Trafalgar Square, thence making his way leisurely to Hyde Park Corner. Then he perambulated Regent Street for half-an-hour. All the while he looked every constable he met straight in the face and favoured those whom he imagined to be 'Yard men' with

a prolonged stare. But, much to his disgust, they took no more notice of him than of any other unit of London's millions.

'The idiots!' he mentally exclaimed as he skirted Leicester Square. 'A murderer might walk about in broad daylight for a whole week without being arrested.'

When he again arrived at Charing Cross he hardly knew what to do. So far his ramble had been productive of hardly any incident. There had not, indeed, been a single event worth a couple of lines of 'copy.' And yet he was tired of masquerading as a murderer. Should he return to the office, or was it worth while to prowl about for another hour? As he stood on the kerb disappointed and irresolute a hand was laid gently on his shoulder, and simultaneously a voice whispered in his ear, 'Mr Dixon.'

Edmondson's heart throbbed violently as he wheeled round. 'At last!' he exclaimed. 'So you *have* found me, then?'

The owner of the hand was a shabbily-dressed man, whom the reporter had not, to his knowledge, ever seen before. His whole air was mysterious, and he glanced furtively from right to left, as if desirous that the attention of passers-by should not be attracted. 'Not a word,' he said, warningly raising a very dirty forefinger.

'Oh, I know all about that,' returned Edmondson airily. '"Your wushup, I cautioned the prisoner," &c.'

'Recognised you in a moment, but I've only just seen you,' went on the stranger hurriedly; and, thrusting something into Edmondson's breast-pocket, he instantly darted away, and was quickly swallowed up in the flowing tide of humanity.

The reporter was for some moments too much astonished to move or speak; he could only gaze after the man open-mouthed. What did it mean? Here he had been practically caught only to be let go again! Ah! what was in his pocket? It was an envelope, sealed but unaddressed. Hastily tearing it open, he found inside a short note:

'*Tuesday.*

'Shall have the money for you on Thursday night. Will be at St Pancras in time for you to catch the midnight train to L'pool.'

Instantly a flood of light dawned on him. He had been mistaken for the murderer, not by a detective, but by an emissary of the man's friends, who were assisting him to fly from England! Doubtless the fugitive was then in town, and should have been at Charing Cross at about the time he (Edmondson) was there.

'Was there ever such a coincidence—or such luck?' thought the reporter. 'Anything more extraordinary I never heard of. Why, this little adventure will be worth no end of "copy." I must find Dobson.'

Hailing a cab, he drove to Scotland Yard, and, giving a constable one of his own cards, asked to see Inspector Dobson. He was shown into a small room, and presently that gentleman entered. When he caught sight of his visitor he seemed not a little perplexed, glancing two or three times with knitted brows from Edmondson's face to the bit of pasteboard.

The reporter burst into deep-chested laughter. 'It's all right,' he said. Then he told the detective of his quest for 'copy' and its wholly unexpected result. 'Here is the letter,' he concluded, pulling from his pocket the note given to him at Charing Cross, 'and, unless I am greatly mistaken, it will lead to the arrest of the Plymouth murderer.'

Inspector Dobson read and re-read the message, smiling massively the while. 'Capital!' he exclaimed.

'Isn't it?' asked the reporter gleefully. 'It gives the whole thing away.'

'Just so,' said the Inspector. 'And you've put us in for a smart capture by a plan to show us up! By the way, what are you going to do about your article now?'

'That depends upon circumstances,' responded Edmondson cautiously.

The detective looked at the note. '"Tuesday." It is now Thursday; so he's going to cut down to Liverpool to-night.'

'To think of his taking the high-road to America!' said Edmondson, with scorn. 'He couldn't have a dog's chance of getting through in any circumstances. What an ass he must be!'

'Criminals of his class generally are,' said the detective sententiously. 'What about to-night?' he queried abruptly. 'You'll turn up at St Pancras?'

'Certainly.'

'Do so, by all means,' said the Inspector. 'You'll have a big sensation to-morrow. I'll meet you outside the station, opposite the clock-tower, at half-past eleven—no, say a quarter-past.'

Shortly after eleven o'clock the reporter was at the appointed place of meeting. Inspector Dobson was not there, nor did he put in an appearance at the quarter-hour. Edmondson paced to and fro, fuming with impatience and frequently glancing at the clock, till the hands indicated that in ten minutes the express to the north would start on its long journey. Still there was no sign of the detective. The reporter, his mind teeming with a thousand forebodings, then strolled up to the departure platform. Beginning at the guard's van, he walked from end to end of the midnight train, looking in every compartment; but, to his bitter chagrin, he could not see anybody in the least like his mental portrait of the Plymouth murderer. Scarcely had he reached the engine than there was a banging of carriage-doors, a waving of lamps, a mellow whistle, and then the train moved out of the station.

'Confound it!' muttered Edmondson, as he watched the red light on the rear van grow fainter and fainter. 'Neither Dobson nor the murderer here. What's happened now?'

This question remained unanswered till the following morning, when the pressman found on his desk a letter from Inspector Dobson:

'Our detectives,' wrote that gentleman, 'may be "asleep" (*Comet*, August 14), but they are sufficiently wide awake to hoax some enterprising but credulous journalists. By accident I saw you go into a certain establishment this morning, and I also saw you—though not by accident—come out again. Putting two and two together, I had you watched, soon guessed your game, and proved that I was right by means of the letter you received. I hope you were not seriously inconvenienced by your journey to St Pancras last night.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MUCH interest has been aroused by Professor Ramsay's discovery of certain new constituents of the atmosphere, due to a method of research rendered possible by the fractional distillation of air in its liquid form. In the first place, 750 cubic centimetres of the liquid were reduced to 10 centimetres, the gas from which, after being deprived of its oxygen and nitrogen, left a residual vapour, which gave, besides the spectrum of argon, an additional spectrum before unknown. This new gaseous element has been named Krypton ('concealed'). By the same method of research it has since been discovered that argon has intimately associated with it two gaseous substances which there is every reason to believe are also elementary in their nature. The lighter of these two constituents of argon has been named 'Neon,' and the heavier one 'Metargon.' These bodies have hitherto escaped detection by the most careful observers, and would have yet remained undiscovered had it not been for the new power which liquid air gives to the physicist.

OUR MUSEUMS.

A select committee of the House of Commons is inquiring into a very important subject—that of the administration of the museums of the Science and Art Department, and they are examining as witnesses those who are best able to give information as to the educational value of these establishments. One of the witnesses very opportunely called attention to the late Professor Huxley's opinion that this nation would have to face an industrial war, the result of which would be far more serious than a mere national war. It would not be a question of battleships and cruisers, but a question of schools. So far as the British fleet was concerned, it was supposed to be twice as strong as the fleets of any two Powers. That might be so, but educationally we were scarcely on a level with Switzerland. We could not hope to fight this struggle for existence unless we had battleships—by which he meant thoroughly developed scholastic institutions.

ANIMAL ODOURS.

A curious fatality lately occurred in the streets of London owing to a horse being frightened by the smell of a performing bear, the vehicle to which the horse was attached being brought into collision with a wagon, and one of its occupants killed. In commenting upon this lamentable accident, the *Lancet* points out that horses are peculiarly sensible to and terrified by the odour of a bear or of a camel, and suggests that fear of the bear may be a reminiscence of that far-away time when the primeval horse became a prey to the cave bear. But no such explanation can be given for the horse's dislike to the proximity of a camel, whose smell, although disagreeable, is not much more offensive than, and very similar to, that of a goat, to which animal the horse shows no aversion. There certainly can be no hereditary fear of the camel, as there may be of the bear, and it is difficult to account for the horse's antipathy to the first-named animal. The subject of animal odours is a very interesting one, and it does not seem to have received the attention which it deserves. It may be that some of the dumb animals have a far more acute sense of smell than we give them credit for, just as we know that some of them have more sensitive hearing apparatus than is possessed by the human family.

THE RABBIT PEST.

Australia and New Zealand are now trying another plan to cope with the rabbit pest. Instead of being poisoned, the rabbits are now trapped, frozen in their skins, packed in crates, and exported to London as an article of food. It is hoped that this new departure will lead to a rapid diminution of the prolific rodents. Some, indeed, prophesy that the animals will be brought to the point of extermination in a few years. The success of the experiment depends upon whether the frozen rabbits will present a palatable and wholesome food. If this proves to be the case they will be welcomed as a boon. But it must be remembered that for many years rabbits have been imported to this country in tins in that overcooked condition common to this type of food, and that they have not been looked upon as delicacies. Let us hope that the frozen food will meet with better appreciation.

HOW TO VANQUISH THE MOSQUITO.

According to an American paper, *The Public Health Journal*, the dreaded mosquito, which is

such an intolerable nuisance in the summer months, more particularly along river-banks and on the seacoast, can be easily abated by the use of a very simple remedy. It is stated that but two and a half hours are required for the development of the full-grown mosquito from a mere speck, its first stage. It can be instantly killed either in its infancy or at maturity by contact with minute quantities of permanganate of potash, the cheap purple salt which is used so much for disinfecting purposes. It is said that a solution of the salt containing only one part in fifteen thousand of water, distributed in the marshes where the mosquito breeds, will render the development of their larvæ impossible. To quote the *Journal* itself: 'A handful of permanganate will oxidise a ten-acre swamp, kill its embryo insects, and keep it free from organic matter for thirty days at a cost of twenty-five cents. With care, a whole state may be kept free of insect pests at a small cost. An efficacious method is to scatter a few crystals widely apart. A single pinch of permanganate has killed all the germs in a thousand-gallon tank.'

AN ACQUIRED HABIT.

It is a matter of general knowledge that the mountain parrot of New Zealand, the kea, has acquired the very destructive habit of piercing the backs of sheep with its sharp beak in order to feed on the kidney fat of the unfortunate animals attacked. It was at one time believed that the birds had learned this habit from procuring fatty particles from the skins of sheep which had been slaughtered; but now a more likely solution of the problem has been suggested by a correspondent of the *Zoologist*. This gentleman, who writes from Melbourne, tells us that in the hilly districts of the middle island of New Zealand there grows in great quantity a white lichen which bears a strong resemblance to sheep's wool. Beneath this lichen are to be found small white fatty substances, which some suppose to be the seeds of the plant, and others describe as maggots which infest it; but whatever they be, they form a favourite food of the kea. It is suggested that the bird, misled by the resemblance of the sheep's wool, digs down into the flesh in the hope of finding this white substance of which it is so fond, and that in this way the new habit has been originated. In the first place, probably the birds were misled by mistaking dead sheep for masses of the lichen under which they had been accustomed to find their favourite food.

X-RAY PHENOMENA.

The discovery of the mysterious X-rays by Professor Röntgen of Würzburg was considered of so much importance in our own country that a Röntgen Society was soon suggested and established. This society busies itself in every matter having relation to the X-rays; and its secretary, Mr E. Payne of Hatchlands, Cuckfield, Sussex, is always ready to afford inquirers information as to its aims and doings. The committee are now anxious to accumulate facts relative to the alleged injuries which result from continued application of the rays—burning of the skin, shedding of the nails, &c.—and they are appealing to medical men who work with the X-rays for information on the subject. With this view they have prepared a series of questions, so that the information may be collected in convenient form. Copies of these will be gladly sent to any medical man or other worker with the X-ray apparatus who may be acquainted with a case of injury of which he is willing to give particulars.

DEEP-SEA FISHING.

Prince Albert of Monaco has for the past fifteen years made oceanography his hobby, and the paper which he read the other day before the Royal Geographical Society describing his experiences was full of interest. Commencing with a little sailing-schooner of 200 tons, he replaced it in 1890 by a stronger vessel of 560 tons; and now a far larger one is being built for him by Messrs Laird of Liverpool, in which he hopes to continue his researches. Much of his work has consisted in collecting specimens of marine creatures from depths sometimes as great as 1600 fathoms. He used the trawl, and also huge traps made of wood and netting, big enough to hold four or five people. These he would bait with such delicacies as salt-fish, sheep's offal, the heads and claws of fowls, &c.; and, strange to say, these baits are more attractive to certain marine creatures if soaked in a sauce made of asafœtida. One difficulty he met with in the fact that the larger prisoners devoured the smaller ones, and he obviated this by making refuge-traps of small size within the big trap. But occasionally the bigger prisoners found their match in the small crustacea, on one occasion a large dogfish being reduced to a mere bag of skin, its soft parts, muscles and tendons, weighing at least nine pounds, being completely devoured during the twenty hours which the trap remained sunk at the bottom of the water. These traps were sunk like lobster-pots, with a buoy attached so that they could easily be recovered. Many interesting creatures were brought up by this means which would otherwise have remained undiscovered. Bright objects, such as fragments of looking-glass, were hung to the trap, and seemed to attract the marine creatures; and on more than one occasion a good haul resulted from the employment at night of the electric light.

A NEW FUEL.

A new fuel has been introduced in the form of petroleum briquettes, made by a process known as Kuhlow's. Petroleum refuse is mixed with ten per cent. soda lye and a like quantity of tallow or any fatty matter, the whole being intimately

mixed by constant stirring, and heated by steam to a temperature short of the boiling-point of petroleum. Incipient saponification takes place, and in this state the plastic mass is capable of taking up a quantity of fluid rock oil, after which addition the mass is allowed to cool, and is run into moulds. For certain uses coal-dust, sawdust, or other refuse can with advantage be added to the compound, or the grease can be replaced by resinous substances. The resulting product is described as a cheap and very convenient form of fuel.

AN ICE-BREAKING VESSEL.

There was lately launched from the shipyard of Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, & Co. a vessel which, although only a couple of hundred feet long, is of more than ordinary interest. It is an ice-breaker, and its particular mission is to keep open the port of Hango for the Russian government at that time of year when it is generally ice-bound. Former ice-breakers have been built with a long, cut-away bow, so that, partly by speed and partly by forcing the weight of the vessel above the ice, the obstruction has given way under repeated attacks. The new boat is designed to work upon a totally different principle. It has two propellers, one in the ordinary position, and the other forward, the object of the latter being to give the water under the ice a high sternward velocity, so that the ice is left without support. Then comes the bow of the vessel with its heavy, crushing action, and breaks through with comparative ease. The vessel is being fitted with two sets of triple expansion engines, which are of special design so as to fit them for the heavy work which they have to accomplish.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE.

A great advance in telephonic communication is indicated in the introduction from America of the automatic exchange, by which device a subscriber can put himself into direct communication with any one else on the system without the help of an intermediary. The automatic instrument at once dispenses with the large staff of skilled assistants which is necessary for the old system of exchange, and a further advantage is that the utmost secrecy is maintained. It would not be possible to describe the clever mechanism by which these results are brought about without the assistance of complicated drawings. It will be sufficient to say that each subscriber has attached to his instrument a disc pivoted at the centre, and bearing the figures 0 to 9. Supposing that he wishes to speak to a neighbour whose number is 624. He will insert his finger in a hole opposite the figure 6, pull round the disc, and do the same in succession with the other two figures 2 and 4. This action connects him with No. 624, and he is at liberty to talk to the subscriber represented by that number. When the conversation is finished he hangs the receiver on its hook, and the switches which his previous action put in motion return to their normal position. A large number of installations on this principle have been at work for some time in the United States, and are stated to have given great satisfaction to the subscribers. The system is being introduced in this country by the Direct Telephone Exchange Company, who have fitted up a model installation at Winchester House, London, E.C.

TEA-CULTIVATION IN CHINA.

According to the consular report from Foochow, the cultivation of tea in that district has ceased to be remunerative, and the export is now but one-third of what it was twenty years ago. No reason is given for this decline in the industry, and we are left to assume that it is caused partly by the competition of India and Ceylon, and possibly in part by the discovery of certain tricks of trade at which the heathen Chinee is an adept. But whatever the reasons may be, much land formerly devoted to tea is now going out of cultivation, and the curing-houses are being offered for sale to the missionaries. The report in question tells us that the export trade is of great importance to China, for the internal demand for tea is not great. The majority are content with a brew from tea-dust; and when tea is not readily available, other leaves take its place. Here in Britain the consumption of tea is about six pounds per head of the population, but in China it is only half that, even among the small fraction of the people who are tea-drinkers.

A NAILLESS HORSE-SHOE.

One of the most recent novelties, which will, we think, be welcomed as a boon to horse-keepers as well as the animals under their charge, is a shoe patented by Mr R. M'Dougall of Wellington Street, Glasgow, which can be affixed to the hoof without nails. The new shoe takes the familiar form, but has two projections, one on each side at the back, which engage rings at the ends of a band which passes over the front of the hoof, and is fastened in the middle by a screw attachment to the centre of the shoe. The entire arrangement is simple, and the innovation means that when a horse casts a shoe it will not be necessary any longer to seek the aid of a farrier, for the new shoe can easily be fitted in a few minutes by an inexperienced hand. In a recent trial of the nailless horse-shoes the new invention was put to a severe test—the horse on which the shoes were fitted being attached to a heavy-laden van and worked up and down steep gradients and on granite-paved streets. Notwithstanding this rough work the shoes showed no sign of shifting, and were not removed until worn out. The new shoe obviates all risk of pricking or

laming by nails, and a slight rasping of the hoof is all that is required in attaching it to its bed.

THE TSAR IN PROVERB.

The Tsar (oddly enough spelt by us *Czar*) plays a still more prominent part in Russian proverbs than the king does elsewhere. Some of the following are not peculiar to Russia: 'The crown doesn't save the Tsar from headache;' 'The Tsar may be the cousin of God Almighty, but he isn't just His brother;' 'The voice of the Tsar makes an echo even when there are no mountains near;' 'One tear in the eye of the Tsar costs the country many handkerchiefs;' 'If the Tsar takes to writing poetry, God pity the poets!' 'Time accomplishes what even the Tsar can't do;' 'Even the Tsar's cow can only produce calves;' 'If the Tsar takes smallpox, all the country has the pock-marks;' 'If the Tsar gives you an egg, he expects at least a hen in return for it.'

THE PRESERVATION OF EGGS.

Many are the plans which have from time to time been published for preserving eggs in a fresh state; but, judging from the quality of what are commonly known as 'shop eggs,' it would seem that there is still much to learn in this department of domestic economy. The director of the Agricultural School at Neisse, in Germany, has lately published the results of certain experiments which he has made in this direction; and a record of them will, we feel certain, be useful to many of our readers. Eggs kept in brine for seven months had not turned bad, but were so saturated with salt as to be quite unpalatable. After this first observation we are given a list of some twenty experiments with various agents, with the percentage of eggs spoilt in each during a seven months' probationary period. These are as follows: Kept in solution of salicylic acid and glycerine, 80; rubbed with salt, 70; packed in bran, 70; coated with paraffin wax, 70; immersed in boiling-water for from twelve to fifteen seconds, 50; solution of alum, 50; solution of salicylic acid, 50; coated with soluble glass, 40; collodion, 40; varnish, 40; rubbed with bacon fat, 30; packed in wood ashes, 20; boric acid and soluble glass, 20; potass permanganate, 20; coated with vaseline and kept in lime-water, *all good;* kept in soluble glass, *all very good.* It is curious that the experimenter makes no mention of a plan which is adopted by the French, by which it is said eggs can be kept in good condition for two years. They melt by heat four ounces of beeswax in eight ounces of olive-oil, dip the eggs in the warm liquid, wipe them, and store them in powdered charcoal in a cool situation. Another system, known as the British Egg Storage Patent, has been introduced by Mr C. A. Christianson, Bernard Street, Leith. He discovered, after a trial of seven years, that eggs must not be enclosed in any substance, but allowed to be apart in a perpendicular position, the narrow point downwards, so that the air in the warehouse enclosed each individual egg. The position of the eggs was, however, altered every second day. This is accomplished by the simple turning of a lever, which keeps the yolk in its natural position embedded in the albumen. Some eggs have been tested which were under the process for fourteen months, and they were found quite good.

SUMMER'S MELODY.

Oh! picture to yourself a scene like this:
The silent river gliding 'tween its banks,
Each lovely floweret drooping low to kiss
Its cooling surface, in its grateful thanks
For all the strengthening moisture it doth yield;
Whilst, glittering in the sunlight's glorious sheen,
The sweet corn turning to a golden brown;
The verdant meadows covered o'er with green;
The gay lark singing, soaring up and down,
And sailing over coppice, pool, and field;
The mighty forest kings—the elm and oak,
The silvery birch, the stately pine, the beech—
Clothed in the glory of their leafy cloak,
All raise their towering heads as though to preach
Their Heavenly Maker's glory, praise, and care;
Whilst lowing cattle, grazing at their ease,
And feathered songsters singing forth their praise,
The very hearts of men, so hard to please,
Seem glad, as they their thankful voices raise.
And in one song of gladness take their share.

Frank R. Dutton.

THE AUGUST PART

OF

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

WILL CONTAIN THE OPENING CHAPTERS

OF A STORY ENTITLED

THE SHIP-BREAKERS:

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By T. St E. HAKE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st.* All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

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THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By Thomas St E. Hake.

CHAPTER I.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY'S CABIN.

IT was an autumn day. The weather at Cablethorpe was dry but gusty, and a sand-storm was driving up from the beach in whirling clouds. Cablethorpe is a small, sea-washed town on the east coast. In autumn, and still more frequently in spring, the tide has been known to flow into the High Street, rising to the very door-steps of its red brick houses, with their bow-windows and gabled roofs. This picturesque old street is almost as broad as it is long; but the narrow ways that branch out of it are unattractive, except to those in search of lodgings. They are like green shoots from a decayed trunk.

The sand-storm, fierce and penetrating, was more merciless than a storm of hail or snow. The sand flew madly into every by-path, nook, and corner. It swept under archways and into passages; it entered every shop that stood open, and sanded its floor as thickly as though it were the floor of a bar-parlour. It described a pirouette in the courtway of the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn; and it rushed across the road into the timber-yard, where it settled down in the holes and crannies between the tall piles of timber. It pattered noisily against the window-panes of the timber merchant's office, and diverted the clerks from their cash-books, invoice-books, and ledgers. With one of these clouds of sand that burst into the timber-yard a middle-aged gentleman was blown in. He was menaced and attacked on every side. He panted and fought; but the flying sand dodged round him with a constant change of front, sometimes giving him a lash in the face that threatened to blind him, and sometimes stinging him in the neck, until at last he was driven into the office.

He recovered his dignity when he had shut out the storm, and, drawing up his tall, slim figure, said, 'Is Mr Beek at home?' while wiping the sand out of his eyes with a red silk handkerchief.

A clerk ushered the visitor into Mr Beek's office.

It was growing dusk. Mr Beek, wreck-wood merchant and ship-breaker, was occupied at his desk under a shaded lamp. He was a man of sixty, thick-set and ruddy, with a large head and short neck—a typical John Bull. The visitor walked towards one of the windows and looked out. Workmen were busily engaged loading carts with ship-wood. Near one of these carts stood a girl. She wore a blue serge dress and a red cap; and from under the cap her dark curly hair was blown about over her forehead. She was observing the workmen with interest, while Mr Beek's visitor observed her through his *pince-nez* in the gathering gloom.

'Sit down, Mr Burtenshaw,' said the ship-breaker genially, as he glanced up from his desk. 'Sit down, sir. I was rather expecting you might call to-day.'

Mr Burtenshaw, who was Mr Beek's lawyer, dropped his *pince-nez* and sat down.

'You've come about the mortgage, I presume?'

'Yes,' said Mr Burtenshaw.

Mr Beek leant back in his chair. He seemed to be waiting for some communication; but the lawyer showed no sign of being in a communicative frame of mind.

'You've had a visit from my son?' said the ship-breaker tentatively.

'Yes; he called upon me this afternoon,' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'He has put his signature to the deed. I've brought a certified copy of it with me.'

As the lawyer spoke he smiled blandly, and rising from his chair, handed Mr Beek a bulky oblong envelope, and then resumed his seat. While the ship-breaker was occupied in opening the letter Mr Burtenshaw went on:

'The document has now been signed by both of you. The Beek & Son estate—house, timber-

 [*All Rights Reserved.*]

yard, warehouse—has been mortgaged for the sum of three thousand pounds. I think you'll find, sir, that everything has been done in as strictly a legal form as you could wish.'

The ship-breaker turned over the pages of the duplicate mortgage-deed searchingly; after which he looked into the empty envelope, and then down upon the floor near his desk. Then he said:

'You've omitted one thing, Mr Burtenshaw.'

'Indeed, sir?'

'You've omitted to enclose the cheque.'

'Oh! That,' said Mr Burtenshaw, smiling still more blandly, 'I handed to Gabriel when he signed the document.'

'You gave the cheque to my son?'

The lawyer adjusted his *pince-nez* and looked keenly into Mr Beek's face. He thought he had detected a touch of anxiety in his client's voice. He had certainly turned redder in the face; but a man of Mr Beek's apoplectic tendency was always liable to turn all sorts of colours without any special provocation. It was perhaps mere fancy on his part. The ship-breaker uneasy about his son's honesty? He had always held him up as a model of integrity! There *were* men—the lawyer might be one of them—who considered Gabriel a hypocrite: who even suspected that he gambled. But that was not *his* affair. Mr Burtenshaw, having reconciled his conscience with this last thought, dropped his glasses and resignedly folded his arms.

'I gave the cheque to your son. Hasn't he come home?'

'I'm expecting him home every minute,' he said; and, as Mr Beek referred to his watch, the lawyer fancied that his hand trembled violently. 'You'll stay and dine with us?'

But Mr Burtenshaw smilingly excused himself as he rose to take his leave: 'Thank you, no; I think not. Good-night.'

When the lawyer had crossed the timber-yard and had reached the little door in the closed gateway, he paused a moment with his hand upon the latch. Then he stepped out into the High Street, and found himself once more confronted by the storm. A gust of sand whirled round him, and attacked him more fiercely than before. It came up in a blinding cloud from the shore, as though it had been lying there in wait, smote him in the face, and fled on its way.

Mr Burtenshaw found shelter over the road in a parlour at the 'Jolly Bacchus.' He walked to the window. The ship-breaker's premises stood opposite; and the lawyer contemplated them with as much interest as though they belonged to him. The moonlight touched the gateway sidewise. Over this gateway there were two old ships' figure-heads. One was a weather-beaten admiral, who stared at the sign of the 'Bacchus' with a stony stare; and the other was a buxom mermaid, who directed her gaze toward the sea. The one seemed to have a longing for water, the other for wine. A red brick house adjoined the premises. The lawyer rang the bell. A brisk old man, with so many deep wrinkles on his face that it was a puzzle to every one how he managed to keep so clean-shaved, came in.

'A glass of sherry, Mumby! And be smart about it,' said Mr Burtenshaw in a bullying tone, 'for my time's precious. Hurry up my horse and gig, will you? I never knew such a slow lot.'

Mumby had been boots at the 'Bacchus' when Mr Burtenshaw was a young man, and he had grown to regard the lawyer's insults as marks of distinction. The horse and gig were presently brought round. Mr Burtenshaw was soon in his place; and in another minute he had started off at full speed along the flat fenland road towards the town of Alford. For some little distance a cloud of sand came chasing after him. But when he had passed Cablethorpe Church, an isolated Norman edifice that stood half a mile from the town and was surrounded by dikes, he got free of sandy annoyances. On he went, spinning on his way through village after village. It was a brilliant night. The moon, nearly at its full, had mounted high overhead into a cloudless sky. The country on all sides was like a wide, almost limitless heath, with clumps of trees and sheltered homesteads at distant intervals. It was a vast playground for the wind. Gust after gust fled over it with scarcely less bluster than out at sea. Mr Burtenshaw, with his rug tucked closely round him, and his broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat pulled down over his brow, urged his horse into a quicker trot as he glanced over his shoulder with a grim smile.

At the moment that lawyer Burtenshaw started from the 'Jolly Bacchus' the clang of the workmen's bell in Beek & Son's premises broke upon the night. The workmen speedily dispersed; and presently the only person left in the timber-yard was the girl whom Mr Burtenshaw had observed from the window of Mr Beek's office. She was stepping over a pile of timber in the moonlight, and her pretty face and lithe figure suggested an elf of the forest in which this ship-wood had been cut down. The girl was still balancing herself along a narrow plank, when the doorway in the gates was hastily opened, and a young fellow stood before her. He looked a jovial, weather-beaten man, who had brought with him some of the breeziness and brine of the sea. He was cordially greeted by the girl.

'Why, Mr Tudway—Ted, I mean,' said she, laughingly—'where did you spring from?'

'London; and I'm going back to-night.'

'So soon?'

'Yes. But see here, Hettie,' said he, plunging his hand into a side-pocket; 'I've a letter from your brother Gabriel. I met him on the road. The letter is for your father. Let me give it you before I forget.'

'From Gabriel?'

There was still a light in the ship-breaker's office. But all the clerks were gone, except the manager, who was seated over a big ledger.

'Is father in his room, Jarvis?' said Hettie, looking in; and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, she opened her father's door.

Mr Beek was seated at his desk, with his head resting thoughtfully on his hand. He had not heard Hettie's step, and as she approached he gave a slight start and looked up.

'What is it, my dear?'

'Gabriel;' and she gave him the letter.

As Hettie was going out—she had just put her hand upon the latch—she thought her father called her, and she looked round.

'Did you speak?'

His eyes were bent upon the letter.

'No.' And he went on reading.

Hettie was not satisfied, for she thought that she detected a change in her father's face.

'There's nothing the matter, father?'

'The matter? Dear me, no!'—he threw down the letter and took up his pen to resume his work—'nothing—nothing.'

Still Hettie was not satisfied. As she passed through the clerks' office she stopped at the manager's desk and whispered, 'I believe there's bad news in that letter,' and she jerked her head in the direction of her father's room. 'Will you try and find out, Jarvis?' and then she stepped out into the yard.

Tudway was seated on a pile of timber waiting for her.

'Is it true,' said he, looking about him, 'that your father has bought my uncle's old schooner *Nancy?*'

'Quite true.'

'Is he going to break her up,' said he, 'and sell her as ship-wood?'

Hettie laughed. 'Of course! Isn't it our trade?'

Tudway again looked about him. 'Where is she lying?'

'High and dry,' replied Hetty, 'on Cablethorpe sands.'

'I'd like to overhaul her, Hettie. Will you walk there?'

The tide was running in fast over the flat, sandy beach when Hettie Beek, accompanied by Tudway, came in sight of the old hulk. It had already been stripped of some of its timber. It lay at the water's edge, leaning, meditatively as it were, on its starboard side; and the waves that were leaping up and flinging feathery spray against its rudderless stern seemed to be inviting it sportively on another voyage.

Down here on the open coast, where the potent gusts of wind had full play, the flying sand from the dunes stung the faces of this young couple with pitiless force. Hettie soon found herself compelled to shut her eyes and cling firmly to Tudway's arm. Tudway fought against the storm; but he made slow progress, for he frequently had to stop and look into Hettie's face and assure himself that she did not wish to turn back. They got under the sheltering side of the hulk at last, and Tudway ran up the ladder that leant against the bulwark, not forgetting to give Hettie his hand. They reached the deck together. It sloped considerably, so Tudway ventured to retain the girl's hand until he had landed her safely at the aft-cabin door.

The aft-cabin of Captain Tudway's old ship was large and semicircular in shape. There was a window on each side, and a shelf for a berth under each window. Hettie seated herself upon one of these, while Tudway stood near her looking round him with lively interest. A soft glimmer of moonlight was on the sea.

'Just as I remember her,' said Tudway, 'when a boy! How often I have seen my Uncle Tudway, in his seafaring days, seated where you are now! It was his favourite corner. How often he has sat there smoking his old pipe and spinning yarns by the score! By the bye,' he added, tapping the woodwork as he spoke, 'I've a good mind to make your father a bid for this old cabin. The timber would make a summer-house—wouldn't it? I don't like the thought of its being sold as ship-wood by auction in so many lots.'

'Going—going—gone!' laughed Hettie.

Tudway sat down beside her. 'Hettie,' said he, 'I'm off to London to-night to bid my old uncle good-bye. I have come to-day to take leave of you.'

Hettie's face grew serious. 'When do you sail?'

'My ship, the *Seagull*, leaves the Thames,' said Tudway, 'at daybreak to-morrow. I am going on a long voyage. It may be months before I see you again. When I come back, Hettie, you'll be my wife, won't you?'

'I don't know.'

'Don't know, Hettie?'

'I—I *do* like you, Ted. But,' said she hesitatingly—'but wouldn't it be wiser to ask me that question when you come back?'

'Hettie! Can you doubt me?'

'No. I doubt myself.'

There was a pause. 'There's nobody else, Hettie, is there?'

'Oh no!'

'What is it, then?'

The girl looked out over the sea. Her lips moved, as though she were trying how to frame her reply. Presently she said, 'Father's business is in a bad way. Would you marry a penniless girl?'

'Wouldn't I! Why, you know it makes no difference to me,' said Tudway, 'whether you're rich or poor.'

'I'm sure of it. But it's only fair to tell you,

Ted, that my father is not so prosperous as he was a year ago.'

'I'm sorry for that.'

'I knew you would be. His affairs are in such a muddle, Ted, that I hardly know where we shall be when you return. Would you speak to me,' said Hettie, with irresistible laughter in her voice, 'if I stopped you in the streets of London with a basket of violets on my arm?'

'Hettie!'

'You would buy a bunch, dear — wouldn't you?'

'Don't make a joke of it, Hettie!'

'How can I help it?' And yet there were tears gathering in her laughing eyes. 'I have been thinking so much about the business lately. I wonder if I should trouble my head about timber and wages and such prosy things, Ted, if I really loved you?'

They walked homeward. A glittering path of moonlight stretched across the sea. The waves rolled over their own changeful lights and shadows along the flat, sandy waste with the incoming tide. But though these waves leapt high, sending their white foam flying inland with the sand, they fell with no angry sound. On a rocky coast there would have been, on such a windy night, an incessant and deafening roar. It was only when the tide was at its highest—when the waves crashed against the breakwaters that saved the fenlands from being swamped—that the sea at Cablethorpe made its voice loudly heard.

Hettie Beek, in the goodness of her heart, felt pity for Tudway. She liked him well enough, if she did not love him; and the manly effort which he made to hide his disappointment roused her sympathy. She was disinclined to wish him 'good-bye' when they reached the High Street. She asked rather humbly, 'May I come with you to the station, Ted?' and she only took leave of him when the train started on its way to London.

IRISH HOME INDUSTRIES.—POINT LACE.

By Mary Gorges.

THE Textile Exhibition of last year in Dublin, at the time of the Duke and Duchess of York's visit, was a veritable inspiration. Nothing so convincing could have been done 'to dispel the myth that the Irishman is constitutionally an idler, and that the Irish can do nothing of themselves.' For here was the evidence of their aptitude for work, and of eager yet patient industry which had toiled on, almost unrecognised, for years. Ireland owes this great and timely help to Lady Cadogan; and truly from many a heart came the involuntary 'God bless her!' at the sight of the many strangers who, pleased and surprised, crowded round the various exhibits at the Textile Exhibition, often entering into interested conversation with the exhibitors, and receiving information which totally upset preconceived ideas of Ireland and its people.

Out of all the industries exhibited I single that of lace-work for a brief account, partly because it is rapidly attaining—like Irish poplin—the rank of a speciality, and also because nothing so displays the deftness, taste, and artistic skill of Irishwomen. Those who can remember its beginnings have a deep and pathetic interest, not unmingled with pride, in now beholding its results.

And first let me take that 'queen of Irish laces,' the Irish Point, made only in the south of Ireland. This exquisite, filmy fabric is so beautiful as to have called forth deep and genuine admiration from the Queen, and her especial thanks to the workers as well as to the donors of the valuable lace shawl presented to her by the ladies of the Irish Industries Association. Who, looking at it, could connect this costly and artistic product with a few pale, poverty-stricken children gathered into a convent school in the terrible years of the famine (1847–1850) to be taught fine needlework as some resource against starvation? Yet this was the beginning from which sprang the now famous Irish Point.

Mother Magdalen Gould of the Presentation Convent, Youghal, was doing all that she could for the poor at this crisis; till, when every resource was exhausted, the idea occurred to another nun, Mother Mary Anne Smith, of teaching the poor children an industrial occupation. She had a piece of 'Point de Milan,' which she carefully unravelled and examined stitch by stitch, until she discovered how it had been made. Then she selected those of the convent children who had shown a taste for fine needlework, and taught them separately what she had just learned. So great was their aptitude, and so rapidly did the number of workers increase, that the convent lace school had to be opened in 1852.

Let it not be supposed that this lace is simply an imitation of the Italian model. At first the stitches were few; but with time and practice some hundred new ones have been invented, and these so complicated that it is almost impossible to rip them; consequently this lace, which looks light as gossamer, has great durability, and grows more valuable with the lapse of time. It stands wear and tear, and can be washed and made up without detriment. It is often compared to the finest old Brussels Point, which it more nearly

resembles now than the Italian Point, from which it sprang. But, what between the number of new stitches invented by the lace-makers, the variety of the designs, and the perfection to which the work has been brought, the Irish Point has a right to its name as an original fabric, though 'it only came into existence as an Irish industry within living memory.'

It is made entirely with the needle, and demands the greatest skill and care. The finest is very costly, rising to £80 a yard for deep flounces, £30 for a handkerchief, and £50 for a fan.

An exquisite fan which was presented to the Duchess of York on her marriage by Lord Crewe was bought at the Irish Lace Depôt, Grafton Street, Dublin, a most important agency for Irish needlework of all kinds, and one of which I must say a few words at the close of this article; for there I have seen some of the choicest specimens of lace, embroidery, and other work, and heard many details of their production. There too I found that, costly as Irish Point can be, yet fan, flounce, or handkerchief may be had at from twenty shillings.

It must be confessed that Rose Point, or Inishmacsaint work, runs the 'queen of Irish laces,' the Irish Point of the south, a very close second. It is an exquisite fabric, at once delicate and rich.

Its origin as an industry also dates from that landmark of desolation in Irish history, the great famine, and from the efforts made by resident ladies to create remunerative employment for the girls living around them. Perceiving how quick they were to learn the use of the needle, they collected them into classes and taught them crochet-work, embroidery, and lace-making. Many stories could be written of these efforts, and of the various industries which originated from them; but I must confine myself to telling that of the lace next in importance to the Irish Point.

Mrs Maclean, wife of the rector of Tynan, county Armagh, was the teacher of this Rose, or Raised, Point (*punto in aria* is the term for the tiny 'brides,' or links, which join its sprays together); and the same thought which prompted Mother Mary Smith to unravel her 'Point de Milan' till she found out the secret of the stitches, caused Mrs Maclean to carefully examine the torn part of a piece of Venetian Rose Point which she possessed, until, after patient search, she too discovered the art, and taught it to some of the poor girls around, both teacher and workers patiently toiling on till the various stitches were perfectly understood. The first flounces made at Tynan were exhibited in London in 1851, and purchased by the Primate of Ireland. But, on the death of the Rev. William Maclean, the centre of the work was changed to county Fermanagh in 1865. And there, on the lovely shores of Lough Erne, do the girls carry on to this day the work taught them by Miss Maclean, who went to live there with her sister, Mrs Tottenham, after the breaking up of the home in Tynan. A late writer on this subject (Miss D. Roberts) testifies that they are always improving, glad of old patterns from ladies who possess family lace, and very quick to follow out the designs and instructions of the teachers connected with South Kensington.

Inishmacsaint gives its name to the parish and the lace. It means 'Isle of the Sorrel Plain.' And by the white strand opposite the isle, or 'inish,' live the 'bright-eyed, neat-handed girls' whom the writer mentioned above first saw sitting outside their cottages 'in the full light of day, seeming to create the fairy-like fabric without any strain to the eyes, though the work is so minute that it takes some time to make four-inch square of the lace.' The same lady compared with this the modern Venetian Point-lace, with the result of finding the Inishmacsaint much finer and more beautiful than the modern Venetian Rose Point, which she had the opportunity of examining at Venice and in the schools established by the Queen of Italy on the island of Murano, in the Venetian lagoons, for carrying on the making of old Venice lace, once of world-wide fame. The old Venetian Rose Point is very costly, and while the Rose Point made by the shores of Lough Erne quite equals it, the price is about a third of that given for the Italian lace.

This industry no longer depends on private patronage. Two of the lace-makers were sent by the late Mr Lindsay, 76 Grafton Street, Dublin (Irish Lace Depôt), to the School of Art in Dublin, that they might there learn to draw and design. And ever since this establishment has given constant employment to the Irish girls, who toil so patiently and lovingly at this beautiful product.

And now one word as to this Irish Lace Depôt, an agency worked by seven directors, wholly for the benefit of the workers—the directors, of whom Lady Aberdeen is president, receiving, of course, no emolument. The capital of the company is in debentures, and no dividend is paid to any shareholder. All productions of lace-work, embroideries, crochet, tatting, &c. are taken at the Irish Lace Depôt, whose representatives pay prompt cash and find a market for the goods in the United Kingdom. When workers are poor they make advances to sustain them while the work is being done; often, indeed, the full price is paid before it is received, and how much that sometimes means to the poor! An idea of the good that is done by this company may be gathered from the amount of wages paid annually to the workers, which is upwards of £12,000. And it is the intention, when the debentures are cleared off, to devote the profits to the workers who have made the goods, so that practically it will be a great co-operative concern.

This society sends first-class teachers, when desired, to the various districts, and all over Ireland women have learned to do work which brings them comfort and independence, keeping the roof over their heads in many instances.

Having begun by mentioning Lady Cadogan's

Textile Exhibition as having been a veritable inspiration of great and timely help to Ireland, I cannot close without a word concerning Lady Aberdeen, without whom this lace exhibition could never have taken place. It was Lady Aberdeen's interest and personal efforts which gave the impetus that made it possible. It was she who organised the Irish Industries Association, and by extensive orders introduced various kinds of Irish lace in quarters where it had been previously unknown—for instance, at the World's Fair at Chicago, where it was greatly admired, over £500 worth of orders being executed for this exhibition of one kind only (Kinsale lace); while everywhere in Ireland a declining tendency was checked and fresh heart and courage infused by the kind heart, the quick eye, and the clever brain that had come to the help of the poor workers. Lady Aberdeen saw exactly what was wanted to place the struggling industries on a firm footing, and spared neither time, trouble, nor expense in securing good designs and skilled artistic training for the workers. And Ireland does not forget this, and that it is to Lady Aberdeen she owes her late crowning hour of recognition in Lady Cadogan's Textile Exhibition.

In later articles I hope to notice Irish poplin, the Carrickmacross industry, Limerick, and other lace. Here I will only remark in conclusion that Irishwomen have developed positive genius (of head and hand) in the making of lace, and that the marvellous cleanliness with which the merest peasant keeps her handiwork often puts to shame the work done in a drawing-room.

TOWARDS THE SUNRISE.

A TALE OF RUSSIAN JEWRY.

By SAMUEL GORDON, Author of *A Handful of Exotics*, *In Years of Transition*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

AFTER bestowing both his parents in the grave and his only sister in marriage, Judah Engelsohn was free to do as he pleased. The rent he derived from the dairy-farm he had inherited from his father, late factor to Count Gribalski, the great landowner, provided him with comfortable if not over-affluent means of subsistence; and so he said good-bye to the four-footed ruminators who, together with their predecessors, had engaged the first twenty-three years of his life, and came to Warsaw.

There was a special reason why he chose the Polish capital for his place of abode. Into his boyhood's hermitage there had come from time to time vague echoes, faint after-quivers of the great upheaval that was stirring his people, dazed with suffering, out of their millennial torpor. By-and-by these rumours had changed into tidings of certainty. His soul caught fire: he longed to be present at the awakening, to add his shout to those that were bidding the sleeper arise and array himself once more in the glory of which he had been stripped by the despoiling centuries. And Judah felt it would be base and criminal to remain longer where he was, thrust away out of sight of, out of touch with, his fellows in faith, in the solitude where one remembered, only by a miracle, or at best by an accident, that one belonged to a great race and a great destiny.

Judah had no acquaintances in Warsaw; he brought, however, a letter of introduction to Uriah Vilenski, the *doyen* of the Jewish Students' Association. On the second day after his arrival Judah called on Vilenski.

'So you have come here because you want to help Zion?' asked the latter, after the usual preliminaries of identification, looking curiously at his visitor. 'What can you do?'

'I don't know yet,' replied Judah. 'How can I tell when I am ignorant of what there remains to be done?'

'Everything,' said Vilenski. 'We have got as far as the beginning. We want men to help us further. I don't know—you might be one of them. Have you learnt anything? You speak Russian remarkably well.'

'The tutor of the young counts gave me three hours a week,' said Judah simply. 'I can read Cicero; I have a fair knowledge of French and German, and a tolerable notion of the questions of the day. These are my accomplishments. I have but one natural talent—my love for Zion.'

'That is always welcome—even reckoned as an acquirement,' broke in Vilenski. 'And that is where your work should lie. You should utilise your talent—and impart it to others.'

Judah looked up quickly. 'I do not ask for anything better. I could not ask for anything easier. Nothing could be easier in this great city, where every third man I meet is linked to me by the memory of Jerusalem's ruins. I shall make them listen to me. I shall go to them one after another and say'——

'A sort of roving commission,' interrupted Vilenski, smilingly. 'No, friend; we are more methodical than that. Listen; there are about a dozen of us. We call ourselves the "Kadima." We have forsworn the seeking of wealth and earthly honours, and all who would be of us must

do the same. We are pledged to Zion, body and soul. While our pulses are capable of a throb, while our minds can fashion a thought, we shall toil in her service. She needs many such toilers, many such servitors. I think you would be a valuable recruit. Will you join us?'

Judah gazed silently at the floor. 'Kadima?' he said at last, half to himself. 'That means eastward—towards the sunrise. Yes, that is where we should be tending—thither where our new day is breaking, where the shadows will be afraid to follow us. It will be sweet to have a little sunshine again; we have shivered long enough with the cold. And then you ask me if I would be one of those to lead the way? I beg it of you as a privilege. Eastward—ay, ever eastward!'

And so it came that Judah joined the Kadima; but no, he did not—the Kadima joined him. He had been a little unjust to his natal star in the enumeration of his congenital gifts. The discovery surprised him as much as the others. At the first meeting of the Kadima he attended, he had risen to his feet to offer some trivial suggestion. He had thought that a few well-turned sentences would be enough to give it expression, but a quarter of an hour afterwards he was still standing up, still speaking; for, to save his life, he could not check the flow of eloquence that came surging up from his heart's depths, taking to itself, with every second breath, fresh scope and volume, widening out into majestic eddies of sweeping argument, and anon contracting itself into whirlpools of passionate fervour. He was unconscious of his gape-mouthed audience; he was not addressing them—he was speaking to himself. These were the culminations of his night vigils, the thoughts and feelings his heart had accumulated these many years, cramping them up, hoarding them jealously till there was no more storage-room. And therefore he spoke, because his words were to him as the air of heaven to a choking man.

When he sat down there was a momentous silence, followed by a short whispered consultation among the members, and presently Vilenski came up to him.

'We cannot let you work with us,' he said.

'Why—why not?' queried Judah, taken aback.

'You are too good for us—too strong for us. And therefore, if we are to act in concert, let us work with you. You are a stranger in our midst — a mere probationer — and already you have shown that you can do in minutes what we could not do in years. We have men amongst us who have given up the marrow of their youth, the sinews of their manhood, in our mission; none more so than I. But we must stand aside. If this work is to be achieved, the lesser of us must make way for the greater ungrudgingly, without murmur or complaint. Only the best shall hold command. Be our general; let us follow under your banner.'

That was how the Kadima joined Judah. Nor was it long before his fame had trickled out beyond its narrow confines. Whenever he was seen on the Nalevkas, in the street of the Franciscans, or anywhere within the purlieus where the teeming thousands of his co-religionists congregated, men gazed and pointed after him: 'There goes Judah Engelsohn.' And every one who noted the massive, lion-like head with the broad thinker's forehead and the fearless eyes—every one who watched the towering frame striding erect and resolute through their midst as though nothing could deflect it from its path or purpose, added to himself: 'Yes, I thought he would look like that.'

Some six months afterwards Judah had occasion to call on Vilenski to consult with him on business connected with their association. His friend was out, but was expected back shortly. Judah decided to await his return. Vilenski's room was on the second floor, and overlooked the court formed by the four blocks of buildings that flanked its sides. Judah sat down by the window and gazed out vacantly. The square was deserted; the men—artisans most of them—had gone to their work; the women were cooking; the children were in school. Suddenly Judah heard the front gate shut with a clang, and a moment after Ivan, the red-headed *concierge*, came staggering into the middle of the court. Judah saw at a glance that the man had drunk heavily, but he did not know what had brought the cunning, murderous look into his eyes, or what he concealed so sedulously under his jacket. The fact was that this happened to be Ivan's saint's-day, and, as usual, he observed it by drinking himself into *delirium tremens*. Now, even in his most rational and charitable moments, Ivan could not forgive his wife for not being some one else's wife; and when in his present condition he always did his best to rectify her mistake by attempting to make himself a widower. He was sure she was in hiding somewhere about the adjoining premises, and was standing sentry here, waiting for her to appear down one of the staircases. The tenants were not much concerned; they knew that Ivan's wife had gone to fetch the police, and that in five minutes the danger would be over.

Judah watched the man attentively; there was food for reflection in the spectacle. Whatever reproach their detractors might hurl against his brothers, their malice could not go as far as this. They could not taunt them with effacing from their countenances, as this brute had done, the image of the God who made them; there might be a few—ah! but it was those few that saved the many. Judah bent forward; the drunkard was standing on the alert—some one was descending. Yes, a young girl stepped out, veiled and richly dressed; evidently she did not belong to any of the tenant families. For a moment she stood wondering at the strange sight that

met her gaze. Ivan began to stumble towards her; he had heard the rustle of skirts, and that was enough to convince him he had his wife to deal with. Then, as the girl realised her danger, she screamed, and darted past him to gain the gateway. A glance showed her it was closed, and there would not be enough time to undo the bars. She turned back, but by now the ruffian had intercepted her way back into the court square. To the left of her was a little door. Judah just gave himself time to see her disappear behind it, when he rushed down, five steps at a time. Ivan's hand had moved under his doublet, and there had been a glitter of steel. Judah knew that the door led to a bricked-up flight of stairs, at the top of which the girl would be caught in an *impasse;* he himself had blundered into it on his first visit. He reached it just as Ivan's foot was on the threshold, hauled him back by the collar, jerked the knife from his nerveless grasp, and sent him spinning into a convenient puddle. It was all the work of a moment.

'You can come down now,' called Judah; 'there is no danger.'

The girl appeared almost immediately; her face showed very white under her veil, but otherwise her demeanour was calm. She cast a shuddering glance at Ivan, who had sat up, propped on his elbow, and whimpering piteously.

'Thank you,' she said quietly as she saw Judah forcing back the heavy bolts of the gate; and Judah did not know whether she thanked him for saving her life or only for procuring her egress. He took it to mean both.

'May I escort you home?' he asked diffidently. 'You are probably a little shaken by this unpleasant incident.'

'Yes, do come,' she said cordially. 'My father will naturally want to acknowledge his obligation to you. He would scold me did I not bring you.'

Judah hailed a fiacre. His companion gave an address, and Judah wondered not a little as he heard it. Indeed, he wondered so much that he thought his ears had deceived him. It was a long drive, and for the most part a silent one; but Judah found enough pastime in studying her face. It was a very pleasant study. And then he started wondering afresh as the vehicle pulled up outside a huge mansion in the Praga suburb. He knew to whom it belonged. So he had not made a mistake? It was indeed the daughter of Heinrich Kronemann, the great banker, the greatest Jew in Warsaw, whom he had saved from a terrible fate!

A minute or two after he was sitting in a magnificent saloon; he waited a little, and then the door opened for the banker and his daughter.

'You are the hero?' said the former, striving to be jocular; but the trembling in his voice and the moisture in his eyes belied the attempt. 'I have many millions of roubles—I can't help people knowing the fact,' he continued—'but I have only one child. How can I repay you?'

'By saving me the trouble of answering you with commonplaces,' said Judah, grasping the banker's proffered hand; 'one can appreciate gratitude better when it is unspoken.'

'There is something in that,' replied the banker thoughtfully. 'The least then I can do is to honour your wish, Mr'——

'Engelsohn,' completed Judah.

'It would be easy to pun on the name under the circumstances,' said Kronemann. Then he turned to his daughter, and his tone became more animated. 'As usual, it is your fault that I find myself in a predicament. I gave you strict orders not to perform these incognito charitable exploits of yours unaccompanied. I warned you you would play the good Samaritan once too often, and come to a bad end.'

'Annette has a cold, and the people were starving,' answered the girl. 'Besides'——

'Yes, besides?'

'One may be disobedient in a good cause.'

'That sounds horribly Jesuitical, you little rebel,' said her father, tapping her cheek smilingly, 'but my head is not fit just now for unmasking the fallacy. I'll do something more simple—I shall ask Mr Engelsohn to stop to lunch.'

Judah did not answer immediately. Something told him not to accept—a sense of danger which had already begun to possess him towards the end of their drive, and which gained fuel at the prospect of spending more time in the girl's immediate presence. He felt ashamed of his apprehension—as much as if he had uttered it aloud—it was so puerile; and therefore, to spare his self-respect, he translated it into the necessity of seeing Vilenski. He told his would-be host he had an appointment.

'I am exceedingly sorry,' said Kronemann heartily; 'but I hope you will give me another opportunity of cultivating your acquaintance. Bertha, will you as hostess ask Mr Engelsohn to call again?'

'For her sins?' smiled Judah.

But from the tone and manner of her invitation it did not appear that Bertha regarded it in the light of a penance.

'Would you please leave your card?' she said shyly. 'You may want a reminder.'

Judah handed it to her, feeling he had ceded a bulwark of his safety. Once back in the street he drew a breath of relief. Now that he was alone with himself he need not conceal what it was he feared. He did not want to come under a woman's spell—fall in love, as it was commonly called; he had heard that was the most terrible accident that could happen to a man. To love Kronemann's daughter? For Judah Engelsohn that would be an irreparable disaster. He must keep mastery over his emotions. He had his work to do—work that should be done well.

Vilenski was awaiting him anxiously; he had been given a confused account of what had occurred.

'Do you know who she is?' he asked when he had heard the true version.

'I will tell you on condition that no one else knows,' said Judah—'Bertha Kronemann.'

'What! *the?*'——

Judah nodded.

It took Vilenski a full minute to recover his breath.

'And you say that as quietly as if it were the name of your washerwoman?' he shouted.

'Am I to go into hysterics?'

'Why, man,' continued Vilenski eagerly, 'can't you read the stars? Don't you grasp the possibilities? You have free access to Heinrich Kronemann; you have eloquence enough to talk a fossil into life. If you can convert him to us we can boldly, safely, write "Victory" on our standard.'

'I have thought of that myself,' replied Judah a little coldly. 'Possibly I may make the attempt. I really don't know whether I shall ever call there again.'

Vilenski stared at him stupefied, but he asked no questions. He had learned to look on Judah as an elemental mystery, and therefore took him for granted.

Week succeeded week, and Judah made the best of them. The Kronemann episode, as he called it to himself, was fading from his mind beneath the stress of work. Occasionally Bertha's face and voice came to trouble him. For antidote he worked harder. But at the end of a month arrived her reminder—the reminder which he had not desired, and which, nevertheless, gladdened him more than he dared admit. The note read as follows:

'You are not paying me a compliment. I have not thanked you for your service. I intended, on your own principle, evincing my gratitude in my friendship. You evidently require neither; and I grieve for it. BERTHA KRONEMANN.'

After that he went, although he guessed what it would mean. He guessed right. He took away with him from his visit the consciousness that he lay in the balance; a hair's-weight might decide whether henceforth he would belong to himself or to her. And that made him struggle on a little longer; but only a little. The third time he left her a vanquished man, but one who exulted in his downfall. It made him strong—even as the giant of old rose reinforced by contact with his mother earth; and that justified him in his own eyes. She did not sap his energies—she fed them till they overflowed with their exuberance; and because she did that she was a laudable necessity. But then came a fear—a horrible fear—that made him writhe. This spell, this enchantment, in which he revelled was precarious; it hung on a thread. Any day, every day, he might lose the right to come to her for his inspiration; and the rest would be aimless, nameless agony — the slow-gnawing, relentless worm that poisoned and cankered and killed. One evening, as they were alone—she had been singing to him—she noticed the ungovernable terror in his eyes. She asked him what it meant.

'You ought to know,' he said almost sullenly; 'you put it there. One thing only can remove it.'

'And that is?'

For reply he gave her a look; but no—it was not a look, it was his soul pointing its finger straight at her.

'Myself?' she echoed, drooping her head.

'Yourself. Will you do it? You know how.'

'You have a right to ask the question,' she said at last; 'only it is not of me you should ask it—of my father. And'—a flush crept over her at the words—'ask him soon.'

'To-morrow,' he ventured, scarcely managing the word.

She hurried shamefacedly to the door; from there she nodded assent.

A minute later he was out in the street, and the dull thud of his footsteps was music in his ears. Everything was music and light and gladness. Perhaps it would be that only till to-morrow; but while it lasted he would quaff it to the dregs.

A CRUISE IN A CRUISER.

MANY people in these bustling days have gone to sea in the liners that traverse the great trade-routes and carry passengers in more or less luxury; but comparatively few have had the chance of taking a cruise in a man-of-war—one of those ships that form England's Royal Navy—the great first line of defence that secures the honour and well-being of our country. Let me transcribe a few notes made on board a fast cruiser, the type of ship that represents the frigate of old days; one of the scouts of the battle-fleet when it sails in company; one of the guardians of our commerce when it is on detached duty.

The cruiser in which I was privileged to embark was employed in relief-duty. She had to convey about two hundred men from Plymouth to the Mediterranean squadron, and then to bring back a like number to Plymouth. The captain

was an old friend with the blessed naval gifts of hospitality and sociability, and he repeated a long-standing invitation that I should spend a month with him under the white ensign.

The ship is moored near Saltash, and, on a breezy morning, slipping our moorings, we steam down Plymouth harbour. The great battleship in which the commander-in-chief hoists his flag is duly saluted by the marines drawn up on the poop, and we pass by Drake's Island outside the breakwater. The pilot is dropped, the speed increased to a hundred revolutions, and we are in blue water. There is a general feeling of thankfulness that we have a fine morning for a start. The men have been told off to many of their duties, but much remains to be done before everything is ship-shape. The first lieutenant is rushing about, note-book in hand, keeping every officer and seaman busy, and seeing that each knows his place and his work under every circumstance. The navigating lieutenant is on the fore-bridge with the captain; and our course is laid for Ushant. The captain is, of course, responsible for the navigation, as for everything else; but the navigating lieutenant lays down our track upon the chart, and can at any moment show the exact position of the ship. Our navigator, as a specialist, is very keen and enthusiastic about his work, and it is seldom indeed that he is not busily employed. By day and night he is ever on the alert. Every point that he sights, every light that sheds its beam across the water, enables him to take his bearings. He shoots the sun by day, and asks questions of the moon and stars by night. He has his dead-reckoning from the log; and even if it is obscure around, he can still form a shrewd guess as to the ship's whereabouts; but he does not like to be reduced to this, for many unforeseen influences may be at work, any one of which may produce grave error.

The first lieutenant is the mainspring of the whole ship. He is supposed never to have a minute to himself at sea, and to have his work doubled when he is in harbour. In a cruiser that does not carry a commander he is the senior executive officer. He does all the work of an adjutant in the army, and a good deal more besides. Everything passes through his hands, and his voice is heard throughout the day carrying on the ship's routine. Instruction, reproof, and very occasionally approbation flow from his lips without pause, and withal one may live for days in the smartest ship and 'never (well, hardly ever) hear a big, big D.' The freedom of expression that used to be common in her Majesty's naval service has of late years been much modified.

The ship's armament is all snugly tucked away. The breech of every gun is shrouded with a waterproof cover, and the threatening muzzles are turned inboard, parallel with the ship's sides. Rifles and cutlasses are hung in racks in sheltered places, and the torpedo-tubes modestly hide themselves in the shade. About the most interesting to an onlooker of the many drills that occupy the day is the falling-in of the ship's company at 'General Quarters.' As we have a scratch crew who have only just come together, and many of whom may not have previously served in a ship of our class and armed with our ordnance, the first lieutenant commences by assembling them and repeating to them in detail what has to be done by each of the parties already told off. They are dismissed, and a few minutes later the bugle sounds. What a scene of orderly bustle follows! The officers are buckling on their swords; the seamen and marines run to the arm-racks, fetch rifles and cutlasses, and sling them behind the guns in readiness for a possible hand-to-hand combat. Every man has girt himself with an ammunition-pouch, and the guns' crews fall in by their own pieces. The ports are opened; the guns are swung round and pointed over the sides. The hoists for shell communicating with the magazines are opened, the torpedo-tubes are manned, and, in four minutes from the sound of the bugle, the ship is ready to speak in tones of thunder to an enemy. Very fair work; but, of course, in a ship that has been long in commission everything, from constant iteration, goes like clockwork, and the slight delays which are now unavoidable never occur. When a ship is really cleared for action, which is done frequently during a commission, not only are the guns prepared, but the railings round the poop and forecastle fall flat, every possible object of hamper is removed, and nothing is left that could be at all in the way of the freest movement. I have said that, with a new crew, everything was ready for action in about four minutes; but in a well-drilled ship the broadside could be fired in less than two minutes from the last note of the bugle's warning, and in time of war everything would be in such a state of readiness (a certain amount of ammunition ready on deck, &c.) that the order to come into action and the firing of the first shot would be almost simultaneous.

Let us look at our armament. There are two six-inch guns, one on the poop and one on the forecastle, each of which throws a 100-lb. projectile. These great pieces are mounted on elaborate pivoting machinery, and can be traversed, sighted, and fired as easily as a fowling-piece. Then there are six 4·7 guns, each throwing a 45-lb. projectile. These, like the two six-inch guns, have their crews protected by shields, and are equally accurate and manageable. In addition there are eight six-pounders, four Nordenfelts, and four torpedo-tubes. Heavy as is the fire of such an armament, there is undoubtedly much question among naval officers whether our cruisers are sufficiently well armed in comparison with those of France and other powers. The theory on which our administrative authorities work is, that coal-carrying capacity with a large supply

of ammunition (involving a comparatively light armament) is preferable to heavier guns with less room for coal and a smaller ammunition supply. It may be admitted that a French cruiser of equal nominal size might, at broadside to broadside, overpower an English one; but before the ships could thus meet *à outrance* there is much that must occur. Lighter, faster, able to remain longer at sea, it may well be supposed that the English cruisers would more than hold their own against the heavier-armed ships of a foreign power, even as Lord Howard's light craft were able successfully to tackle the floating castles of the Armada. Superior seamanship and gunnery would also have much influence in striking a balance.

Clearing away all deck hamper for action has been mentioned, and the question at once arises, What is to become of the ship's boats which hang on davits fore and aft? In case of serious action every boat would become a source of grave danger. If an enemy's shot struck any one of them (and they are in such exposed positions that they must inevitably be struck) the splinters of wood and iron would carry death and destruction to the guns' crews and others on deck. The scattering fragments, too, would be almost worse than the bursting shell. It could not be hoped that, after an engagement of half-an-hour, there would be a single boat left that could float, and meantime their presence would have added heavily to the already inevitable loss of life in action. So completely has this been recognised that many naval officers of experience have it in their minds that, if they were called upon to engage, they would drop their boats over the ship's side and let them drift. When the action was over, a victorious ship could then cruise round the place where it had been fought, and take the chance (a reasonably good one) of picking up at least some of her boats.

From arms to the men. Our ship's complement when fully manned is something short of three hundred men, including marines and engine-room staff. Certainly a more workman-like lot it would not be easy to find than the men whom we now have on board. They are not giants, and in actual physical size I believe that the men of the French navy, drawn from the fishing population of the coasts, have the advantage over the British bluejackets. But, as I have already said, our men are caught young, and have two or three years' training as boys before they are rated as men and commence their regular twelve years of service. In handiness, general knowledge, discipline, and activity they leave little to be desired. The difficulty which is presented by the modern construction of ships of war is that of giving to the crews sufficient physical work to keep them in condition. Low be it spoken: many of the men are actually fat, or at any rate it must be acknowledged that they have a tendency to embonpoint. In the big battle-ships there is space enough to have arrangements and appliances for gymnastic exercises, but in smaller craft this is impossible. While in harbour the men are often landed and exercised in battalion movements, and this, besides rendering them peculiarly efficient for service in the naval brigades that take so brilliant a part in our wars, is of essential value in keeping them healthy and replacing the work which was, in the old days, provided by the handling of sails and ropes, and the constant duties aloft.

Marvellous to an onlooker are the adaptability with which all the men, by virtue of their previous long and careful training, fall into their places in a new ship, the quickness with which they become familiar with all the complicated details of its working, their knowledge of the elaborate machinery of modern days, and the smartness with which they handle the tremendous armament committed to their charge. So much for their efficiency. If the best authorities, the captains who command them, may be credited, their general good conduct and sense of duty are equally remarkable. The offences that they commit are few and unimportant, and are kept well in hand by the taut yet considerate manner in which authority is exercised by their officers. As an example of the difference between the condition of the English navy and those of foreign powers, it was credibly reported that, when two Russian battle-ships were lately in the vicinity of Malta, three men were hanged for breaches of discipline. Let us think what would be said if such an occurrence took place on the ships of a British squadron.

As the captain's guest I was made free of his quarters by day, and occupied a spare officer's cabin by night. Every officer above the rank of sub-lieutenant has little of discomfort in his accommodation at sea. The ordinary cabins are certainly not large, but every inch of space is utilised, and the ordinary requirements of an English gentleman are very fairly met. There are plenty of roomy lockers in which to stow away the most voluminous wardrobe. There is a bath, and plenty of hot water is procurable. The bed has the most comfortable of spring-mattresses, and is long enough for a man of many inches. The quarters where the captain dwells in solitary state are quite as extensive and comfortable as an ordinary bachelor's lodgings on shore. He has an after-cabin as a sitting-room, a fore-cabin as a dining-room and a sleeping-cabin, and these rooms may be, and generally are, as luxurious as a boudoir. Fireplace, writing-table, arm-chairs, mirror, couches, and settees are all provided by government; and the quarters only require the pretty coverings, bookcases, pictures, &c., which their occupant adds according to his taste, to be fit for anybody's reception. There are objects present, however, which show that the cabin is not in a smart holiday yacht. Two six-pounder guns have their places, and in an action the

captain's quarters are no unimportant part of the ship's fighting strength.

The officers of the ship mess together in the wardroom; and in a bigger ship that carries midshipmen, all the junior officers mess in the gunroom. It has often been suggested that all officers, including the captain, should mess together, as is the custom in the sister service; and it is believed that the practice would have many advantages. As it is, though captains make a point of asking some of their officers to dinner very frequently, the commander of a ship leads most certainly what Sir Walter calls 'a life both dull and dignified.'

We have been bowling along at the rate of fifteen knots an hour, and on the evening of our first day at sea we are off Ushant. We enter the Bay of Biscay still carrying fair weather with us, and plough our way towards Finisterre; and in little over twenty-four hours more we find ourselves passing down the sunlit shores of Portugal. It is Sunday morning, and, after the time-honoured custom of the navy, the whole ship's company assemble for divine service, which is read by the captain, as the ship does not carry a chaplain. How infinitely impressive and touching it is to hear the beautiful prayers of the Church service in such a place, and very especially those which are provided for the use of the navy—the humble supplication, 'O Eternal Lord God . . . Be pleased to receive into Thy almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us Thy servants, and the fleet in which we serve'! And it is not on Sundays only that divine service is held. Daily prayers are read by the captain, and never may a more reverent and devout congregation be seen than the crowd of England's fighting-men who follow his words and repeat the solemn thanksgiving and supplication.

On the fourth day after leaving Plymouth we are at Gibraltar, and having filled up our coal-bunkers, another day sees us speeding on to Malta with the white crests of the Sierra Nevada on our beam. How many places of interest we pass, first on the Spanish coast and then on the African! But the skipper does not care to be near the shore, and we see little but the bold outline of the hills. At last Gozo rises from the waters, with Malta beyond it. The light of evening falls on the white houses and gigantic forts of Valetta, and our bows are turned to the narrow entrance of the man-of-war harbour. As we steam slowly past St Elmo, the massive forms of battle-ship after battle-ship, cruiser after cruiser, torpedo-boat after torpedo-boat, come in view. The greater part of the Mediterranean squadron is in port. How spick and span they all look!—very different from our craft, which is only on a short commission, and whose officers have not had time and opportunity to give the finishing touches that accentuate the beauty of graceful lines and elaborate equipment.

There can hardly be a more completely and lovingly cared-for thing on earth than a British man-of-war in commission. The great black sides, smooth and polished as if enamelled; the spotless paint that marks out the fittings; the great ordnance burnished like silver; the gorgeous gilding on stem and stern; every piece of metal-work shining like an ornament in a lady's drawing-room; the boats delicately painted and varnished, and every article of equipment stowed in the most rigid order—all mark the most careful supervision of details, the most perfect discipline and organisation. But let it not be supposed that the British taxpayer pays for all the extreme of polish and decoration in a warship's appearance. When she is handed over to her officers and crew there is nothing provided for her beautification beyond the most plain and simple painting and ornament. Everything in excess is provided out of the private pocket of the senior executive officer (the commander in a battle-ship or the first lieutenant in a cruiser), to whom his ship is as a wife or child, to be turned out radiant and spotless at all times; and this is no trifling expense. Even in a cruiser it amounts to more than £50 a year, and in a large craft a far larger sum is, of course, necessary. Sometimes the captain shares the expense, but not always. However, whatever of smartness the ship has, the senior executive officer reaps his reward in the portion of credit that he receives, and this may recommend him for advancement to the powers that be.

Constant signalling has been going on between us and the flagship, and orders have been received that we are to moor to buoys in a particular spot. As we take up our position the ship is surrounded by a crowd of shore-boats, and the special bumboatman who is to have her custom makes his appearance on board. These bumboatmen are the universal providers of a seaport, and they make a very good thing out of it. The bumboatman provides fruit, vegetables, fresh bread, and many little luxuries that the ship's company wish to purchase. They take off the officers' washing, execute numberless little commissions, and provide for the many little requirements that make themselves felt after even a few days at sea. Our bumboatman is a most respectable-looking old Smytch (as an inhabitant of Malta is called by the English). He is said not to be able to read or write; but no piece of business ever comes amiss to him, no commission is ever forgotten. By some mysterious *memoria technica*, everything to be carried in his mind is carefully packed away in some brain pigeon-hole, and is never overlooked. 'Valda, I want a ticket for the opera to-night.' 'Valda, don't forget my washing.' 'Valda, get me some scented soap.' 'Valda, bring me some cigarettes,' &c. And it is perfectly certain that what Valda says he will do will be most punctually performed. It is said that the great Lipton is very anxious to get all the bumboat work at Malta into his hands; and that he offered, if the naval

authorities would give him the monopoly, to run a special steamer regularly to the Levant squadron, which would take out all supplies, and, if required, would bring back all invalids to the naval hospital at Malta. This was, however, more than could be conceded, and the trade is still in the hands of local men, who have left little to be desired in times past, and, as they are stimulated by active competition, may be trusted to meet all requirements in the future.

We have little time for more than a sip of the flood of pleasure-making and hospitality for which Malta is so famous. The men that have been brought out are distributed to their new ships. Time-expired men have come on board in their places, the coal-bunkers are again filled, and, as time presses, we are ordered to sea.

The winds to be dreaded in the neighbourhood of Malta are the Gregales, those that blow from the north-east. Many people believe that gales are nearly unknown in the Mediterranean, and that it is ever a sunny, smiling sea. Let them expunge such an idea from their minds; the weather can be as rough there as in any other sea. As soon as we have cleared the harbour we find that we are in the sweep of a rapidly freshening gale; and for the next forty-eight hours we are certainly very far from being at our ease. Our cruiser is an excellent sea-boat, but she is a very wet one, and her decks are constantly awash. She rolls, pitches, and staggers under the mighty thrashing of the waves. Everything that is not securely and firmly lashed on the decks or in the cabins breaks loose and charges erratically from side to side.

Even a gale from the Gulf of Lyons must come to an end at last, and once more we are able to lay on our course and increase our speed to fourteen or fifteen knots. Again we touch at Gibraltar, where we find an Italian and an American man-of-war. The courtesies of navies are interchanged; an officer arrives from each ship in the fullest of full-dress to pay a ceremonious visit, and one of our officers has in turn to mount his epaulets and cocked-hat and return the compliment.

A few hours' stay and, our bows directed towards the gorgeous sunset glowing at the mouth of the Straits, we left the Pillars of Hercules behind. We had paid our debt to fortune in enduring a Mediterranean gale, and the Atlantic was kind and equable. There were only two incidents to mark our homeward voyage. Off the Portuguese coast we passed a British battle-ship outward bound. She was a couple of miles distant, but we interchanged long messages by means of the semaphore on the poop. Keen and well-trained signalmen on board of each vessel, with strong glasses, communicate with marvellous precision and rapidity. To such a pitch of perfection has this semaphore signalling been carried that communication has been established between ships *sixteen* miles apart.

One evening in the Bay of Biscay we were at dinner, when the signalman on duty came to report 'a fleet of foreign battle-ships on the starboard beam.' Of course the captain rushed at once to the bridge, and thence through the darkness could be seen the distant, flashing electric-light signals of warships. In my ignorance I asked, 'How can we know that this is not our own Channel fleet?' The answer was prompt: 'If they were our own ships they would be signalling with masthead lights; and besides, no British fleet could be in such slovenly formation. British ships would be correctly in their stations, three cables apart; and just look at these. They are not keeping station at all. Two ships are more than a mile apart, and the others are at all sorts of distances. They are probably the French Channel fleet.' What a pleasing exemplification to the novice of the impossibility which the war-ships of other nations find in trying to emulate the stern regularity which is the pride of the British fleet!

OLIVES AND OIL-MAKING AT SORRENTO.

ONE of the principal industries of the Sorrentine peninsula, which is equally lucrative with that of oranges and lemons, if not actually more lucrative, is the cultivation of the olive and the export of oil.

The whole line of coast from Castellamare to Massalubrense is dotted over with picturesque-looking olive-trees. They are grown chiefly on the mountain and hill sides, as they thrive best in a rocky and dry soil. Their twisted gnarled branches take the most fantastic shapes, and the dark-green leaves, with their silvery lining looking gray in the distance, are restful to the eye in the brilliant landscape, with its glittering blue sky and sea.

The olive yields an abundant crop once in two years. The season when olives are plentiful is called by the *contadini* 'l'anno grasso,' or the fat year; the other when they are scarce being 'l'anno magro,' or lean year. In the month of September the fruit begins to turn a bluish black, but it is not fully coloured till October. It is often attacked by small maggots such as are found in cherries, and then it falls from the trees; but though the olives are partially spoilt, they are picked off the ground and an inferior kind of oil is made from them. The longer they remain on the trees the better is the quality of oil they produce. In other parts of Italy they are seldom gathered before the month of December,

but on the coast of Sorrento it is generally necessary to harvest them earlier. In 1897 the crop was abundant and promised well, but owing to the want of rain in August the fruit became dry and shrivelled; and when the heavy rains came in September much of it rotted and fell, and most of it had to be gathered before it was entirely spoilt. In such a season, the end of October will see the trees entirely despoiled, and the fine crop will bring in a poor harvest and produce an inferior quality of oil.

The *contadini* have a bad habit of shaking the trees violently to bring down the olives, so as to save themselves the trouble of climbing in the branches to gather them. Those that are gathered are sound and without the bruises which are inevitable when they are shaken down or fall of themselves. Sheets and sacking are generally spread on the ground to receive the fruit, as it is easier to see and collect it than on the dark earth or grass, where it is easily trampled upon.

Women and children are usually employed to collect the fallen olives, for the work, though light, requires time and patience. The men who pluck them from the trees have a small, deep basket, which they hang on a branch as they climb from one to another. They use a stick with an iron hook at the end to bend down the upper branches, which are often the most laden and are too weak to bear their weight. When the little basket is full they hand it to a companion waiting at the foot of the tree, to receive and empty it in the large baskets, which when filled are carried on the heads of women to the mill.

The fruit should be ground at once, for if it is left heaped up till it be convenient to do so it begins to ferment, and the oil made from it has a strong, unpleasant flavour.

Some of the richer proprietors have their oil made by machinery, but the more primitive method is chiefly used in Sorrento and its neighbourhood.

The olives are emptied in an enormous stone basin or reservoir, in the centre of which is a grindstone. A thick wooden beam reaches from it to the rafters of the building where the mill stands. In the centre of this beam another is inserted, which, when it is worked, turns the mill, and the olives beneath are crushed and ground. A mule tied to one end of the cross-beam is driven round and round, blindfolded to prevent his becoming giddy. Men are sometimes employed instead of a mule, but this is a waste of labour, for at least four men are required (that is, two at each end of the cross-beam) to do the work of one mule. A man with a wooden spade must constantly collect the olives and shovel them under the grindstone as they are flung against the side of the basin by the motion of the mill as it works. When the crushed mass is removed for the oil to be extracted it has a dark-brown appearance, somewhat like peat. This is stacked up like a haycock, except that, instead of being round, it is flat on the top. It is then placed under a press, which is also worked by hand, and in this both men and women are employed. This work is far harder than that of grinding the olives. A party of visitors, consisting of two strong young men and several ladies, tried for fun with their united strength to work the press, but could hardly move it an inch. When the son of one of the *contadini*, a mere lad, who was watching their efforts, joined them, they found they could work it easily.

The *contadini* are very strong, being accustomed to work from their childhood, besides having the knack that is required to manage the unwieldy machine used for pressing. As the heavy weights ascend and descend upon the mass beneath, those at work sway backwards and forwards as they throw all their weight in moving the cumbersome levers.

If one of the girls, in the impetus given, stumbles and falls, as is often the case, her partner claims a kiss by way of forfeit; and so the work goes on, brightened by fun and merriment.

When the press is in motion the oil streams from the mass beneath it into a large tank which stands on the floor below. Olives contain a watery juice as well as oil, and the former, which is black and muddy-looking, remains at the bottom while the oil floats to the top. When the tank is full the loose planks of the flooring above are removed, the oil is taken out and put in large earthenware or glass jars, the water being thrown away. After a few days it must be changed into other jars, as it forms a deposit. This is done at intervals till it is perfectly clear and free from all impurity. The last oil made in the season is always the best and most refined, as it is the produce of the olives which, being perfectly sound, have remained the longest on the trees. The oil of Sorrento is not equal to that of Lucca and Apulia, but it is thicker and more greasy, and therefore goes further, and the poorer classes prefer it, as having more flavour. It is sold by the litre or by the kilo—never by the bottle. The average price of fine salad-oil is from one franc to a franc and a half a litre. The oil made during the season is always cheaper than that of the preceding year, for, however carefully it may have been purified, a slight deposit always forms, whereas there is no waste whatever when it has stood for a year or more. It is sent in large quantities to Naples, but is seldom exported abroad, as is that of other parts of Italy.

The olives used for eating are of a different quality and much larger than those used for oil. They are gathered when still quite green; and the gathering must be done very carefully, as they would be worthless if bruised.

They are placed in salt and water, where they remain for some time before being transferred to jars, which are hermetically sealed. They must

on no account be touched by the hand when they are taken out of the salt and water, as in that case they would all be spoilt. A silver or wooden spoon must be used in transferring them to the jars.

There are different kinds of olives used for preserving, and the preparation of each quality differs slightly in some respects. The small olives used for oil, when quite ripe and black, are also much eaten by the people. They are preserved with salt alone, and when they become too dry a little oil is added to soften them. These are never placed in jars, but are sold by the kilo and are very cheap.

It takes twelve or fifteen years for a tree to grow to its normal size, and the olive, as every one knows, lives for centuries. It is valuable not only for the fruit it yields, but also for its wood, which is much prized.

The Sorrento woodwork so much bought by English people is made almost exclusively of olive, and it is also used for furniture. Even the pulp or paste, after the oil is extracted from it, is serviceable, for it is dried, broken up, and burnt as firewood. Sometimes, when taken out of the mill and still moist, it is given to pigs mixed with other food, so that no part of the fruit is ever wasted.

It is the custom of many of the landed proprietors to plant an olive-grove when a daughter is born, and it forms her dowry when she is grown up.

So high a value is placed on these trees that the space on which one of them could stand is grudged for any other purpose. In Apulia, where they are still more valuable, as they grow to a much greater size, the utilitarian principle is carried to such lengths that scarcely any flowers are ever planted, as they have no market value. Yet, indeed, it cannot be said that the olive is for use alone, for the great trees, though somewhat sombre in appearance, have a grace and beauty of their own.

GERMAN SONG-CANARIES.

By the Baroness von Rotberg.



N powers of song no canaries can match those of the Harz Mountains. German canaries can be divided into two kinds—the common country-bred bird and the Harz canary or songster. It is about the latter that I am going to tell you. The home of these birds, the Harz, an entirely isolated chain of mountains rising out of the plain between the rivers Leine and Saale, is the most northern elevation of importance in Germany, and lies partly in Prussia, partly in Anhalt and Brunswick. The best song-canaries are reared here at the present time, chiefly in Andreasberg, a town also celebrated for its silver-mines. In every house and cottage of the place you see canaries; and on a fine summer's day, when walking by, their song greets you from every open door and window. Whereas with other races of canaries colour, markings, shape, and size are important points, with this breed there is but one—their song. The birds are usually of middle size and strongly built; the head is larger, the legs shorter, and the neck not so long as in the common canary; the legs slant backwards a little, and the bird does not stand as upright as the others. The breast ought to be broad and strong, the eyes large and lively; the feathers must lie smooth; and the bird ought to execute all its movements with a sort of coquetry. The colours vary from straw to golden-yellow, some with green markings; but deeper shades of yellow are not to be found among them. If we say that these birds have to take the second place in outward beauty of form and colour, we certainly must give them the first of all in point of song. Their entire value lies in this. With the utmost care and science their voice has been cultivated for years, and splendid results have been obtained. The song of a really first-class Harz bird is a marvel of beauty for those who understand it; but it needs much practice and a musical ear to note slight differences and faults, and to be able to choose the really best songster among a crowd of birds.

The Harz canary is easily bred. A large cage in a sitting-room will answer this purpose, and the birds will build their nest and hatch their young in a room where people are constantly going in and out. This tameness is one of their great attractions, for it is a pleasure to have the pretty, lively little birds near one, and to be able to watch their doings. The middle of March is the best time for them to set up housekeeping. The cock ought always to be put into the cage intended for breeding a few days sooner than the hen, so that by the time she comes he will be master of the house. This avoids much quarrelling, and the birds settle down together sooner. The cocks, on account of their fiery temper, often quarrel; some will attack anybody who ventures to put a finger between the bars. Wire cages without any wood are always the best, and care should be taken to keep them as clean as possible. After the birds have been together for a fortnight, the cock will be seen feeding the hen, and the latter will be busy about her nest. Usually about the beginning of April the first egg is laid, and the hen ought to continue laying daily, the usual number being four to five eggs, sometimes less, hardly ever more. From the laying of the first egg all particulars about the breeding ought to be noted down. The Harz hens usually are model

mothers, seldom deserting their nests, and always feeding the young birds well. The hen sits thirteen days. When the young are hatched the breeder must watch carefully to see if they are properly fed by the parents. In sixteen or eighteen days the young birds leave the nest, but it is a fortnight before they are able to feed themselves. Summer rape-seed is the staple food of the Harz canary, varied by peeled oats and canary-seed, both of which are given in separate dishes, never mixed. Once a week the birds get a small quantity of hard-boiled egg, chopped up fine; in breeding-time this must be given daily. Every breeder has two or more old cocks, the best songsters he has been able to pick out, which are never used for breeding purposes, and are usually kept in small darkened cages. These are the masters who give the young birds their musical education. When the nestlings are about six weeks old, cocks and hens ought to be separated. The cocks are put into a large cage till they have developed properly; after two months they are put singly into smaller cages and placed in a room with the master bird, yet so that they cannot see each other. It is now the work of the breeder carefully to listen and to judge the voices of the birds and the progress they are making. According to their merits he chooses the best singers. These are then put into what are called 'singing-boxes,' cages so arranged as to be almost dark—usually a small wire cage placed inside a tin box, with a curtain at one side, which is withdrawn when the bird is to sing. Another thing the breeders pay great attention to is that their canaries never hear an inferior bird or other sort of bird, as they are apt quickly to learn wrong notes and so to spoil their song. Great care is taken to keep the birds quiet, as hasty singing is invariably condemned, and leads to a broken, jerky sort of melody. It is incredible what an amount of education a song-canary has to go through, the bird needing about six months to learn one much-prized melody. The excellence of the song consists not so much in its loudness, or even in its tone, as in varied repetitions of certain strains. Each melody has its special name, and the birds are divided into different classes according to the tunes they sing. There are supposed to be as many as twenty-two different strains, and some birds have a compass of four octaves. The faults of song are catalogued with equal accuracy, each being separately defined; and good breeders are very particular to remove all birds possessing faulty song as soon as they perceive it, as otherwise the best songsters could be spoiled by them.

As a rule, birds are supposed to have finished their musical education when they are seven months old, but breeders prefer to leave the young cocks with their master some time longer, as experience shows that a few weeks' longer practice enables the bird when sold to preserve his original song better. Great care is taken to keep the songsters in an even, moderate temperature, and, above all things, draughts must be avoided, as these may cause them to become hoarse or to lose their voices altogether. The Harz canaries are not so hardy as other breeds, and are especially susceptible of cold, one reason for this being that the breeders often keep them in small, over-heated rooms, some even employing artificial warmth to hasten nesting. However, with care any of these birds can be gradually accustomed to the ordinary temperature of a dwelling-room.

The number of people who keep canaries in Germany is very great; they are to be found in the houses of the rich as in the cottages of the poor, and everywhere the little yellow songster is valued and cherished. Workmen often save their money to buy and keep a canary, and the breeding is sometimes an important item in the income of poorer families. In the Harz districts the trade in canaries is the source of the principal income to the inhabitants, many thousand birds being exported every year, the prices varying for cocks from ten shillings a head wholesale to thirty shillings or three pounds for best single birds. This may seem a great deal, but some first-class singers have been known to fetch even more. The canary's song is seldom heard in perfection; and the few birds who reach the highest standard of melody are not often for sale, breeders preferring to keep them for their own use as masters. Only those who have had the opportunity of hearing one of these rare birds can form an idea of what a beautiful thing the song of a canary can be.

OUTWARD-BOUND.

I have taken good-night at the world, and at all the fasherie of the same. JOHN KNOX.

GOOD-BYE, Old World; shake hands before I go.
I would not leave behind a single foe.
We've lived for different objects, different ends;
My God has not been your God, nor yours mine;
Something's amiss, Heaven only comprehends.
As for your suitors, how could they combine
With hearts that hungered for the higher love,
Seeking the light that cometh from above?
Our forced copartnership, thank God, now stays
At parting of the ways.
I leave my burden with you, here below;
Your presence is not suffered where I go.

But Thou, O Mother Earth! must we too part—
We, who have loved each other, heart for heart!
Have I not strained my ear to breeze and brook,
By hill and valley, flower-enamelled sod,
Till thou hast shown me in thy secret book,
On every leaf, the signature of God?—
Thy revelation, flashing from afar,
The things that are not through the things that are.
O Mother, it were pain to part with you
Unless I surely knew
That earth, air, ocean, all thy mighty sum,
Were but the mirror of a world to come.

J. B. SELKIRK.

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PRIME-MINISTERS I HAVE KNOWN:

ENGLISH AND FOREIGN.

By T. H. S. ESCOTT, Author of *England: Its People, Polity, and Pursuits; Personal Forces of the Period*, &c.

ON the old-fashioned bowling-green of a manor-house in the extreme west of the county of Somerset, under the shadow of the purple heather-clad Quantocks, touched by the gold of the setting sun, when the present century was about entering middle age, there walked two men who had each of them been Prime-Minister of the Queen. They were visiting one of their supporters, the uncle of the present writer, at his country house, Hartrow Manor, near Taunton, then in his earliest childhood. Some one present had suggested a game of bowls; but it was the first day of the week.

Even fashionable London could not, at this early date, have foreseen Sabbaths in the valley of the Thames divided between steam-launching and lawn tennis. The great Duke garnished his talk with the expletives which had not then gone out of date. He tolerated no neglect of Sunday ordinances, and together with Sir Robert Peel frowned down the desecrating suggestion of producing the bowl-box. This was how I in my infancy just missed the sight of the heroes of Waterloo and of Corn-Law Repeal playing the same game as that which on Plymouth Hoe some three centuries earlier the great Devonshire captains insisted on finishing though the Armada was full in sight. There was, they said, as proved to be the case, plenty of time to finish their rubber and thrash the Spaniard too.

The Prime-Minister of whom not only the west country but the whole English mind and ear were most full in those comparatively early days of this expiring century was neither Sir Robert nor the Duke, but the representative of the west of England borough of Tiverton. Within the opportunities of observation common to those born about the middle of this century no public man has ever so entirely possessed the popular mind, provincial or metropolitan, on the Thames or on the Exe, as Lord Palmerston. When in the autumn of 1865 he died, every cab and omnibus driver in London put himself into mourning. The whole country-side round Tiverton in thought walked in his funeral procession, for the fame of Palmerston's personality had overflowed from the borough he represented into the whole neighbourhood. No native, therefore, of that part of the kingdom being much there at that period could fail to be steeped in personal reminiscences of the well-knit figure in the blue frock-coat with gilt buttons, and buff waistcoat; the shapely head covered with hair which had not yet quite lost its curl—in a word, with all the ensigns of the jaunty octogenarian presence that was really to those who saw it a personal, not less than a national, pride and delight.

Among the college acquaintances of the present writer, though on a different foundation, was a former pupil of Blundell's School, Tiverton, who owed liberation from school durance to the unexpected presence of the borough member and his friend, Sir Thomas Acland, who died immediately after Mr Gladstone. The two gentlemen had chanced to enter Blundell's School; here they found a boy engaged on the imposition, which kept him from the half-holiday games. He had been set as a task a copy of verses on, I think, Andromeda, and could make nothing of the theme. Palmerston found out what was the matter. Turning round to his companion, he said, 'Acland, do that boy's verses for him.' They were done, and the lad was set at liberty. While Tiverton exists as a town, no statue would be needed to keep alive the memory of its former member; for memories and anecdotes of him encounter one at the corner of every street. Some chance had brought me to the town, in whose neighbourhood many of my early days were passed, while an election was going on during the latest fifties. The hustings stood, I think, close to St Peter's Church. Lord Palmerston then, as

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I believe he always did, was staying at the inn named after him. I had squeezed my way into his committee-room; seeing him there, 'dauntless child'—in Gray's phrase—that I was, I had introduced myself by mentioning the name of a relative who, being in the House of Commons, must, I felt sure, be known to him. 'Come on the hustings! By all means, my little man, if you think you can climb up.' I cannot have been much more than six years of age at the time, but climb up I did. I was rewarded by witnessing one of the historic encounters between Lord Palmerston and his most pertinacious local opponent, the butcher, whom he insisted on publicly calling 'my old friend, Mr Rowcliffe.' This tradesman I can recall as clearly as if I had seen him yesterday: a man of good presence, with a clever face, a strong mouth, and a certain look of Disraeli as to the shape of and lines about the nose. On the same day as I witnessed this historic encounter between the statesman whom no interruptions could put out of temper, and the sturdy and clever old Chartist whom no Palmerstonian explanations could satisfy, there was being enacted behind the scenes a Palmerstonian incident which I did not witness, but of which I was informed by one who did. On the whole, Lord Palmerston's relations with the more serious among his constituents were surprisingly smooth. At this election a Nonconformist minister refused to give the popular favourite his vote until he was satisfied about his lordship being a 'saved soul.' Personally heckled on the delicate subject by this inquisitor, the statesman evasively, by way of reply, expressed a hope that the performance of his public duties showed his desire to obey the cardinal precept of 'doing to others as he would they should do unto him.' 'Ah!' exclaimed the divine, 'you look to be saved by your works. So did the Jews. In that case, my lord, you will have to submit to a certain Jewish rite.'

Palmerston's local services to his borough out of Parliament were, as might be supposed, worldly rather than other-worldly. He revived the Tiverton race-meeting that had long lapsed. He ran some of his horses there for some years without much success. Twitted on his failures, he replied, 'Well, I must try to get John Day' (his trainer) 'to send me something better.' The result was the arrival of his mare which had won the Cesarewitch, 'Iliona,' and her carrying all before her on the west-country course. Any one who about this time happened to be in Hampshire, near Lyndhurst, where 'Broadlands,' Lord Palmerston's house, stood, might have seen him clad generally in a swallow-tailed dress-coat, mounted on a thoroughbred cob, with a groom behind him, riding often at a hand-gallop to Danebury, where his horses were trained. Always genial to his inferiors, and often chatty, Palmerston wasted words with no one. So soon as he had heard Day's account of his stud, and of the money the trainer might be putting for his employer on some of the horses, often without dismounting, usually or always without entering the trainer's house, John Day's employer rode back to his own home. Palmerston, as every one knows, was the most abstemious of men. 'The sort of internal sinking of which servants complain is,' he often said, 'the luxury of housemaids denied to statesmen.' He never wanted or took anything between meals. My old friend, the late Mr Abraham Hayward, lived perhaps more with Palmerston than any other man of his time; he told me he had never known the 'evergreen Premier' to drink more than one glass of the lightest, almost unalcoholised sherry, sometimes nothing but water, at lunch, or two glasses of sherry at dinner. Wherever he might be, in London or the country, just the amount of exercise which he had found useful to his health seemed his first aim. By compulsion of sedentary occupations, he always evaded sedentary habits. At home, in Hampshire or in Piccadilly, he entered his study every night at ten, transacted all his business, whether of reading or writing, at a standing desk. When in office and kept closely within-doors at the Treasury, he used two desks. On one of these were his papers, on the other was his ink-bottle, so that he could not for any time use his pen without partly making the tour of the room to replenish it.

The most methodical of men in all things which were to him business, he was as careless as the younger Pitt himself in his private money affairs. It is a perfectly true story that a London tradesman—I believe a coachbuilder—exasperated by his customer's neglect, actually took steps towards putting an execution into Cambridge House. One of the best rejoinders ever credited to Palmerston—which I happen to know to be authentic—must close these Palmerstoniana. Always vain of his appearance and proud of his *belles fortunes*, he never quite gave up his flirtations with young married ladies. Remonstrating with him on this habit, one of his devout relatives, a lady, began by describing it as ungentlemanly; it was also, she said, contrary to all religion; finally, she urged, 'it can never answer.' Then came the incorrigible reply of the gay veteran: 'As to the first point, that is a question of opinion. I think it most gentlemanly. As to religion, I admit the practice of the churches differs. As to its not answering, your ladyship misapprehends the facts, for it never fails.'

Of all Premiers with whom I have been brought into personal touch, Lord Palmerston was the one who to me suggests the fewest associations of Downing Street. The case of Mr Gladstone is exactly opposite; for as social host at his official residence only do I chiefly recall this great and good man. Here, while his memory is still fresh, a current misconception

may perhaps be corrected. Recollecting his own words on the subject, I may say Mr Gladstone was not behind Disraeli in inviting to his State dinners others than guests of Cabinet rank—such, I mean, as men distinguished in science, letters, or art.* The Downing Street dinner in the Gladstonian days most vividly now before me is one whereat physically the largest, socially the most entertaining, guest of the evening was The O'Gorman. This was the typical Irishman of the old school, with little in common between it and the younger patriots of Erin, who, as member for Waterford city, rolled his huge and pleasant presence into and out of the House of Commons. He, like his Downing Street host, as the latter said, was one of the few men still living who could still relish a glass of port. Always in good form, the Major was on that evening brilliant. The reminiscences which, in talk with Mr Gladstone, he suffered to be elicited from himself of Ireland in the old days would have furnished fit additions to Sir Jonah Barrington; they could be reported justly by no one save Charles Lever. During the London season Disraeli's most characteristic talk, whether he might be in or out of office, was ever reserved for young men of great families and for fine ladies. It was my lot in the early seventies to hear him make his famous 'extinct volcanoes' speech at Manchester, and to dine at the same house where he was staying —that of Mr William Romaine Callander. The statesman could never have been in a more agreeably autobiographical vein. He talked much and pleasantly to several who were near him on his Lancashire visits more than a quarter of a century earlier, when he was collecting material for his novels, and was himself in the company of one of his heroes, the George Smythe who suggested so many touches for the character of 'Coningsby.' Disraeli's often-quoted 'I prefer the peacocks to the primroses' was uttered on the Hughenden lawn, not to Sir William Harcourt, but to Sir Algernon Borthwick, now Lord Glenesk.

Contrast with these First Ministers of Queen Victoria statesmen filling a like position in other lands which mould their government after the British pattern. The first time I ever saw Gambetta was in a railway carriage on the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean line. His companions were a lady of great natural distinction, still with the traces of beauty about her, though no longer young, whom he treated with a courtesy worthy of a birth and breeding far higher than his own. The other member of the Gambetta travelling-party was a young man, apparently half-secretary, half-bodyservant, whose business it was to produce for his chief all the newspapers, as it seemed, known to Europe from one of those bags which France alone manufactures. These sheets the statesman, who had not yet 'arrived,' mastered with great speed; they were then docketed by the secretary, and carefully put away. Soon after reaching Paris I presented to my illustrious fellow-traveller at his apartment a letter of introduction. This was after the fall of the Empire, but long before Gambetta seemed likely to become a very great personage. He was then living very simply in an apartment not very far from the Bourse. He received me in the *demi-toilette* dear to all intellectual workers at their work, and affected specially by Frenchmen *en famille*. Smoking incessantly full-flavoured cigars, never moistening his lips with any liquid, he chatted pleasantly and pertinently with a knowledge of England gained doubtless from his loyal and able follower, Camille Barrère, to-day French Ambassador at Rome, but then responsibly occupied on his chief's newspaper, *La Republique Française*. Gambetta was concerned circumstantially to combat the opinion implied, I suppose, in some remark of mine that careers of every kind were more open to all the talents in France than on the other side of the Channel. The observation, however, which has most often recurred to me since was upon Egypt. There was nothing, I think, then to indicate the international future and problems ahead for the land of the Pharaohs, but, apropos of I forget exactly what, Gambetta said something in very significant tones of the day when the political currents of all lands would flow into the Nile.

The next time I was to meet this remarkable man he was in office practically as Premier. He was installed in his official rooms at the Palais Bourbon, where he had asked me to call. The natural dignity of the man suited his general surroundings of decoration and furniture—rather decayed, though, their splendour seemed in the room where he sat. The old pea-jacket, much the worse for wear, had been replaced by such a frock-coat as an English Premier might wear. The cigars in the open box on the table were of a better quality than of old; they struck me as of exactly the same brand as those smoked by Mr Joseph Chamberlain, my mention of whose name to my host with a question as to acquaintance with him elicited no more reply than: '*Je l'ai vu.*' Once more only did I behold this famous Genoese Jew, whose Eastern descent was stamped not less visibly on his features than on his moral and mental nature. This meeting must have been in the summer of 1882, in the winter of which year Gambetta died at Villa D'Avray. He had resigned office in the previous January on the rejection by the Chamber of Scrutin de Liste. He was living in a little house, built on the English scheme, in the Rue Didier, not far from the Arc de Triomphe. The ministerial frock-coat had now given place to the old smoking-jacket once more. The tobacco which perfumed the room scarcely

* Mr Gladstone once used words to me conveying, I think, the impression that the initiative was actually taken under his administration. Both statesmen were doubtless ready to take it about the same time.

seemed of the same excellence as at the Palais Bourbon. But Gambetta himself was apparently in high spirits—quite happy with his papers and proof-sheets—of which latter several lay on his table. His last words to me were, as almost his first had been, but in a cheerier tone, on the subject of Egypt. He would never allow the dual control in Egypt to have been the failure which it was popularly accounted. On this occasion his words, just as I rose to leave were: 'We shall yet come out of this business very good friends.'

Shortly after taking my degree at Oxford, I had been asked by an acquaintance of mine interested in the Italian railway system to go to Rome for him to see Count Cavour, the then Premier. I could not accept the offer. The friend who replaced me, and who performed his mission far better than I could have done, told me that the hour appointed by the Italian statesman for his business interviews was 4 A.M. When, therefore, being in Rome in 1886, I secured an appointment with Signor Depretis, I was relieved at knowing it to be a post-meridian, not ante-meridian, meeting. The Italian Premier was then living on the second floor in a block of buildings in a small street near the Corso; everything about him was in the same simple and frugal style that, by its contrast to the environment of English Ministers, had struck me when first visiting Gambetta in his little apartment near the Bourse. At this time Depretis must have been somewhat over seventy, but his spare, sinewy figure was active and brimful of vitality; for political information he referred me to one of his followers with the operatic title Commandatore and a surname which I cannot recall. That gentleman gave me the facts which I desired for the moment, and assured me that Signor Depretis would send me some time next year the article I had hoped to secure from him for a periodical I was then editing. But next year Signor Depretis died; the article was never written. The most memorable words uttered to me by the Italian Minister had been: 'Your two statesmen, Mr Gladstone and Lord Derby' (he alluded to the fifteenth Earl, the predecessor of the peer of 1898) 'are the two men who understand Italian affairs better than do any of us.'

I have had the honour to be received by Mr Burt, M.P., in a small Chelsea lodging, as well as by Mr Bright in his hired room in Piccadilly.

Is the day coming when British Premiers, actual or potential, will receive their visitors as both the French and the Italian statesmen received me, with as little of the pomp and circumstance of State in their surroundings as if they had been students in the Latin quarter? When the State pays its members of Parliament, will a step in the Continental direction have been made? Have not the experiences of foreign States been called the prophecies of British posterity?

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER II.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY.

TUDWAY'S uncle lived in a quiet corner, out of the Southwark Road. It was known as Nelson Square. This square, obviously built in the days of naval victory, was devoid of historic interest. A more commonplace square did not exist. No one suspected of heroic deeds had ever lived there; and yet, by reason of its suggestive name, this square had come to be looked upon as a sort of nautical landmark. In fact, one almost expected to discover a statue of Trafalgar's hero, weather-beaten and begrimed with London smoke, in the centre of its large circular garden; but the trees, planted there perhaps in the year Trafalgar was won, formed a natural and poetic substitute. At least it should be conceded that the architect was in a nautical mood when he conceived his design; for some of the houses had windows bulging out like the stern-windows of old battle-ships, and the broad areas beneath them had the appearance of dry docks into which they had run for repairs.

Tudway on reaching London had driven here. His uncle had rented the top floor in one of these houses for years past. The old skipper was seated beside the fire over his glass of grog.

'Well, Ed'ard'—this was Captain Tudway's invariable form of greeting—'what cheer?'

The captain had been too gouty and rheumatic for many a day for active service. He was a stout, broad-shouldered man, with a quantity of gray hair and beard, his small eyes peering keenly out of these bushy surroundings. He wore a thick pilot-coat at all seasons, tightly buttoned round his chest; and in the capacious pockets was stowed away an exhaustless supply of 'negrohead' tobacco, pipes, lucifer-matches, and such-like useful articles. His room had the appearance of a ship's cabin. The walls were panelled, and a ship's lamp was suspended from the centre of the arched ceiling. There was a ship's compass in the recess of the window, a telescope hung horizontally above the mantelpiece, and a schooner crowding all sails—a model of the *Nancy* on Cablethorpe sands—was scudding over a rough sea under a glass case.

Edward Tudway sat down on the opposite side of the hearth. 'It's blowing a'most a gale,' said he, 'at Cablethorpe to-night.'

'Blowing is it? Why, Ed'ard,' said the captain, 'you've got more cheery news than that for me, I reckon; haven't you?' As he spoke he shut one eye and looked at his nephew knowingly with the other.

Tudway bent his eyes upon the fire and made no reply.

'Well, my lad, here's to Hettie Beek!' the captain went on. 'It was agreed between us to drink her health afore you sailed; weren't it?'

Tudway nodded. 'I'll drink to her,' said he, 'with all my heart!' Still, while he mixed his glass of grog, with the captain's eye upon him, he thought to speak of how Hettie had refused to bind herself to any promise. But he shrank from an avowal that might lead to one spoken word of mistrust. It would be necessary to suppose Captain Tudway as much in love with Hettie as he was himself before he could put the whole situation to him; and to suppose such a thing would, of course, be absurd.

When Hettie's health had been drunk, and Captain Tudway had sat silent for a while, 'There's something on my mind, Ed'ard,' said he, 'and it's been there for years. But secrets ain't the sort of ballast I've a fancy for at my time of life. As it is, I've had the load stowed away a bit too long. Are you a-listening?'

'I'm with you, Uncle Ted,' answered Tudway. 'Something on *your* mind? I would never have suspected it!'

'You're starting on a long voyage to-morrow, Ed'ard,' the captain began, taking no heed of Tudway's comment, 'and afore you steer again into this port o' London maybe there'll have been changes here as elsewhere. I can't abide in this cabin o' mine everlasting. I shall be lifted up the companion-ladder one of these days and dropped overboard. It may happen before you come back; for, like my old ship *Nancy*, stranded at Cablethorpe, I'm a-breaking up.'

Tudway had frequently found his uncle in this mood of late; and although he had made every effort to rouse him out of it, and sometimes succeeded, the mood would invariably recur.

'Now, you've always looked upon me, I'll be bound,' and the captain closed one eye winkingly, 'as a poor man; ain't that about it? Come now!'

'I've never looked upon you as a millionaire,' said Tudway, laughingly.

'Ah!'

As the captain uttered this ejaculation he plunged his hand into one of the pockets of his coat, as if about to draw forth a handful of gold; but he only produced a handful of tobacco, and then a meerschaum pipe, which he began to fill meditatively.

'I'm an old bachelor with no kith or kin,' he resumed, 'yourself excepted. And when you were left on my hands, a penniless young orphan, I began to save money. I didn't begin to save it in any miserly spirit, you'll understand; it was all done with an object. Now, I'll tell you what that object was.'

He took a match from another pocket, lighted his pipe, and then went on. 'Some twenty years ago,' said he, 'Mr Beek brought his daughter Hettie up to town with him for the first time. I took a fancy to that little girl. She was hardly five years old at the time; but I made up my mind, there and then, that she should marry you—some day. I thought when I had saved enough money to buy you a partnership in Mr Beek's house, I would make it part of the bargain that she should be yours. That was my notion. P'raps you'd call it a dream. Well—stop a moment. I ain't done yet.'

The captain's words brought to Tudway's recollection his first meeting with Hettie Beek. It had been a case of love at first sight on his part; and yet there had been little or no romance about the time or place. It had been upon the staircase, one foggy November morning, in this lodging-house in Nelson Square. The landlady—who went by the name of Clitherow—had been Mr Beek's housekeeper at Cablethorpe in her spinster days. Captain Tudway had been her lodger ever since she had rented the house. That 'staircase-meeting' between Tudway and Hettie, as he now remembered, had happened on the morning upon which he had 'come off' his first voyage.

'I put by money year after year,' said the captain. 'I was like an old miser over my gold. I used to hoard it up in a sea-chest. And many a night, when Mrs Clitherow and her lodgers were all abed and asleep, I've emptied the bags out here upon the hearth and gloated over my bright guineas. It was all going into Mr Beek's timber and ship-breaking business—all a-going to buy you a partnership and the best o' wives! Ain't my dream coming true? Wait a bit!'

If he had only known this, Tudway thought, even a few hours ago—how easy it would have been to set Hettie's mind at rest! Uncle Tudway a man of wealth! Surely he would help Mr Beek—help Hettie's father—out of his troubles?

'Most men would have blurted all out,' said the captain, winking as though he had been specially wound up for it to-night; 'but I knew better! "Tell that young blackguard," says I to myself—meaning you—"tell that young blackguard that Hettie Beek is the wife for him, and he'd never marry her!" That's human nature. Why, when you left school and I told you that I had made up my mind to put you into the timber-trade, didn't you instantly insist upon going to sea? But I've got you now!'

Thereupon Captain Tudway began to shake with laughter, and to wink and nod so persistently that

his nephew began to have serious fears lest he should 'break up' before he had completed his confession.

'That dream,' the captain resumed when he had had his laugh out—'that dream was the one I mostly had, Ed'ard, when aboard the *Nancy*, seated in my cabin—you know my favourite window on the starboard side. I've dreamt it a thousand times! I've dreamt of you married to that girl—happily married—and a flourishing partner in Beek & Son's house.'

As the captain's words, a minute ago, had recalled to Tudway's mind his first meeting with Hettie, so the parting between them to-day in the captain's cabin recurred. Had they not sat there together, side by side, the embodied spirits of the dream of which Captain Tudway had just spoken? He felt almost tempted, remembering all that the girl had told him about the tottering condition of Beek & Son's house, to make known to his uncle that his dream could never be fully realised. Still he hesitated. Might not Hettie justly consider any communication with regard to her father's affairs as a breach of confidence? Yes; it would be time enough to waken him out of his dream when all hope was gone.

'Well,' said the captain after blowing a cloud or two from his pipe, 'you shall make this one voyage more. Then you must settle down. I've saved enough money at last; and I should like to have it all my own way, just as I dreamt I would, afore I die. Come, my lad, don't look down-hearted! I know what I'm a-talking about. Seafaring is all well and good when you're young and single. But it's better to break ships than sail in 'em when you've thoughts of brightening the domestic hearth.'

Meanwhile Hettie Beek, after bidding Tudway 'good-bye' at Cablethorpe Station, hastened homeward. She felt the parting more keenly than she could have believed possible an hour ago. Still she did not regret her determination. It might be only a passing sentiment, which all leave-takings are apt to awaken. It was better for him—it was better for both of them that there should be no binding engagement. She quickened her pace, as though that would help her to put the thought of Edward Tudway out of her heart. She recalled to mind her father's trouble—saw him seated at his desk with her brother Gabriel's letter in his hand—and grew eager to reach home. She was well acquainted with the state of her father's affairs; she had of late taken an active part in the timber business; and she seriously feared that some catastrophe might at any time overtake the house.

All was silent within the gates. There was no light in the office windows; and as Hettie crossed the moonlit timber-yard, her face aglow after her gusty walk with Tudway, and her hair in great disorder about her forehead, Jarvis came hurriedly out of the house by a side-door. The look on his face took all the colour from her cheeks.

'Was it bad news?' said the girl, instantly grasping the situation. 'Was it Gabriel's letter?'

'I don't know,' said Jarvis. 'I found your father lying face downward in the office. The letter is still crushed up in his hand.'

Hettie did not wait to hear more. She turned quickly towards the house and went in.

IN PÈRE LACHAISE.

By JOHN STAFFORD.

TO the sojourner in Paris who wearies at whiles of its ceaseless *bruit*—its roar of wheels, its cracking whips, its omnibus hooters, and, above all, its perennial chatter—there is always at his hand a city of another kind to which he may retreat—a city of many streets and stately edifices, with a population of millions, yet through whose ways and byways he may saunter, hearing no sound but his own slow steps or the song of a bird here and there among the trees; from whose heights he may gaze down on all Paris, and yet hear the beat of his own heart, so still it is and restful on the leafy slopes of Père Lachaise.

To really know the charms of the old cemetery one must go, not once, but many times. And those who do know it rarely go in quest of its quiet alone, or to enjoy its natural attractions—the cool of its avenues, its winding ways, its sylvan nooks. They know that, over and above these things, there is a subtle glamour there, which, mingling with them, lends to the trees and the flowers—yes, and to the very grass-blades, a something not their own, which makes the foot fall softly and the head to bend with a kind of homage.

As the visitor enters through the great archway from the Boulevard Ménilmontant, and slowly mounts the yew-lined hill to the chapel which crowns it, he already feels something of this, as he sees on either hand of him such names as Rossini, Alfred de Musset, Arago. And, pausing on the hill-top to consider which way he shall turn, he knows that whichever path he may choose will take him by the last homes of other men of light and leading, not in scores but in hundreds. Involuntarily he looks away to the distant dome of the Panthéon; he thinks of Rousseau, Mirabeau, Victor Hugo, wishing, perhaps, that they had been put to rest amid the bosky shades about him rather than in that

dismalest of mausoleums. But as he passes on he remembers that under that sombre cupola, and here beneath the kindly drapery which nature has hung about them, lie most of the stalwarts, who, in their exits and entrances, like shuttles working on the warp and woof of meaner things, have woven for us the extraordinary fabric of modern French history. They have thought and done—are in some sort still thinking and doing in their silent subjective way; and however some of them may have erred, or whatever wrong turnings they may have taken in the moral fog they were groping in, they make, nevertheless, an impressive group of strivers. And after life's fitful fever how well most of them sleep in Père Lachaise! Each in his particular arbour—the green tree-arms stretching protectingly over him, filtering the sunlight and waving back the brusquer breezes—how different it all seems to the great cellars away there in the Pays Latin!

One walks on full of musings; the names about stir the thoughts as the sun does a hive at sunrise. Here in a railed space, with its sturdy box-borders and geraniums and things, lies La Fontaine; and there on the right of him, sharing the same enclosure—were they not friends to the last?—rests the creator of *Tartuffe*. Remembering the famous quartette of the Rue de Vieux Colombier is to wish Racine and Boileau no farther away. 'Ætat 51' says the inscription on Molière's monument. He lived, then, a year less than Shakespeare, to whom in all the world he used to say he would doff his cap. Witty, cynical, handsome Molière! He died in harness, making laughter to the last. And, as if to satirise his own sick health, his play was *Le Malade Imaginaire!* His funeral was scarce better than a *felo-de-se's*. A couple of silent priests, a little string of friends bearing torches—not a chant, hardly a prayer. For why? He was Molière, the king's player. It was the revenge of *Tartuffe*.

Not far away are two other friends who are even more closely united. Their cameo faces, halfway up the lofty obelisk, are turned one to the other, and beneath them are the words, '*Je désire être inhumé dans la tombeau de mon ami Manuel.*' It was Béranger's last wish. The mourning multitude which followed him there saw that it was duly executed. The sweetest of Latin singers, he could also be the most sonorous, and not always to the peace of his enemies. Once they caught him and put him in a cage—the prison La Force; but still he sang on, and by-and-by a government fell, cursing him. The restored Louis, not to be ungrateful, offered him reward, but Béranger would have none of it. He went his way to make more poems. He has been called the Tom Moore of France. Both sang of love and fatherland; but the power they wielded was widely different. Béranger could ring out, when the humour took him, like a clarion; Moore was a lutist always. Béranger could rouse a nation, as his orator-friend Manuel could rouse a mob. Passing by David's tomb will remind us of an instance. The great painter—he was all that in spite of Thackeray's raillery—died an exile in Brussels. His friends sought to take his body for burial in his beloved Paris, but government martinets stopped it on the frontier. Béranger thereupon threw off a terrible song. Louis David now shares with the poet the same necropolis. He lies over by the chapel, having as neighbours such brothers-in-art as Géricault, whose 'Raft of the Medusa' is so familiar to us; Gustave Doré, Ingres, and Corot.

De Musset, like Béranger, had also a last wish: it was to rest under a willow-tree. His comely features, chiselled in marble, show no chagrin that the willow there is no better than a sapling. It is the third or fourth which has been planted, such is the devastation wrought by hero-worshippers. But the little tree, with the geraniums and marguerites about, does its best to make some cheeriness over the bones of melancholy De Musset.

Lingering there, the eye travels to the name of a very different man, the bright, vivacious Auber, the arch-laugher in music, whose *Fra Diavolo* alone makes kindly thoughts for him. Rossini's empty tomb—he lies now at Florence—waves back other tuneful hours at Covent Garden, which most of us may count among the few not lost in the waste of our living. Such reminiscences make more, and one's glance turns to the trees opposite, among which Bellini rests, and Cherubini. Thought, already on the lilt, will find that little pear-shaped copse quite haunted with old tunings. For Chopin is there too, and through the Ariel of memory will add to the rest *morceaux* of his own nocturnes and melodies till, if you will, the place be as full of 'noises, sounds, and sweet airs' as Prospero's isle.

It is pleasant to rest a while, listening to these things, and looking on at what fancy will do to their measures, the visions it will bring, the figures it will shape and unshape from the fugitive brain-scraps you throw it. But among the pictures which come and go, like the faces over the witches' kettle—dim cathedral, glaring opera-house, twilighted drawing-room, a yellow moon over the trees—ah, Chopin, what fools you made of us!—come others of an impersonal kind, biographical vignettes which these men around have left on all our minds. There is the Parisian *salon*, Heine smiling over at Bellini; the fair lady, amused with the maestro's curls, delicately destroying them with his cane. Not one of them thought that in fourteen days' time poor Bellini, curls and all, would be under the ground at Père Lachaise. Then appears a severer apartment; a short, muscular man there, square-jawed and angry-eyed, as Cherubini turns upon him, half-bitterly: 'Citoyen-General, I perceive that you love only that music which does not prevent you from thinking of your politics.' And the Italian moves

away, as if adding under his breath, 'Why is this man not Midas-eared?' For that little, stout man, Napoleon, had alone, 'mid applauding Paris, belittled his music. And now rises a room in Florence, a litter of books and papers, De Musset writing, George Sand dictating. It is Chopin's doing—he has reminded us of them. But now he appears himself, his piano before him, dreaming through his finger-tips, and making more dreams for his crouching listener, the same George Sand. The tragedy and comedy of those two lives!—they make us weep and smile by turns. The sculptured muse on the composer's tomb sits mourning, lyre in hand. But it is all past now, that sorrowing time. For when Chopin died did he not leave us his better angel? The musician's soul of him, does it not dwell purely among us, one of the 'choir invisible' which is ever urging us to 'larger issues'? One wishes the figure would lift its head as the sick-hearted do at the last burst in the *Marche Funèbre*. The few poor bones she weeps over are not Chopin.

As you turn from the Bellini column, to thread your way to the Chemin Denon, you may notice, half-hidden under bushes, a tiny weather-worn headstone stooping over a thick carpet of ivy. If you bend low it will tell you in its faint way why it is there, and you will straighten yourself, glad again to have found out the grave of such another old friend. For you mind, long ago, before Chopin had ever made you see visions, or Cherubini had lifted you as high as heaven, how St Pierre came to you between the leaves of a book and told you a moving tale. And you are not ashamed to remember now that you had to brush something away as you followed it. But were ever tears sweeter than those which made you blink over the pages of *Paul and Virginia?* Do not some of its scenes cling to you now, as the ivy clings to the patch of earth at your feet? Carlyle calls it somewhere 'the swan-song of old, dying France;' it often enough marks in its way the swan-singing of our own boyhood or girlhood, that wondering, transitional time in our lives which men like St Pierre gently lead us through, kind in their art, in their reticence more kind.

We feel less grateful for the rougher handling later on of such as Balzac, whose grave lies within gunshot of you as you think of him. He was a great artist enough; Nature shows clearly in his mirror—if not beautifully; for, like Géricault, who filled his studio with dead men, Balzac went down to the grim reality of things, and built from them with a free hand. But he is of those who make us wiser and sadder; who tear open June roses to show us their cankers; who rummage in foul places to find us festered lilies. They may mean well, but they take from us as much as they give; we go our way richer, but poorer also, till, perhaps, some truer enchanter restores to us some of our lost heart.

He will do you the turn who spoke the funeral oration over Balzac to the three thousand people who gathered round to see him put away. Victor Hugo saw life no less truly than the author of the *Comédie Humaine;* but he looked at it from a higher plane, seeing the human prospect in its larger, nobler meanings. He mounted high enough to discern the ideal beyond the real, and he showed us what he saw. He was a greater artist.

Talking of Balzac reminds us of another remarkable man who for quite another motive spent the best years of his life in seeking for the truth of things in the ditches of society as well as on its hillocks—for poor St Simon never mounted much higher. He lies here too, in a plain stone sepulchre not many yards from Hugo's father. St Simonism is as dead as Manichæism; but it would be hard to stand by the last dwelling-place of its founder without a touch of gentle feeling. Living in the thick of the social and moral dust which the Revolution made, little wonder he saw askew; but it was a brave ambition that of his to clear the air and set the world to rights that men might live again and be content. To be daily reminded of his task, his valet was required to awaken him each morning with the words: 'Remember, Monsieur le Comte, that you have great things to do.' In his ceaseless study of human nature he went through every possible experience save dying, and when he was nigh to that—a worn-out, beggared man—his last utterance was: 'It has been imagined that all religion must disappear. But religion cannot disappear from the world; it can only change its form. Do not forget this, and remember that in order to do great things one must be enthusiastic.' He might have said poorer words to the young fellows about him, his few followers. Among them once was reckoned Auguste Comte, but his deeper social feeling and more powerful intellect soon led him to break away and steer a course of his own. His system rests on a wider, a firmer bottom than St Simon's; it is more organic—is a grander conception entirely. But in its sum it illustrates the same truth which came from the weary lips of St Simon: Religion can never disappear; it can only change, evolve, grow to completer religion, as mankind grows to completer brotherhood.

If you will make your way down the slope past the tombs of General Foy and Benjamin Constant to the Chemin Labedoyère, you will find in a shady hollow there, one of the prettiest corners in the cemetery, Comte's own resting-place. There is a bench there standing beside it on which you may sit a while, baring your head in the coolness to catch 'the benediction of the air,' musing the while, as you well may in such a spot, of how one life may condense in itself and express a thousand others. Comte was essentially a summer-up of other men's lives, his own contribution being the explanation of their divided

efforts—revealing, in effect, the long social evolution which threw these up, each in his day, as its manifold instruments. Under Comte's pen the great Human Story grew round as Giotto's O, and whatever be our mental attitude it makes marvellous reading. No known life—nor unknown either—which has made for human progress but has some voice in the chorus which Comte weaved for the first into one vast harmony. It is interesting to remember how he obtained his keynote, and that at least two of those repose near him who helped him to it—Bichat and Gall.

The latter's marble bust stands high on a pedestal between the sepulchres of Monge and Joseph Fourrier. The sight of it sends us back to our Corinthian days, when we pored over Combe's *Constitution of Man*, just as the empty grave of Laplace, over by Molière's, brought back the *Vestiges of Creation*, with its lucid exposition of his Nebular Hypothesis. It is many years ago now since Gall made such a noise in Paris, and so irritated Napoleon that he turned on the French savants 'for suffering themselves to be taught chemistry by an Englishman (Davy) and anatomy by a German.' This imperial snarl may have covered a regret that Lavoisier and Bichat had as yet found no worthy successors. It would give his hearers a glimpse of the littleness which lurked behind the strong character of the Corsican. We can see them suppressing involuntary shrugs and glancing one at the other, as much as to say with Talleyrand, 'What a pity such a great man has been so badly brought up!'

Monge, who accompanied the Egyptian expedition to bring home so many treasures, would see Napoleon in larger moments. But Cæsar as he was in the field, we have one witness here to remind us that he sometimes met his match even in those early days of triumph. Sir Sidney Smith lies over in the Chemin des Anglais, and, English-like, he has his epitaph:

> In war-like France, where great Napoleon rose,
> The man who checked his conquests finds repose.

And so on in naïve, John Bull fashion, which, fortunately for human kindness, few Frenchmen can spell out. The brave Ney, who rests in another part of the cemetery, will recall to us Bonaparte's final overthrow, years afterwards, at the hands of Wellington. Had the Marshal kept his promise to Louis to bring back the man from Elba 'in an iron cage,' that last struggle had perhaps never broken the peace of a June day; but the sight of his old chief—neither he nor his army could withstand the magic of it. *Vive l'Empereur!* Then Quatre Bras and Waterloo. Ney was executed in the Luxembourg Gardens for high treason. 'He who had fought five hundred battles for France—not one against her—was condemned as a traitor.' A sorry business.

Waterloo brings us in a roundabout way to Monge again; for it was he who examined young Arago at the University of Toulouse; and it was Arago, you remember, who, when he was become 'the Newton of France' and had visited London, could never be induced to look at Waterloo Bridge.

And here, by sheer association, poor Heine comes up again. It is a digression, but let him speak: 'Nothing, however, equalled the gloomy mood which once came over me as I stood on Waterloo Bridge towards evening, and gazed on the water. It seemed to me as if my soul was mirrored there, and was gazing up out of the water at me with all its scars. The most sorrowful stories came to my recollection. I thought of the rose which was always watered with vinegar, and so lost its sweet fragrance and faded early. I thought of the strayed butterfly which a naturalist who ascended Mont Blanc saw fluttering amid the ice. . . . Ah! I felt so sorrowful that the hot tears started from my eyes. My tears fell down into the Thames, and floated on to the great sea.' *

Brilliant young Bichat, whose discovery of the duality of animal and vegetal functions gave such a lift to anatomy, lies near Cuvier and Chénier in the eighth division. His quiet little memorial—'À Xavier Bichat' is all it tells you—like that of Comte, stands out in singular contrast to the run of such things in this cemetery. Cuvier's also. You read his name on a plain stone slab such as you would find in an English churchyard. It suggests the similar stone which commemorates Gustave Doré, over on the hill there. Such simplicity is rare in this grandly-built city of the dead, in which a grateful people often erects to poor genius or merit a votive honour which wealth might envy.

But though here and there in the cemetery are evidences, more than enough, of vulgar display, bourgeois ostentation, you find, as a rule, much taste and right feeling in the designs of monument or mausoleum. Many of the latter, with their stained windows and marble interiors, are exceedingly attractive. Swept and garnished, and often with fresh flowers on their altar-places to give aid to the other ornaments, they show a loving care for the shrines of dead dear ones beautiful to see.

More striking, however, than any of these, and far more graceful in its Gothic lines, is the great tomb of Abelard and Héloïse, at which one may suitably end up a ramble through Père Lachaise. It stands in a little flower-grown space, all by itself, and the paths around are worn with the feet of pilgrims who have made that their tender pausing-place. Every one knows the story of Héloïse, one of the love idyls, as it is, of all time; and whatever reservations we may have for Abelard, there is not a cynic among us but can feel some stirrings of reverence for that noble woman. The two lie side by side in effigy under a lofty catafalque; and often enough you may see lying with them a red rose or two, which young people have tossed there for the old tale's sake, which time has never done telling.

* *Florentine Nights.*

TOWARDS THE SUNRISE.

A TALE OF RUSSIAN JEWRY.

CHAPTER II.

HE had forgotten. To-morrow night had been fixed for the great public meeting when the Kadima would submit their programme of propaganda for the first time to the mass of their co-religionists. Judah, as the chief organiser, felt considerable anxiety as to its success; the blame of a fiasco might fall on him. He was half-sorry he had undertaken his interview with Kronemann for the following day; but there was no help for it now. Bertha might put a wrong construction on his dilatoriness. And moreover, in the cool light of reflection, it seemed more desirable to put his fate to the hazard at the earliest. He shuddered. After all, it was a hazard, and he might lose. Yet there was one comfort even in that. If he lost now, there would be nothing else the losing of which need cost him a single pang. Perhaps that was true happiness, to have suffered beyond the climax.

He had seen very little of the banker; even when he was in the house he showed himself but rarely. And as Judah, the following afternoon, knocked at the door of his study, he suddenly became aware that Bertha's father was comparatively a stranger to him, and that made his task more difficult. But the banker's cheery manner reassured him.

'You are the very man I want to see,' he said as Judah entered; 'in fact, I was going to send for you. Sit down.'

The banker strode silently once or twice across the room. Then he confronted Judah suddenly.

'I should like to ask a favour of you,' he said quite solemnly. 'I want you to marry my daughter. I am perfectly serious,' he went on, noting the young man's look of amazement. 'I have even gone so far as to first ascertain, very discreetly, her feelings on the subject; and while you think over my offer, I will give you one or two reasons which prompted me to it. To begin, then, I liked you from the first, apart from the claim you had on my goodwill. I liked your keeping aloof when another man, relying on his merits, would have battered my walls in. Bertha wrote you that letter at my instigation. The thought of making you her husband came to me the second time you called; otherwise I should hardly have thrown you so much into each other's way. You think I know nothing about you—that I am rash in trusting my only child to a haphazard acquaintance. You are mistaken. A practised reader of character, as I am, hardly needs more than a casual glance or two to draw his conclusions. I inferred you possessed common-sense, backbone, rectitude. That was all I required. I have no sons to keep the house from passing into strange hands after my death. My name would be forgotten. I want you for my successor. I want the firm of Kronemann & Co. to rank with the first in the world. Call it vanity—I desire to raise for myself a lasting monument. Another point, a matter of superstition perhaps—my own good fortune was the outcome of accident. I was lucky enough to do the founder of the house almost as great a service as you have done me, and married his daughter. I have prospered; by the same token, I prognosticate you will succeed in ratio to our beginnings. You see I have been candid.'

'Oh God, what am I to say?' breathed Judah, with beating heart.

The banker lifted his finger. 'Wait, I have not quite finished; till then reserve your answer. It has come to my ears you are one of the most prominent champions of the so-called National Movement.'

Judah rose eagerly, but the other waved him down and continued:

'In view of that, I want you to give me a guarantee—your word of honour will be sufficient—that you will once for all sever your connection with these hare-brained hobby-riders. The task which I impose on you is too difficult to allow any division of energy, too matter-of-fact to run smoothly alongside of soap-bubble hallucinations and day-dreamings. In short, I want to safeguard it against any possible rival in your affections. That is my only condition; no doubt you will find it easy.'

'No, I do not find it easy,' Judah burst out, battling with his despair. 'You have been very cruel, Mr Kronemann,' he went on more gently. 'You give me a glimpse into Paradise, and then tell me that I can only gain entrance by leaving behind the one thing I held dear on the hither side. Or did you only want to see what a Tantalus looked like?'

'Yes, viewed from that point, it certainly seems a little hard,' reflected the banker. 'Only it is the wrong point. I respect your reluctance; it is good our ideals should die hard—it is what makes life worth living—and therefore, when the time comes, let us be practical.'

'By all means, then, let us be practical,' assented Judah, with a sudden hope. 'Tell me, Mr Kronemann—have you given much thought to the question of our national regeneration?'

'Not much, I admit; I contented myself with listening to its advocacy by others. And what did I hear? Rodomontades in fustian that walked about on stilts to make them look big. And because they walked on stilts, they were fairly easy to trip up.'

'Quite so,' said Judah, his voice quavering. 'I will not presume to put any new aspect of the case before you. I have merely a burning desire to be practical. I will tell you only what I can swear to. I have seen Jewish porters at the railway stations carrying three times their own weight of baggage. I have seen hundreds of Jewish wood-fellers cutting timber in the Lithuanian forests. I have seen droves of Jewish raftsmen on the Vistula working their way miles and miles against the current, and I have seen thousands of Jewish field-labourers harnessing themselves to their ploughs in place of the oxen they had sold to buy seed. You would call these men of muscle, I suppose?'

'Yes,' conceded the banker hesitatingly.

'Again, in the house in which I live there are four students whose gymnasial reports show they were always at the top of their class. There is a little boy who can easily multiply rows of six figures in his head. There is a young artisan who has made the model of a steam-crane without ever having handled a book on mechanics. There is also a hawker to whom six weeks ago I gave ten roubles to set him up, and who has made them into a hundred. All that would argue brains, I believe.'

'I see your drift,' said the banker.

'Please note that this is only the result of my own limited observation. These people are not exceptions—they are specimens. Here, then, you have brains and muscle—some of the material which goes to the making of a nation.'

'Yes, some,' emphasised the banker.

'The rest is merely a matter of organisation—of arrangement,' continued Judah. 'We are sweeping away internal misunderstandings and differences; we are beginning to combine, to collaborate. We are no longer limbs—we are a body. And then there are the necessities of the case. These, of course, are self-evident.'

'No!' exclaimed the banker. 'I will grant you everything but the necessities. This latter-day exodus is not wanted. It is merely the desire to repeat history. Our Jews here are perhaps a little more ground under heel than the rest of the proletariat. If so, it is the penalty they must pay for being as yet only step-children of their country. They must wait and work for their redemption, as their brothers have done elsewhere. Possibly'—he sank his voice and looked round cautiously—'possibly they may not have long to wait. The signs are in the sky. The times are pregnant. What birth they will bring forth no one can tell; probably it will have a baptism of blood—some Jewish blood amongst it. We may not live to see it, but sooner or later deliverance will come—from within. Till then, patience!'

'Ah! patience, patience,' muttered Judah desolately, 'and in the meantime our mother's heart is breaking to see her sons degraded into cattle, her daughters haled by the hair along the highways.'

'There it is, the cloven hoof,' said Kronemann lightly, to loosen the tension that was becoming awkward. 'The sentimentalist revelling in generalities. Do you call that being practical? The man who talks like that is capable of writing his business letters in rhyme.'

Judah stood motionless, his face set, and a haggard wretchedness in his eyes. The banker saw it, and was touched.

'I won't press you for an immediate decision,' he said, laying his hand on Judah's shoulder. 'I shall give you, say, twenty-four hours. That is as much as any man wants—I shall be candid again—to reconcile himself to his good-fortune. By the way, you will find Bertha in the drawing-room; she may help you to your determination.'

Judah waited. 'Is there no compromise possible?' he quavered.

'None—there are two alternatives; you will do well to keep that in mind. It will save you from complicating your methods of reasoning.'

Gropingly Judah made his way up the *escalier*. At the drawing-room door he stopped and listened. Bertha was playing the piece she knew to be his favourite. A wild longing came over him: if his life went forfeit over it he must see her once more.

She turned at the click of the handle and rose quickly; but as she saw his face she hung back, with her hand to her heart.

'You have asked father,' she faltered at last; 'he has refused, and has sent you to me to say good-bye.'

'On the contrary,' he replied hoarsely, 'your father was good enough to give *me* the chance of refusal.'

And then he told her quickly what had happened. 'You have small reason to be pleased with me,' he ended up. 'I could win you by the stretching out of my arm—and I hesitate because of an hallucination—a day-dream, as your father names it.'

'That only shows your love is worth having,' she said almost inaudibly.

'Suppose, then, I persist in this day-dream?'

'Judah, you will not persist? Oh, say you will not!'

He turned from her with a dumb gesture of despair. She came close to him.

'Listen, Judah,' she whispered. '*I* do not call it a shadow—an illusion. To me it is a great, grand reality. Many a time the thought of it has set my nerves tingling; many a time I have said, "Oh that I could help!" Look, I am turning traitress against my own father. Make concessions to his caprice—if only in appearance. Later on, when the irrevocable has happened, you will always find ways and means to be of service to the cause, indirectly'——

He shook his head wearily. 'I am to give my word—you have forgotten that.' And then he flamed up. 'You have made one suggestion; I

shall make a second. If my love is worth having, then follow your heart's bidding and none other. You said yourself one may be disobedient in a good cause. Now prove it. You can help the good cause by helping me. Without you I am useless, an empty husk; with you I could achieve miracles. And I promise you, the honour of it shall be yours and yours only. It is in your hands to raise your father a monument a thousand times more durable than the one he dreams of himself. Bertha, I repeat, it is in your hands.'

She listened to him patiently; but her voice was very sad as she replied: 'I have deserved this —I must not complain. I counselled treachery; you counsel open revolt. A few words will answer you. I dare not—for the life of my father, I dare not. A year ago he broke a blood-vessel. Any sudden shock and I tremble for the consequences. Do you want it to be on my conscience?'—— She broke off and buried her face in her hands.

'Then nothing remains,' he said in a hollow voice.

'Yes, twenty-four hours of reflection remain,' came from her quickly.

'Twenty-four hours of torture,' he echoed. 'Would to God I had them behind me, whichever of my two loves they will bury.'

'Judah!'

He saw the passionately uplifted hands and went out. The gesture haunted him. Again and again he tried to put it from him. He wanted his mind clear, crystal clear. He had to think. Think—when his thoughts were so many snowflakes, whirling wildly in the hurricane of his emotions? No, he would let things be for the present. Later on the decision would come to him of its own accord, without racking, without writhing. This was a useless riot of pain. He must be calm or he would die.

Colourlessly the hours dragged by till it was seven o'clock. Mechanically he made his way to the hall where the meeting was to take place. Vilenski looked at his white, wan face, and asked:

'What! you, Judah? Lamp-fever? Stage-fright? What are we others to say then?'

Judah made a great effort and parried the inquiry. No prying, no questioning, or he must strangle something—himself by preference. As in a dream he watched the huge hall filling steadily. He felt the great, subtle waves of excitement undulating through the assembly, at first only distantly, but presently they came nearer. The first thrill touched his soul, pain-numbing, healing, life-giving. He began to hope again: yes, his decision would come to him in a flash, without a throe. And once he had it in his grasp it might kill him, but he would not let it go. Better a hell of certainty than an ecstasy of doubt.

The greatest Jewish scholar in Warsaw occupied the chair. One by one the speakers rose, gripped the ear of the audience, and sent their message, blood-warm, down to their hearts. The waves of excitement waxed into billows of enthusiasm. Judah's speech had been left to the last; it was to be the climax, the coping-stone on the fabric that was to be reared that night.

A hush, throbbing with the pulse of its own stillness, held the gathering as he came forward. Every ear, every eye strained lest a word, a movement of face or hand, should escape it. Judah felt the magnetic silence that argued his power; but he himself was dissatisfied; he was wasting breath. This was not what he meant. He was not striving to convince them—he wanted to carry conviction into his own heart. And in that he had failed so far. His utterances seemed to him idle antics of sound. But at last he struck the right note. He touched on the joy of self-surrender, that made a sacrifice of its bleeding heart, and looked on smilingly as on a thank-offering; that gave up life and love because that was the most one can give up, and because the best could be fed and fostered only with what was best. His hearers grew frightened, for this was the first time they had seen a human soul stand before them in its white-gleaming nakedness. Judah had conquered, and so he could sing his song of self-victory.

'The land of Kedem is trembling with joy to its inmost caverns,' rose his pæan; 'its soil is quickening with prophetic gladness, and mightily is Jordan rearing his waters, to pour teeming fruitfulness into her bosom, for that the songs of the Lord shall once more re-echo on his banks, and that the singers' voices might not grow faint for hunger. There is a rustling in the cedars of Lebanon that have been as cypresses in their desolation; their branches are whispering one to the other, "Be joyful—the wanderer is returning home, the outcast is coming into his own again." And in his rock-dwelling Father Abraham is listening night and day, that he may be the first to catch the myriad footfalls of his sons marching eastward. Ay, brothers, up and towards the sunrise!'

Judah stopped, but the vibrating hush continued long after the last word had left his lips. Then came the first ripple of applause that heralded the coming cataract. Already it had gathered itself into moderate fullness; already it had started reverberating; but instead of the cataract it suddenly oozed out into a dull, sullen buzz of consternation:

'Dead, dead!' people were murmuring. 'Heinrich Kronemann is dead!'

Judah caught the words, not once, but a dozen times, as he forced his way out through the way-giving throng. In a quarter of an hour he had reached the mansion. A few gaping quidnuncs were hovering round. Judah stopped one of the footmen who had just come back from an errand. Yes, it was true. A telegram had brought bad

news that evening, and the master had had a stroke. Slowly, very slowly, Judah walked back to his lodgings. He was wondering whether it would be counted against him on Judgment-day that he was glad he needed not give an answer to-morrow. To Bertha he wrote: 'I shall come when you want me.'

It was a month after that she wanted him. They were standing together at the window, peering into the twilight.

'I had no compunction in renewing my suit,' said Judah tenderly; 'it was not inciting you to revolt. Your father's project, even had he lived, has become an impossibility. The government monopoly that wrecked his investment and broke his heart took good care of that. You are not going counter to his will.'

'Do you know, Judah,' she said solemnly, 'I sometimes am afraid his death was God's visitation on his purblindness.'

'Afraid? You should exult—exult that his death has not been useless, if it only strengthens our belief in the Providence that watches our destiny. You can say then he died for our cause. He shall have his monument. His memory shall go with us as we struggle towards the sunrise.'

THE SEA-OTTER.

AT the recent fur-sales in London the fur of the sea-otter was quoted at an average of £56 per skin. The animal, when it is alive and wearing the fur itself, is from three to five feet in length from nose to tail-tip, though the skin lying upon it in loose folds, the actual 'pelt,' is of a fair size. Still, sea-otter skins at £56, whilst seal-skins are worth from £3 to £6, cannot be considered economical wear. Ever since Behring, sailing from Russia, discovered Alaska, and found its natives clad in otter-skin, this fur has been the prime object of the pelt-hunters' desire. Sable, marten, mink, and even ermine can be trapped or shot without extraordinary trouble; seals are driven inland like fools to be slaughtered and skinned at their captors' leisure. But the sea-otter must be sought diligently as the diamond, for three centuries of experience have made him wise.

Upon the map of North America may be seen, jutting from the southern corner of Alaska—which is the north-west corner of the continent—Aliaska, a peninsula which breaks off into a chain of islands called the Aleutians. Just where the peninsula ends and the islands begin, a point may be noticed marked Belkovsky. This is the headquarters of the sea-otter hunters, and between here and Chernaboor Island to the south and Saanak Island to the south-west the bulk of the sea-otters are taken. Thoroughly impressed with the value of his own skin, the sea-otter takes care of it by living far away from the mainland, sleeping, with one eye open, upon the floating weed-beds or a sea-washed reef exposed to the full fury of the North Pacific. At the slightest sign of the approach of man he dives deep, and stays below for twenty minutes at a time. Sometimes a stray otter may be shot from the land as he plays in the surf; but the chief methods of his capture are 'the surround' and clubbing. In the former case a party of Aleutian islanders are conveyed to Saanak, there to encamp for two or three months. Woe to the hunters if the wind be off the shore, for then no fire may be lit to make the beloved tea, no pipe of tobacco smoked, or the hope of a capture would be vain. For the otter is all eyes and ears and nose when alive; all fur when dead. Upon a calm day the hunters paddle gently over the sea in their skin canoes, keeping an eager eye upon the rolling surf for a sign of the prey. A hunter sees an otter and makes a quiet signal to his mates; like a flash the quarry has dived. Raising his oar aloft, the man who found the otter remains as a buoy above the place of the animal's disappearance, while his mates form in a huge circle, with him for centre. In twenty minutes, at most, the otter comes up again in sight of some of the canoe-men. A frightful yell drives the poor brute below again before he has had time to fill his lungs. Shortly he is again seen, and the process repeated, till at length his body is so gas-inflated that he cannot sink, and falls a prey to the lucky hunter whose spear first pierces that too, too rich coat of his. Luck varies, and the sea-otter is yearly rarer and more shy; but, if fortunate, each hunter may have from two to five skins for the traders as the result of his three months' catch.

To be a successful hunter requires a Spartan scorn of comfort, huge patience, keenness of vision, and readiness of resource, as well as great dexterity in the handling of a risky craft of the nature of a coracle, and an intimate knowledge of your quarry's habits which it requires a lifetime of observation under trying conditions to gain. 'The surround,' then, is no joke, but clubbing is next-door to suicide. The hunters encamped upon Saanak have been for a day or two prevented by a howling gale from doing anything save sleep or smoke. One or two of the men, knowing, seemingly by instinct, that the gale has almost blown itself out, prepare for a clubbing expedition. They also know that, much distressed by the weather, many sea-otters will be sleeping, with their heads buried in the sea-weed beds about the rocky, wind-swept islands of the Chernaboor group. To-morrow, the gale over, the otters will

plunge again into the ocean. The hunters, therefore, lash their flowing waterproof garment to the edge of the well of their light canoe, and thus, like a centaur of the sea, half-man, half-boat, they paddle out from the islands' shelter and are whirled away like straws before the blast. Should they, in the dark and turmoil, miss the islands some score of miles away, they are carried out into the ocean to certain death. If, on the other hand, they make their haven, they land and creep, club in hand, over the rocky coast to the ocean-swilled reef where the otters sleep. The roar of the gale drowns the sound of their approach, and the poor otter is a mere 'pelt' before he knows of his danger. Scores of otters have been killed in one night by a club-man or two. But otter-clubbing is not a means of livelihood likely to become generally popular.

CURIOSITIES OF STAINED GLASS.

By E. R. Suffling.

EVERY phase of art has its beauties, its blemishes, and its curious features either of manipulation or anachronism; and in these matters, especially the latter, stained glass is no whit behind other branches of the fine arts.

Like nearly every other luxury of civilised life, stained glass originally came from the East, gradually—very gradually—working its way westward from its birthplace, Byzantium. Italy received the art, then in its crude state, and nursed it tenderly for many long years, passing it still farther westward to Marseilles, and from thence it found its way to Paris—then a small but smart town, the centre of French power and learning.

It is not known with any certainty when stained glass was first used in England; and it is believed that no examples earlier than the twelfth century are extant in this country, those examples being of a very poor mosaic of somewhat inharmonious colouring—gaudy reds and blues greatly predominating. But it is not our purpose to trace the rise and decline or the resuscitation of the art of glass-painting, but simply to note curious phases and anachronisms connected with it.

Probably the early modes of producing a coloured window were in themselves exceedingly primitive and crude; but of their manner of working, the monks, who were the first glass-painters, have left us but little written evidence. But this we know: they had neither brushes, diamonds for cutting the glass, nor mills for turning out the lead for glazing with. Still, it must be confessed they turned out some very effective work, much of which can be reverently admired at the present day.

For brushes they used certain feathers from the woodcock—little spear-shaped feathers coming to a very fine point; and with these bound to wooden handles they were enabled to do very fine outlining and cross-hatching.

The lack of brushes was doubtless the reason for the early monks leaving out all shadows and confining themselves merely to beautiful outlines. Shading came with the advent of brushes, in the late fourteenth century.

Diamonds for cutting glass were not introduced till the reign of Elizabeth, at which period stained glass was declining; and before that era every piece of glass which went to form a window had to be cast in little clay moulds, and afterwards chipped with an iron instrument, called a 'grozing iron,' so as to properly fit into its assigned place.

Leads were all cast in iron moulds, and were consequently tremendously heavy and clumsy in comparison with fret-lead turned out so neatly by modern machinery.

Reverting to glaziers' diamonds being unknown before the end of the sixteenth century, the writer has on several occasions been able, with this knowledge (and other expert signs) to discover frauds in so-called *ancient* stained glass. Just one instance. A pawnbroker of Canterbury, for the sum of thirty pounds, purchased six panels of painted glass which he was assured came from Canterbury Cathedral, and were of genuine fourteenth-century work. A clever story of how these panels had been removed from the cathedral was concocted by the clever but unscrupulous seller, and the man of Lombardy paid for the panels; but the sudden disappearance of the seller caused him to be suspicious of his bargain. To set his mind at rest he would have an expert's opinion, and applied to the writer for that purpose. The glass was accordingly sent for inspection, and, to the poor man's chagrin, I was compelled to show him how cleverly he had been deceived. On removing several of the sections of glass from the lead it was at once apparent that each piece had been neatly cut with a *diamond*, and the glass itself very cleverly *antiquated* by manipulating it on hot plates with hydrofluoric acid, splashes of stain, and the many 'fakements' known to the clever gentlemen who produce *genuine* glass of any age, with which they 'salt' the pawnbrokers' and old curiosity dealers' shops all over the kingdom. Readers should beware of those beautiful little mediæval medallions of Flemish glass which can be picked up at our seaport towns or in the cottages of Holland for a mere song. The writer has sent

many a purchaser of these *ancient gems* disconcertedly away vowing dire vengeance upon their producers if only the culprits could be found! But they never are; the secret is too well kept.

Much of a startling historical nature may often be learned from the careful surveying of an old window; and probably for quaintness of conception and the transmitment of *un*historic facts the windows in St Neots Church, Cornwall, are unique. Every one knows the tragic death of Abel; but who can declare how the guilty Cain ended his career? One of the windows at St Neots can expound it for you, for the event is depicted from a very ancient legend. After Cain had slain his brother he fled into the wilderness, and, living apart from his parents, became an outcast. One day Lamech, who was fond of hunting, sallied forth, with a lad to act as game-carrier, to procure some sport. By-and-by the lad noticed some large, hairy animal in a copse, and urged his master to shoot quickly before it could escape. Lamech drew his bow, and after a short interval out rolled Cain transfixed by his kinsman's arrow! One compartment of the window depicts this scene. As the crossbow was not invented for about fifty centuries after Cain's death, there appears to be a slight discrepancy of time somewhere.

In another window in this church are panels representing the creation of the world; and the Almighty Architect is shown, after making four little trees in the style of those seen in modern toy Noah's arks, in the act of setting out the starry firmament *with a huge pair of compasses!*

Then we have the Life of St Neot, which takes up the whole of the compartments in a four-light window to represent it. Among the curious events in the life of the Cornish saint is the following: The saint receives a visit from an angel, who, for the holy man's sustenance, places three fish in the well in which he daily performs his ablutions. He is enjoined never to catch more than one fish at a time, and cook it for his meal; and so long as he does this the well will always be miraculously supplied with the trio of goldfish.

Another panel shows the saint ill in bed, and a new servant, trying to please his sick master, is cooking *two* of the fish. On being presented to the saint he is much alarmed, and orders the servant (shown in another compartment) to throw back the broiled fish into the well again. This the servant does; and another picture portrays the fish swimming about as gaily as if they had not suffered the martyrdom of St Lawrence a few minutes before.

Anachronisms in church windows are somewhat numerous, especially in the matter of costume and surroundings. As the great masters among oil-painters depicted their saints in the costume of their own country at the epoch in which they themselves lived, so glass-painters may be credited with the same palpable blunders. A Madonna of the fifteenth century is, in Germany, dressed in German costume and her features are German; an Italian window will have an Italian Madonna from hair to foot; and the Flemish painters depict her of buxom proportions and dressed in Flemish bodice and head-dress.

A curious instance of this eccentric use of mediæval costume upon saintly persons who lived fifteen centuries previously may be seen at Gouda in Holland, where some of the apostles are wearing slouch-hats *à la* Boer of South Africa. One of the windows in Gouda church represents 'The Last Supper,' and the thirteen persons usually shown (hence the absurd superstition of ill-luck attending one of thirteen who dine together) are augmented to fifteen by the entrance of the King of Spain, who gave the window, and his Queen. St Peter with his chamberlain's staff of office is introducing this sixteenth-century couple to our Lord! Could bad taste and intrusiveness be carried further?

A still more curious anachronism as to alteration of time was in the case of a window painted some thirty years since for a convent in Ireland, by which the first and nineteenth century were made to join hands. It came about thus: A certain matronly superioress of a newly-formed convent, being anxious to make her order appear as old as possible, gave instructions for a 'Via Dolorosa' window to be painted; and among the crowd was to be shown a nun in the costume of her *new* order with a *crucifix* suspended from her neck. This work was actually carried out, and the window was duly fixed, showing the Saviour *carrying* the cross, while the nun was showing by her crucifix an event which had *not yet taken place!* Pressure was brought to bear, and the crucifix was removed; but the nineteenth-century nun, I believe, still remains a spectator of the event which took place about A.D. 34.

Clever ideas are sometimes embodied in windows, of which two instances must suffice. The commonly accepted idea of our Lord receiving the vinegar whilst upon the cross is by means of a sponge, dipped in the liquid, held aloft upon a reed or staff; but in an old window our Lord holds the reed in His mouth and sucks the vinegar (or sour wine) from a saturated sponge held up by a compassionate attendant.

Another capital idea of a mechanical kind is shown in a west of England window. The subject is Noah taking provisions into the ark. He is a gigantic person, standing at a port-hole, from which to the shore is an inclined plane made from a board of wood. Noah is shown hauling a tremendous barrel (probably a tierce of beef) up this plank by means of two ropes, which, being fixed to the side of the vessel, are carried under the barrel, then over it, and the free ends rest in Noah's hands. Never mind thinking, as you look at the scene, that the barrel is four times as large as the port-hole Noah is about to try

and pull it through—that is his affair; but note the capital use of two powers, the inclined plane and the leverage of a circular mass by two ropes.

Many years ago (less than forty) a charitable lady was importuned by the head of an English college to place a painted window in the college chapel, and at length, wearied with being so repeatedly asked, she yielded, stipulating only that she should choose her own subject, and that the window should not be viewed until the proper day arrived for its unveiling. In due time the window was painted and fixed; and when the veiling cloth was removed, behold she had chosen as her biblical subject Job plagued with boils, and Job's face was a very fair representation of the master who had plagued the lady. Needless to say the window was removed, and another subject inserted at some one else's expense, probably that of the master.

Many curious blunders have been perpetrated by stained-glass draughtsmen, and either inadvertently or knowingly carried out by the actual painter of the glass itself (for the two artists are of distinct branches of glass-painting); the following having come under the writer's personal observation. In a window sent for exhibition from Canada—subject, 'The Last Supper'—our Lord, in the act of blessing the bread, exhibited on His raised hand *five* fingers and a thumb!

On one or two occasions six toes have been noticed on one foot and four joints have been painted on one finger. Then there are cases where persons have received the distinction of having two left or two right feet; and in one window in a London church a 'foolish virgin' has two hands but only one visible arm!

Such instances might be greatly multiplied—for they are numerous—when patrons insist on having a window fixed at such an early date as to preclude proper attention being bestowed upon minor details of anatomy!

Besides saints and other holy and secular persons being rendered in glass, animals are frequently introduced. It is usual to show the head of a cow in the 'Nativity,' and the ass is usually associated with the 'Good Samaritan' or 'The Flight into Egypt;' but even the pig, that unclean animal of the Bible, has also come down to us through several centuries in all the glory of stained glass, and may be seen in the east window of Cartmel Fell Church, Westmorland, as an attendant upon Good St Anthony, whose battered figure has survived the blasts and frosts of five hundred years.

Centuries of immobility cause many curious growths upon the back of glass, which in time becomes deeply pitted and half-eaten through by the chemical action of acid in the atmosphere, and which no clever forger of glass has yet been able to imitate so as to deceive the eye of the connoisseur. Moss, lichen, and small plants are frequently found flourishing in the decayed portions of antique glass; and the writer, in restoring the fifteenth-century glass of a church in Kent, actually removed several tufts of grass nearly three inches long.

Whilst restoring a window from the midland counties, a large lump of solder attracted his attention; and, being flat and circular, he had the curiosity to cut it open, when he discovered a silver coin as large as a two-shilling piece, and of the reign of Charles II., embedded in the hard mass. Probably the window had been releaded during the reign of the Merry Monarch, and the glazier, in the fullness of his heart at receiving a good order, placed the coin in its curious hiding-place, so that the lucky finder (myself) might drink 'a health unto his Majesty.'

Sometimes difficulties occur in carrying out certain incidents in a biblical subject, and such a dilemma occurred when the writer painted the very large east window for St George's Cathedral, Sierra Leone. The Bishop had stipulated for as many black men to be introduced into the various subjects as possible; and among the scenes was 'The Resurrection,' which of course brought in a number of Roman soldiers. Now came the artist's dilemma. Could he draw a Roman soldier with a black face with any warranty of correctness? He argued to himself: 'The Romans conquered nearly all the known world, and probably pressed Ethiopians into their service.' Not to be without extraneous help, he sat down and wrote to several clerical friends, but unfortunately applied to an even number, and received four replies 'yea' and four 'nay,' so that he was as far from a true solution of his difficulty as before. Acting, therefore, as his own chairman, he gave his casting-vote 'yea,' and the negro in Roman armour duly appeared in the window, much to the joy of the Sierra Leonians at seeing a brother in such martial array.

It must not be forgotten that along the north coast of Africa the Virgin Mary is frequently depicted as a *black* woman!

TWILIGHT IN MY GARDEN.

O PURPLE twilight! from thy dim recesses
Pale Memories steal, and shape themselves anew;
Soft breezes stir and lift fair phantom tresses,
Tears mingle with the sacramental dew,
And shadowy lips are wreathed with tender smiles,
And loving hands shine faintly through the gloom;
'Tis not alone the roses' fragrant hearts
That flood the dewy dusk with rare perfume.

The loved and lost with noiseless feet are straying
Among the garden's old familiar walks;
I wonder, do they hear the fountains playing
And see the lilies swaying on their stalks?
O twilight-time! when all earth's jars and fret
Die out, and quiet reigns on every hand,
Who knows but for a little space, perchance,
The dear ones slip from out the 'Summer-Land'!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

EVER since the Poor Law system was established in this country, provision has been made for the support of the aged and of such as are unable to work, either by granting them outdoor relief, or, in the cases where that is found insufficient, by receiving them into the workhouse, where food, clothing, and all that is necessary for their maintenance in health and comfort are supplied at the public charge. The number of persons thus supported forms a varying but always a considerable percentage of the population, and the expense thus incurred is a heavy burden on the resources and industry of the community.

While it is true that persons in various ranks of society are compelled through accident or by stress of circumstances to seek assistance from the poor-rate, it is at the same time found that every one who prizes his independence at its just value shrinks from the idea of asking relief from the parish. All classes of workmen, skilled and unskilled alike, and all persons above that rank of life, endeavour to place themselves in a position in which they will be able to maintain themselves without drawing upon funds which are commonly considered the last resource of the distressed.

The thrifty members of the community usually provide against a rainy day, and the attacks of sickness to which all are liable, by opening an account with a savings-bank or by joining a benefit club. Since the savings-bank has been made a department of the Post Office it has been placed within the reach of every one, and great and ever-increasing use has been made of it; while benefit clubs, with their sick and funeral funds, have furnished their members with means on those occasions when they prove of the greatest service to them and their families.

Before the passing of the Friendly Societies Act of 1875 benefit clubs were of two kinds—the permanent and the terminable. In the former class, which includes several old and well-known institutions, the weekly payments of a member ensured him sick pay during illness, and a sum of money payable at his death which covered the expense of his funeral. As long as the member made his payments regularly he secured these two benefits; but it was perfectly understood that, however long a member kept up his payments, he obtained no further claim upon the large accumulated funds of the society, which were the sole property of the capitalists who owned the concern, and who reaped an ample return for their investments by the careful manner in which a body of managers conducted the business in their behalf. On the other hand, the terminable benefit clubs were also unsatisfactory. The members of these clubs were the sole owners of all the money belonging to their club; but the clubs were exposed to two risks, either of which might prove fatal to their existence. Clubs of this description were generally local in their operation, so that when an epidemic of sickness had to be met, and the means at their disposal were not sufficient for the emergency, the club came to an end. Again, if an ample sum of money was laid by as a reserve fund to meet such a contingency, the members were tempted to dissolve their club and share the money among themselves; thus a fund which should have been a pillar of strength to the club proved the instrument of its destruction. Such was the constitution of the two classes of benefit clubs which offered a sick and a funeral fund to their members before the passing of the Friendly Societies Act of 1875; but that act permitted a great and important change to be effected in these clubs.

What the act of 1875 effected was this—it permitted what was good in the permanent and terminable clubs to be combined. In other words, it allowed a club to be permanent, and, at the same time, it secured all the money of the club for the sole benefit of its members.

As soon as the act of 1875 was passed the late Mr George Holloway drew up a set of rules and registered a benefit club for Stroud, which secured, in addition to the usual sick and funeral funds,

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an old-age pension. This was a new principle in benefit clubs, and the inhabitants of Stroud accepted the boon with a readiness which has been described as extraordinary. This was, no doubt, partly due to the intelligence of the skilled operatives engaged in the woollen manufacture of the west of England, and partly to the able advocacy of the founder of the club. Seventeen years subsequent to the establishment of the club Mr Holloway wrote that if the industrial classes would only avail themselves of the permission given them to establish benefit clubs on the new principle, 'there would soon be a perceptible decrease of pauperism, which so disgraces this prosperous country, rates would be correspondingly reduced, and the rising generation of working men would look forward to comfortable independence in their old age' (Letter in *National Review*, March 1892).

An incident in the history of benefit clubs gave unexpected publicity to the scheme adopted in Stroud. In the autumn of 1877 the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, then President of the Local Government Board, and who had the friendly societies under his jurisdiction, was invited to address an Oddfellows' meeting. While praising that society for the good work it was doing, he pointed out that their work was by no means complete, as it did not touch the question of help for old age. He thereupon announced that, in order to encourage self-help among operatives, he was prepared to give £50 in prizes for the best essays by members of benefit clubs calculated to effect this object. Of the three successful essays, one was written by Mr Holloway; and as they were afterwards published, the plan proposed by him—which was already in full working order—was in this way made widely known.

As a mark of respect for the good service he had done to the town and neighbourhood the electors of Stroud chose Mr Holloway to represent them in parliament. From his special knowledge of the subject he was nominated a member of the parliamentary commission appointed to examine Mr Chamberlain's proposal to grant help in securing old-age pensions; but, as the proposal excluded payment during sickness, Mr Holloway withdrew from the commission, as he was convinced that such a scheme would not be acceptable to the persons whom it was sought to benefit. The commissioners began their inquiry in due course, and examined all the schemes brought before them which proposed to combine State aid with the contributions of individuals to secure these pensions. The report of their completed work has just been issued, and in it they declare that no plan they have considered which is based on the principle of supplementing the savings of the industrious with parliamentary grants would be workable. The whole question, in fact, is judged by them to lie outside the sphere of practical politics. This report has been widely commented upon and criticised, and Mr Lionel Holland, M.P., has reviewed it in a small volume, *Suggestions for a Scheme of Old-Age Pensions*.

The Stroud scheme, which comprehends a sick fund, a funeral fund, and an old-age pension is perfectly simple and intelligible. A choice of six rates of payment is offered, beginning as low as a halfpenny a day, and reaching as much as threepence a day. Suppose the rate of a penny a day is chosen; this amounts to sevenpence a week, and two shillings and fourpence a month. The regular payment of this entitles a person who enters at any age between sixteen and thirty to sick pay of ten shillings a week, and his proportionate share of the capital of the club, which is calculated at the close of each financial year. The subscription to the funeral fund, which is a small item, is collected independently. When a member reaches the age of thirty his regular payment of sevenpence a week is increased each succeeding year by the net sum of sixpence per annum; thus in his thirty-fifth year he pays two shillings and sixpence extra, at forty years five shillings extra, and at fifty years ten shillings extra. These extra payments are necessary inasmuch as the average sickness increases as a member advances in years. The official tables show that the liability to sickness between sixteen and thirty is nearly stationary, and averages 6¾ days per annum; above thirty the liability increases every year, the average being 7¾ days; at forty it is 9 days, and at fifty it is 12 days. In the case of a member whose subscription is twopence a day, his extra payments to meet sickness are twice as much as those of the member who subscribes one penny a day, and he is entitled to twenty shillings a week of sick pay; in the case of a member whose subscription is threepence a day, his extra payments are trebled, and he receives thirty shillings a week sick pay.

At the end of each financial year a valuation of the property of the club is made, and the whole of it is divided among the members in proportion to the rate of their subscriptions—that is, the member who has paid one penny a day receives one share, and those who have paid twopence and threepence receive two and three shares respectively. The money is divided, but it is *not* distributed, and each member has a pass-book in which the money to which he is entitled is entered. A member who pays one penny a day may anticipate an accumulation of wealth on the following scale:

In 10	years	£12	11	5
" 20	"	33	0	9
" 30	"	66	7	7
" 40	"	120	13	7
" 50	"	208	1	8

At the age of sixty-five a member's connection with the club ends, unless he desires to keep up his payments to the funeral fund and secure the benefit which thence accrues. When he leaves the

club he finds himself the possessor of about £200, which he can invest if he pleases in the purchase of an old-age annuity from government which will bring something like £20 a year as long as he lives. Those members who have paid twopence and threepence a day to the club will be able to secure annuities of £40 and £60 respectively.

A member who for any cause wishes to leave the club may do so on forfeiting his two last years' shares of the surplus funds by way of compensation.

Such is an outline of the manner in which the Stroud club is managed. In addition to the usual sick and funeral funds, it secures to its members old-age pensions without asking a farthing from the parish rates or the national exchequer.

An account of the Stroud benefit club having reached Tunbridge Wells, it was resolved by a small number of the residents in that town to establish a similar society in the south-eastern counties. This was done in 1881, and there are now twenty-five agencies at work, with a membership of about two thousand. A few modifications of the original Stroud scheme have been made, the most important of which is an advantage to the members and a credit to the sagacity of 'The Men of Kent' who devised it. In the Stroud club, if a member desired, for any reason, to get a portion of the money placed to his credit and due to him, he could only do so by withdrawing from the club altogether, or by waiting till he reached the age of sixty-five, when his connection with the club came to an end. In the Tunbridge Wells club, a member is allowed to take out the whole of the capital that belongs to him, except four pounds, and still retain all the privileges of membership. Permission to withdraw a sum of forty or fifty pounds, which a member may require to assist him in purchasing a cottage or extending his business, is an obvious advantage. Other modifications will probably suggest themselves as these new benefit clubs are established in other towns and districts of the country. The fundamental idea of the scheme, however, which is provision for old age, will doubtless be jealously maintained; and the result of a general adoption of this class of clubs will be a comfort to the thrifty and industrious, the outlook for their declining years will be brightened, and the dread of the workhouse, which haunts so many, will be taken away.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER III.—RUTH.

THE letter from Gabriel Beek, which Hettie had given her father, had helped to confirm her fears. Her brother had confessed to an 'unlucky speculation' with the three thousand pounds; and the old ship-breaker, with his business affairs in dire confusion, had not had the strength to confront the pending disaster. From the moment that Jarvis had found him lying in an unconscious state upon the office floor Mr Beek had uttered no coherent words. Before morning broke he had breathed his last.

Some weeks went by. No further news of Gabriel reached Cablethorpe. It was reported—and the report was traced to lawyer Burtenshaw—that the ship-breaker's son had gone abroad, and would never set foot inside the gates of the timber-yard again. But as to what had actually become of Gabriel Beek, or what would become of him, nobody seemed to possess any very precise information.

One winter's day Mr Burtenshaw, presenting himself at the gates, was conducted into the private room of his late client. That grim smile was again on his face. Is it possible that he recalled to mind a certain gusty day in autumn? He stood at the window, raised his *pince-nez* deliberately, and looked down upon Beek & Son's timber-yard. In a field beyond the yard an auction sale of ship-wood was going on. Jarvis, who was still 'Beek's manager,' was stepping round the field, followed by a crowd of men who were bidding against each other. Lot after lot, piled up in a separate timber-heap, was being 'knocked down.'

Presently Hettie Beek appeared on the scene; and, to Mr Burtenshaw's surprise, the girl stepped into the manager's place as auctioneer. She took the walking-stick with which Jarvis had been knocking down the lots, and, stepping on to a pile of ship-wood, began to conduct the sale. Jarvis left the field.

A minute later he entered the office. Mr Burtenshaw was still watching Hettie with apparent interest. He dropped his glasses and glanced round.

'Well, John, you want to see me, I understand,' said the lawyer. 'What can I do for you?'

John Jarvis was a dark, good-looking fellow of twenty-eight. The weeks that had gone by since Mr Beek's death had altered his face, as the lawyer observed. He had grown more stern and determined. He seemed fully aware that the onus of Beek & Son's affairs had devolved upon him. While occupying the post of head-clerk, during Mr Beek's lifetime he had never asserted himself. Lawyer Burtenshaw, as he followed John's glance towards the 'auction field,' became

confident that the manager was contending for something more vital to himself than the mere reconstruction of the dead ship-breaker's ruined house.

'A chance has occurred, Mr Burtenshaw,' said Jarvis, 'of doing a stroke of business. A little ready money is needed.'

'What's the business?' said Mr Burtenshaw.

Jarvis drew a note-book from his pocket. A number of old hulks, he explained to the lawyer in detail, were offered for sale at Grimsby. If purchased at once, brought down to Cablethorpe by tug, and broken up and sold for ship-wood, a handsome profit would accrue.

'How much do you want?' said the lawyer.

Again Jarvis consulted his note-book, and then named a sum.

'Indeed! And now, perhaps,' pursued Mr Burtenshaw, 'you'll tell me, my friend, why you come to me? I'm not a money-lender.'

'You've advanced money to the firm,' said Jarvis. 'We are deeply in your debt. A few contracts might lift us out of our difficulties.'

'Ah! Now I'll tell you what it is, John!' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'You have got it into your head—possibly because Mr Beek was an old client of mine—that I'm ready to put his house in order. You never made a greater mistake. What right have you to suppose such a thing?'

Jarvis remained discreetly silent.

'I am ready to admit, however,' said the lawyer, 'that I have a thorough belief in your business capacities. I will even go so far as to say, supposing Beek & Son was transformed into a company, with you as managing director, I might be tempted to put capital into it. But it's useless to speak of that.'

'Why useless, sir?' said John, with an eager look.

'You would never agree to the terms,' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'I should impose very stringent conditions.'

'Let me know them,' said John.

Mr Burtenshaw looked thoughtful.

'If you are as shrewd,' said he, 'as I give you credit for being, you will have almost guessed the conditions. Perhaps you think that I have an affection for this Beek family—do you?'

'No affection, at least, for Gabriel Beek,' said Jarvis.

'Have *you?*' said the lawyer snappishly.

An angry flash lit up John's eyes.

'Mr Burtenshaw,' said he, 'you cannot be ignorant of the fact that Gabriel has stood in my way from first to last! I have been the bone of contention, so to speak, between him and his father for years. He did everything in his power to turn Mr Beek against me. But I've managed to hold my own. From the time I was taken into Beek & Son's service, as a boy in the timber-yard, I have risen step by step. Gabriel Beek's opposition spurred me on! The business is now practically in my hands. What is Gabriel Beek to me? If he showed his face at the gates—if he put one foot into the timber-yard—I would do my best to drive him forth. I have good reason to hate him!' He clenched his hands as he spoke, as though to emphasise his passionate sense of resentment.

Mr Burtenshaw smiled approvingly. Then he went to the window. The sale of ship-wood was finished. Hettie had disappeared. 'You hate the fellow, do you, John?' said he, fixing a keen look on the manager.

'Yes!'

'You've another reason to hate him than you have told me of,' the lawyer insisted. 'Is that your secret?'

'Perhaps. At least,' said John, 'I would rather not speak of it just now.'

Mr Burtenshaw rose and rested his hand on John's shoulder. 'My friend,' said he soothingly, 'we'll speak of it another time. I'll see what can be done about the money. You shall hear from me. Good-night.'

The wintry day was closing in. Mr Burtenshaw was gone. Jarvis lighted the lamp over the old ship-breaker's desk, and seated himself there with a sense of exaltation strong upon him. He knew—though the lawyer had been careful not to commit himself—that Mr Burtenshaw had long striven to get the firm into his power. Nor was it purely for the sake of greed. A sense of intense repulsion had existed between Gabriel Beek and the lawyer for years past. It had only needed a calamity such as the present one, as Jarvis conceived, to make Mr Burtenshaw complete master of the situation.

A bond of sympathy — the mutual hatred of Gabriel Beek—had made it possible for Jarvis to work in harmony with lawyer Burtenshaw. But it must not be supposed that Jarvis would, on that account, have condescended to listen to any unscrupulous conditions. Nothing was further from his thoughts. No brilliant promise of wealth would have tempted him to act contrary to the interests of the old house. And yet he was somewhat dazzled, just for the moment, by the ambitious thoughts that began to crowd his brain. In a few weeks' time, at the utmost, the business of Beek & Son would belong to him! He took up one of Mr Beek's pens, corroded with the ink with which Mr Beek had written last, and wrote across a sheet of paper, '*Beek and Son, Limited. John Jarvis, Managing Director.*' Then he leant back in the chair and contemplated the words with a look of stern purpose, indenting the penholder deeply with his teeth. And so lost in thought did he presently become that, vision after vision of wealth passing before his eyes, he failed to hear a light footstep outside. Before he was aware of it Hettie Beek, creeping up behind his chair, was looking down over his shoulder.

'John! what keeps you here so late?'

Jarvis covered the paper with his hand, as though he were conscious of having done a guilty thing. And yet he had, a moment before, craved to express this written thought to this girl. Perhaps her look—or the dread lest she should misinterpret the scribbled words—gave him the courage he had lacked until now.

He rose from the desk and said, 'Hettie'—he had not called her by her Christian name for many a day—'I am going to take your father's place.'

For a moment Hettie had a perplexed look. But her expression suddenly showed that she had grasped the situation. She spoke in a tone that sounded almost resentful.

'This is Mr Burtenshaw's doing?'

'Yes. The business will be worked with his money.'

'Don't trust him, John,' said Hettie, placing her hand on his arm—'don't trust him! He means us no good. Haven't you learnt that yet?'

'Long ago. But capital must be found,' said Jarvis, 'and no one else will help us.'

'Then why should he? Be frank with me, John,' said Hettie. 'Why should this hard lawyer turn soft-headed?'

'No reason whatever! He's a rich man,' said John, 'and he believes in me—has always believed in me—as a reliable man of business. He looks upon Beek & Son as a good investment. That is all.'

Still Hettie showed no sign of being satisfied. 'It's not that,' said she; 'I can't believe it. Mr Burtenshaw is a crafty schemer. Don't have anything to do with him. If you do, John, you will live to repent.'

For a moment Jarvis made no reply. Then he spoke. 'Hettie,' said he, 'don't think that I wish to oppose you. I've no such desire. The only desire I have—you must have guessed it long ago—is to serve you. It may be that I am placing myself in Mr Burtenshaw's power. But I shall save the house.'

Hettie sank down into her father's chair. 'No, John—no,' said she; 'you have made sacrifice enough already for us. Avoid the man; don't enter into any league with him. Let him do his worst.'

Jarvis looked troubled. 'Can you really wish that? If you were not as conversant with the affairs of the house as I am, Hettie, I could more easily credit your words. Let him do his worst? You know what that means. The business would be sold. You and your sister would be cast out, and the power to help you would be taken from me!'

The girl bent her head upon her hands.

'It is for you, Hettie—for you,' said Jarvis, bending down over her as she still sat at the dead ship-breaker's desk, 'that I'm making terms with this man. You and Ruth will be enabled to go on living in comfort, as you have always been accustomed to live, instead of being forced to face the world. It may even be that I shall gain a fortune for you in time. I will work from morning to night with that one end in view. Don't deny me the one happiness left me in life.'

Hettie looked up and held out her hands. 'How good you are,' she said, 'to Ruth and me! I wish my father were alive to hear. But he knew your worth. He was never deceived in his estimate of you.'

Then she rose and moved away.

'You will not oppose me?' said Jarvis, holding open the door.

'No. I have uttered my protest,' said she; 'do as you will.'

Jarvis paced Mr Beek's room with a restless step for a time. Then he took down the lantern from its place in the outer office, lighted it, and went on his usual nightly round of yard and warehouse. Then he went up the straight, narrow staircase which led to his own room on the upper floor of the warehouse.

He placed the lantern on the table, put a match to the stove, and sat down before it. The step he had taken to-day—the result of his talk with Mr Burtenshaw—troubled him. He had taken a leap in semi-darkness. Would it bring him perceptibly nearer to Hettie Beek? Time would show. If the lawyer had asked him to barter his soul he would have done so if by the bargain a chance were given him of winning this girl.

Hettie crossed over into the house. She entered a cosy parlour. From the windows that looked out up the fenlands the distant wolds could be seen. The flush of a crimson sunset was fading out of the sky, with the wolds forming a dark line along the horizon just beneath. The girl glanced round the room. Her sister was seated at a cottage-piano near one of the windows. She stopped playing and looked round. Hettie took a seat beside her, and told her all that had passed between her and Jarvis in the office a moment ago.

'Now, Ruth,' she asked in conclusion, 'what's your verdict?'

Ruth's features, small and exquisitely shaped, were like Hettie's; but Hettie's face was rosy and animated, while the other's was wanting in life and colour. But as Ruth exclaimed indignantly, 'Surely you'll not consent to this?' her face grew more crimson than the sunset glow.

'Beggars can't be choosers, dear,' said Hettie. 'I have consented. Jarvis is sanguine of success. He is bent on making our fortunes.'

'Have you lost all pride, Hettie?' said Ruth. 'We owe all our troubles to lawyer Burtenshaw. He caught Gabriel in his toils—father too. He will catch John now.'

'Possibly. But John is shrewd enough,' said Hettie. 'He can defend himself. The recollection that you and I are dependent on his efforts, Ruth, will be sure to rouse in him all his best energies. Ah, my dear, what a true friend he is!'

Ruth looked searchingly into her sister's face. The firelight touched Hettie's profile and brought it into strong relief. The flushed cheek, the exquisite curve of chin, the dark quivering lashes —all helped to express admiration and enthusiasm. The tone, too, in which she spoke was emotional. Did she love this man? That seemed the question that was trembling on Ruth's pale lips; and then her delicate face grew white, and she leant back in her chair shrinkingly, as the shadow shrinks when an elastic flame looks up out of the fire.

'I cannot bear this!' cried Ruth, rising suddenly and moving across the room. An agonising sob escaped her as she sank down beside the hearth. Hettie knelt at the chair-side, and with sudden impulse put her arms about her sister. 'Ruth, my dear, what is it?'

For a while there was no answer. 'I can't stay here. I can bear it no longer.' This was Ruth's low cry.

Hettie looked at her perplexedly. 'Shall I never understand you?' said she. 'I thought it was your wish to stay. Would you prefer to face poverty? Dear Ruth, you are far too delicate. The hardship and privation to which we should be exposed would kill you.'

'I shouldn't mind that,' said Ruth, with a resolute face. 'He doesn't love *me!* Why should I care to live?'

Still Hettie looked perplexed. But Ruth, not seeing her face, and misinterpreting her silence, hastened to unburden her mind of the load she could no longer bear.

'I would have kept my secret—kept it even from you,' said she in a broken voice, 'if I could have done so. It has been mine for months—for years past. When he worked in the yard, before he rose to be a clerk in father's office, the mere sight of him was a happiness to me. How hard he has always worked! Is it part of my weakness—he is so strong and brave — to love him so? Every one praised him—every one, except Gabriel. *He* was jealous of him — hated him, I firmly believe. The men's characters are so different! The one a visionary, indolent and irresolute; the other practical, full of energy and force. Are not such men born to disagree? I have watched them together many a time. The unjust hatred of Gabriel roused my indignation; and how it increased my love! But what could a feeble, wretched woman do? If I had been blessed with health and strength like yours, Hettie, I would have left home months ago. Is there no way of escape from this misery now?'

She spoke appealingly, not meeting Hettie's look, but with her eyes fixed upon the fire. The flames leapt high, and set a glow upon her face that seemed like mockery at such a moment.

'But I've not yet told you all,' said Ruth, lowering her voice. 'He loves another. He has loved her for ever so long! I can recall—so at least it seems to me—the very day on which his love began —almost the hour. Since then he has toiled day and night with one persistent thought—the thought of making her his wife! Dear Hettie!—it is you!'

At this moment Ruth heard John's step in the timber-yard, and knew that he was coming in. It had been his privilege, ever since he had held the position of manager, to sup in this cosy parlour with the Beek family; and this hour in the twenty-four had frequently brought to Ruth a painful glimpse of happiness. From the instant of waking each morning she had wished that evening would come. It is true that most of John's attention was bestowed upon Hettie; still, one word or look from Jarvis made up for all the neglect. His indifference caused her to think the more, and with every thought of him her love had grown stronger. But to-night, since she had entrusted the secret to Hettie, she shrank from the prospect of meeting Jarvis face to face. She dreaded lest her flushed cheeks or her faltering voice, or even a glance from her discreet sister, should betray her to him. She rose hastily, and, pleading a headache, went to her own room.

A REVOLUTION IN IRON-MINING.

ALL ABOUT EDISON'S LATEST.

By Frederick A. Talbot.

PROBABLY the great majority of people have read how, in a hypothetical war between this country and the United States, the utter annihilation of the British Isles is brought about by Thomas Alva Edison, the greatest scientist the world has ever seen, simply pressing a prosaic button in his laboratory. Where these stately islands rose majestically out of the Atlantic one minute, they were nowhere to be seen the next. Although this is a satirical exaggeration of the Wizard's inventive potentialities, yet it would be interesting to know when his crowning achievement will be attained. It was popularly opined that his *ultima Thule* was attained with the phonograph, fleuroscope, and kinetoscope. But Edison is not one of those who, when they have made some extraordinary invention, are content to repose upon their laurels and reap the pecuniary benefit accruing from the result of their handiwork. Each successive achievement only piques him to further attempts

by which he may benefit mankind. His latest invention, however, is of such magnitude and so stupendous in its conception that it completely relegates all his previous efforts, wonderful though they are, into insignificance. It has been said on more than one occasion that if the necessity arose he would remove mountains. This contingency has arrived, and Edison is removing the mountains. Every schoolboy knows that if you take a piece of iron ore, pulverise it with a hammer, and then bring a magnet into contact with the granulated mass, the iron molecules, fulfilling the laws of affinity, fly to the loadstone, leaving the pure sand undisturbed behind. Edison's latest consists of an application of this scheme upon a cyclopean scale. The result is that the United States, which now only mines about 15,000,000 tons of iron ore per annum, probably will become in the near future the marketplace of the world for iron.

This marvellous ore-extracting process which promises to revolutionise the iron industry of the whole world, like many of his earlier inventions, arose from almost a mere accident. His phonograph was suggested by a pin-prick of the finger, and now his latest invention was created from quite as commonplace and insignificant a genesis. About sixteen years ago Edison was rusticating upon Long Island, United States. During one of his daily peregrinations upon the beach his observant eye was arrested by a bank of sand which the sea had cast up. It was not the white, silvery, shimmering sand so generally seen upon our seashores, but was of a deep sable hue. It was this peculiar colour that aroused his curiosity, and he made impromptu investigations upon the spot, formulating several hypotheses to account for this phenomenon, but did not arrive at a satisfactorily conclusive explanation. With his characteristic zeal and determination not to be beaten, he carried a quantity of the sand to his laboratory, where he proposed to carefully diagnose the case and obtain a veracious deduction. Suddenly an idea struck him. He laid one of his powerful electro-magnets near the puzzling heap. Instantly the substance was highly affected, and in a very few minutes there were two heaps—one, the original, considerably reduced in bulk, and another surrounding the magnet. A grim smile of complete satisfaction spread over the intelligent features of Edison. Why was it that they betrayed such an affinity for the magnetised steel? There was only one solution to the enigma. The little grains must be particles of iron. Then another idea, as weird as it was stupendous, now portrayed itself forcibly before the great electrician. Why not put the simple, obvious scheme to practical utility in such a manner as to make it worth while, from a commercial standpoint, to grind up masses of magnetite, and separate the iron particles from the sand by magnets? Edison is not a man to recline upon a luxurious couch and hazard impossible theories at so much per dozen. When he advances a theory he immediately proceeds to put it into practice, even though it may entail several years of incessant labour; a thousand and one obstacles have to be surmounted, hundreds of experiments made, ninety-nine of which result in dismal failures involving ruinous expenditure of money. His fertile brain began to work to place his wild idea—it must certainly have appeared wild to a less audacious intelligence—into operation. It was perfectly feasible, though to make it profitable the crushing-machines and magnets would have to be of titanic proportions. But then such slight obstacles as these do not deter Edison, who is thoroughly at home with engines of herculean proportions and almost human ingenuity. For months he was busily engaged in mathematical deductions, intricate machine drawing, and what not. The outcome of it, after much grim perseverance, was that small machines were set up on the beach of Long Island, where he had discovered the mysterious black sand, and the new process of iron-smelting was begun. Alas! the enterprise was doomed to be checked while in its infancy. One night a severe gale raged, and all the black sand was withdrawn again by the sea.

Although the process had only been submitted to a very short and incomplete trial, it was sufficient to illustrate the complete practicability of his scheme. Flushed with his success, he floated a company, and the new process of ore extraction was commenced in grim earnest. Before venturing upon surveying journeys for the exploration of ore-yielding soil, with his characteristic ingenuity he devised a marvellous little instrument for divining the presence of low-grade ore in the earth. This delicate little mechanism consists of a strongly magnetised needle, similar to a mariner's compass, which deflects towards the earth when passing over beds of ore, thus betraying the presence of mineral which under ordinary circumstances would not be divulged. The indispensable utility of this ingenious little contrivance is obvious. Under former conditions iron could only be found by digging for it—a will-o'-the-wisp undertaking—but now a man can walk comfortably along with this needle in his hand, which is so delicately poised as to indicate even the slightest trace of iron. Edison was driving across the extensive wastes and gneiss rock of the mountains of New Jersey, when suddenly the magnetised needle reposing upon his knee became deeply depressed to the earth, and remained so for such a long time that Edison feared his divining-rod had become disorganised; but presently the needle returned to its normal position. Great was Edison's amazement upon this unexpected discovery. The earth must be richly impregnated with iron to affect the needle so violently. They investigated a wide area, and

still the needle was highly influenced, varying but little. Edison's wildest anticipations were more than realised by this remarkable *dénouement*. The upshot of these careful explorations was that a large expanse of land, some 16,000 acres in extent, was purchased by the company. Through this vast tract, at an average depth of 700 to 750 feet, extend for twenty miles six large veins of ore-bearing rock, besides several minor ones. Edison computes that in this area there are some 1,100,000,000 tons of iron ore, which is sufficient to last the States, at the present rate of consumption, for about eighty years. In 3000 acres immediately surrounding the works extends an enormous artery containing over 200,000,000 tons, which alone is ample to supply the whole world for about three years, and which will take the present plant over a hundred years to exhaust at its present average output.

Now that Edison had discovered a rich ore-bearing ground, huge buildings for the accommodation of the Brobdingnagian machinery sprang up like mushrooms. What was but a few years ago a barren, secluded spot in the wilderness now resounds with the clang, whirl, and grinding of machinery, hissing of steam, and the voice of man! The district in northern New Jersey where this unique industry is in full swing is called Edison, after the founder. It is a strange, straggling place of a motley collection of buildings, some towering and slender, others short and extended. Thick electric cables for the transmission of the currents from the huge dynamos to the various machinery sheds are ubiquitous. The air is reeking with dust from the huge amount of sand that pours out incessantly, day and night, in a steady stream from a towering shaft, and the men are provided with curious respirators to purify the air breathed. Narrow-gauge railways dot the landscape on all sides; and the diminutive engines with long lines of trucks dart in and out of the huge buildings as if playing at hide-and-seek. Whirling conveyors of all descriptions, from an endless chain of baskets to an endless rubber belt, abound everywhere; and if it were not for such marvellous labour-saving devices as these this huge factory would give employment to thousands of hands, instead of a little over two hundred, which constitute its present staff.

Edison is the sworn enemy of the trades unions. He is never so delighted as when he can jump up and say, while looking at some new contrivance, 'Another man dispensed with.' One of the most marvellous labour-saving contrivances ever called into requisition is the steam-shovel. This leviathan machine is as nearly human as anything possibly can be. It weighs some 200,000 lb., and in design resembles a crane, with its stupendous telescopic latticed neck, from which depends the immense steel head with its formidable steel teeth. The power controlling this ingenious machine is contained in a compact space upon the body of the car, which rests upon a migratory truck. The rock is first rent asunder by dynamite blasting. The sinews of the mighty shovel are then set to work, the iron neck descends majestically, and, amid much hissing of steam, scrunching, and gnashing, the terrible steel teeth bury themselves in the disintegrated rock, which grates and grinds as the jaws close together; the neck is again raised, and the shovel withdraws slowly from the face of the mountain with some 12,000 lb. of iron ore in its great maw. It swings majestically round and disgorges its capacious mouthful into the skips reposing upon the flat trucks waiting upon the narrow-gauge railway near by. This shovel excavates about ten tons of rock every minute, and, working day and night incessantly, clears away from the mountain-side over 14,000 tons of low-grade ore every twenty-four hours. It is a wonderful sight to see this monster at work, and Edison will sit for hours watching it with satisfactory smiles as it tears and swallows the tons of rocks with the utmost ease. Occasionally, however, it becomes too gormandising and meets with an obstreperous mass of rock. Then the exertion and strain is terrific, but at last something gives way—almost invariably the rock; but on one occasion it was the engine, which, sooner than release its grip, toppled over.

As this shovel withdraws some ten tons of ore per minute, and there are two such shovels, though the second is a trifle smaller, as may be naturally divined, the railway trains conveying the ore from the excavating grounds to the crushing plant are kept pretty busily employed. When a train has obtained its consignment of rock it steams away into a huge building, in which, upon a platform several feet above the ground, are two or three tremendously powerful electric cranes. As the train passes underneath, the skips are rapidly picked up, whirled round, and the contents discharged through a yawning abyss in the floor, accompanied by a roar and rattle and an impenetrable pall of dust, into the crushing-machines below.

The crushing-machines, following Edison's customary system, are most stupendous in construction. They consist of two Gargantuan rollers, over six feet in diameter and four feet in width, and weighing over 235,000 lb. The surfaces are studded with huge bosses, and the rollers revolve within eighteen inches of each other. When viewed at a standstill they appear too ponderous for rapid movement, yet when running they attain a velocity of over 290 revolutions per minute—equal to almost a surface of a mile. When the huge boulders come crashing through the roof above into the machine they are caught by the inexorable teeth and immediately reduced to convenient lumps about the size of coco-nuts. The noise created by these terrible engines at work is frightful, and the giant rollers grind up the

rock as fast as the skips can discharge their cargo. The average output is some 300 tons per hour. After the boulders have passed through this machine they pass through another series of crushers, the rollers of each successive machine being placed nearer together and studded with finer teeth. After emerging from the last machine, what was a few minutes previously an unwieldy mass of ore several tons in weight is now reduced to the consistency of fine powder.

Gigantic though these crushing-engines are, the mechanism that controls them is of a most delicate and intricate nature. There are in all over 4000 bearings, yet they can never be choked, as they are so constructed that grit and dust are a *sine quâ non* for their movements; while, to guard against the possibility of accentuated currents, which would probably tend to disarrange the machines, safety-fuses are plentifully provided, which sever the current directly it becomes of more than the required intensity. Again, the machine is only capable of withstanding a certain strain, and when this is attained, which is very seldom, the 'breaking-pins' snap, and the whole of the colossal machinery is brought to a standstill. The 'breaking-pins,' which are one of the salient characteristics for the prevention of accident, are graded to the one-thousandth part of an inch, and fitted to every piece of mechanism which has to withstand a strain, however moderate.

Another curious fact is that the power which drives these enormous rollers does not accomplish the pulverisation. The engine is only of sufficient power to impart a high revolving celerity to the rollers. It is this tremendous momentum, coupled with the extreme weight of the rollers—nearly seventy tons—that executes the crushing. For instance, suppose a large piece of rock about six tons in weight falls into the machine in such a manner as to offer a momentary resistance to the rollers, a simple contrivance by which the rollers are connected with the engines disengages the latter, so that no impetus is supplied during the moment the piece of rock impedes the progress of the rollers. But seventy tons of metal, whose peripheries have almost a mile a minute, require tremendous force to resist their progress. This brittle rock cannot do, and the next instant it is smashed to fragments, and the engine immediately resumes contact with the rollers. At the outset Edison had a great deal of trouble with these rollers. The 'breaking-pins' attached to a certain part of the machinery kept snapping, without any apparent reason, as rapidly as they were renovated. Edison sat and watched the feeding very closely, but could assign no reason for their refractoriness. After a week's patient and monotonous vigil he entered his office one night, and exclaimed to his indefatigable associate, Mr Mallory, 'I'm not going out of this office until I find out where the "bug" is.' He forthwith sat down at his desk, and was deeply immersed for several hours in abstruse calculations. Suddenly he jumped to his feet and cried exultantly, 'I've got it.' He had; the defect was remedied, and the machine has run smoothly without a hitch ever since.

After the rock has passed through this crushing plant it is ready for the extraction of the ore. First passing through the drying-machine, it is carried by conveyors to the ore-separator, or, as it is vernacularly called, the 'refining-mill,' and this phase of the process is the most interesting, because here a most wonderful metamorphosis is effected. The refining building is a lofty structure six stories in height, and the pulverised ore is conveyed to the uppermost floor. From this top story the sand is permitted to gravitate in a thin shower from room to room, separating as it goes. Altogether, it has to pass four hundred and eighty magnets, arranged in three sets, each of varying intensity. The first set is the weakest—that is to say, it has the least energy and attraction; the second is medium, and the third has the strongest deflecting power. The powdered iron, of the consistency of flour, is now ready for smelting, but first it has to be solidified, otherwise while in the furnace the blasting would blow an immense amount away. The convenient conveyor again catches it as it falls from the chute in the refining-mill, and whirls it to the mixing-house. Here the pulverised iron is thrown into revolving cylinders along with a special adhesive substance which binds every particle of iron securely together.

Edison had considerable trouble in the search for a proper medium for this mixing process, and had made over seven hundred experiments before he alighted upon the ideal. As the iron, now closely resembling dough, exudes from the end of these cylinders, it is caught by an endless rubber belt five hundred feet long, with a conveying capacity of one hundred tons per hour to the 'briquetting building.' The main object of these briquetting machines is to force the doughy mixture through a small orifice about two inches in diameter, at the same time subjecting it to a pressure of a thousand pounds to the inch. The iron issues from this machine in small round knobs, called briquettes, about three inches long and two inches in diameter. They are now baked so that they should be of sufficient toughness to stand shipment. From the briquetting ovens iron rope conveyors hustle them along and discharge them into the railway trucks by which they are carried to the vessel's side. An immense amount of the iron is exported to this country; and this is where England benefits by Edison's enterprise, for no other nation can manufacture iron so well as we can do. As our supply of iron, also, is not sufficient to meet our demand, this American iron is most welcome. It is a noteworthy fact in this remarkable industry that not once in the whole process, from its crude state upon the mountain-side until

it is transported, is the material touched by human hands. All is done by machinery.

When the sand has gravitated from the top story of the refining-mill to the basement, completely destitute of even the minutest particle of iron, it is transported by a conveyor through a towering latticed derrick, from the extremity of which it spouts in a copious constant stream, making a veritable mountain in itself. From a distance this sand-fall presents a picturesque sight with the sun glancing upon its shimmering particles. This sand, although refuse so far as the iron-mining is concerned, is yet a valuable commercial product, being extensively purchased for building purposes, for which it is more suitable than the seashore sand, as it is what is technically called 'sharper.' When it is recollected that of every ton of excavated ore about three-fourths are pure sand, it will be readily seen that Edison is literally moving mountains.

Edison had the greatest confidence in his invention; and although it has taken many years of patient and determined labour, endless experiments, ninety-nine per cent. of which resulted in disheartening failures—Edison has himself confessed that he only expects one practical result out of every hundred experiments undertaken—and the expenditure of thousands of pounds of money, it is now one of the greatest engineering triumphs the world has ever seen.

A BRIDEGROOM ENTRAPPED.

By Agnes Giberne.

CHAPTER I.

'YOU think you really must go, John dear?' she said, and she spoke with an air of reluctance. We were within twenty-four hours of becoming man and wife, and it seemed to have come upon her as a surprise that I could think of anything in the world except our impending marriage. I certainly felt, for my part, all that a bridegroom can reasonably be expected to feel on the brink of wedding the girl of his choice; but perhaps a man is seldom so utterly wrapped up in the one object as is a woman under like circumstances. It so happened that, at this particular epoch of my existence, a second question of importance claimed attention. To be brief: I had a book in hand—the first I had written; and that book—no mere novel, but a weighty volume of early English history—was nearing completion. Those who have written books will know what this means, especially in the case of one's 'maiden' effort. The year which should see me a wedded husband might also see me a successful author.

I had, however, come lately to almost a standstill for lack of information on a certain subject, which information I believed to be obtainable from one man alone. This man was a distant cousin of Laura's, the Very Rev. Dean of a certain city situated about two hundred miles away. The Dean and I had never met, but I looked forward to making his acquaintance after our honeymoon. My book, so far as completed, had been read and approved of by a publisher; and arrangements had been made for its publication in the autumn, provided that I could get it done in time. Therefore our 'moon' was to be scarcely more than a half-moon; and so soon as we returned to England I meant to seek out the good and learned Dean, pleading, as I should then be able, our new connection, and craving his help.

But on the very eve of our wedding-day news reached me that the Dean was on the point of starting for a lengthy tour on the Continent. Another twenty-four hours and he would be out of reach for months, perhaps for a year. The questions that I had to ask could not well be written; at all events, I could not hope that the Dean would fully answer them by post. He would be away from books of reference; his letters were always short to excess; and he was famous for an absolutely illegible hand. I wanted his general opinion upon a somewhat complicated question connected with a considerable period, and involving the characters of two or three eminent personages. Half-an-hour's talk would be worth more to me than half-a-year's correspondence.

Nothing remained but to start off there and then for a chat with him before he should leave home, sending a telegram to announce my purpose, and pleading future instead of present relationship. He was said to be a charming man, full of learning, genial as sunshine, delighted to give out from his stores of knowledge. I had but to place myself in his presence, and wisdom would pour from his lips, like water from a Swiss fountain fed by ever-melting snows.

True, I should have to leave Laura on this last day, and I should have to travel hard.

Weddings in those years were over by midday. If I found the Dean in, if he were free at once to attend to me, and if a short talk sufficed, I might catch the half-past ten return train, and get back about midnight. Otherwise I should have to wait till early morning, to travel by a slow 'parliamentary,' and probably to be restricted in time for changing my clothes. Still, the thing could be done; and I made Laura understand that I fully intended to be off by the earlier train.

Despite these assurances she seemed unhappy,

and she persisted in looking upon the small separation as a serious affair. Actually there were tears in her eyes. I rather wished that she could resolve to shorten our leave-taking. The dear girl had always so much to say, while I felt that there were few minutes to spare, and I was also anxious to escape with a mind free for historical analysis.

'So you think you really must go, John dear?' she began over again, just when I believed that I had fully convinced her of the necessity. 'It seems such an enormous distance! I know you will never manage to catch the 10.30. You'll be so wrapped up in some horrid old Saxon chronicle that you will forget all about the wedding until it is too late. And then I shall see nothing more of you till we meet in church. That slow train is always late, so you will rush up at the very last moment, when everybody is in an agony, and we shall be married in a scrimmage to get done before it strikes twelve, and you will be fearfully untidy, and so sleepy with your bad night that people will say you are miserable at being married to me. Just think! And if your train breaks down, or if you have an explosion or a collision, you may never come back at all.'

'But, my love, we are not going to have either an explosion or a collision, and nobody could possibly call me miserable, because I am just the reverse,' I said, with a furtive glance at my watch.

'You can't tell. Accidents are always unexpected, and they always come at the most inconvenient times. If you don't manage to get your tie straight, that will be quite enough to make you look wretched. You don't think'—coaxingly—'that you might put off till the Dean comes back? It would not be really long, you know. Does it matter so very much? We shall not be depending on your pen for bread and butter, after all; and if your book did not come out this year, it might come out next year instead. Then you would not need to work all day long either. I'm beginning to be just a wee bit jealous of your pen, do you know?'

'My dear, I don't think you quite understand,' I said, with studied mildness. 'I am just now in full swing with the work'——

'Most men in love wouldn't be able,' she murmured; and this was disquieting, but I went on as if I had not heard: 'And if I were to lay it aside for six months or more, I might never feel inclined to take it up again. Don't you see?'

'That would be a world-wide misfortune,' she said; and if she had spoken less pensively I could almost have suspected her of laughing at me. Then her eyes again became wet. 'Would it matter, John? Would anything matter—so long as you and I are together?'

'I think it would, my dearest,' I said. 'That, of course, is a pretty and graceful view of the matter; but one's duty has also to be considered. I have my work in life to do, and mere pleasure must not be allowed to stand in its way.' To this point I held steadfastly, and within five minutes I was off.

It had not been my fate to be always in touch with Church dignitaries. Plain John Smith, of no particular family, could hardly expect to be sought after by dignitaries of any description. But John Smith, plunged deep into the story of early English history, becomes, perhaps, a more important individual. Strong in this belief, I presented myself at the Deanery with no flutterings of trepidation; and I was not in the least surprised to meet with a right cordial reception.

To be sure, the Dean had won a reputation for universal kindliness. His worst enemy—if he had ever had one—needed not to have feared going to the Deanery. He would have been received with beaming smiles and with the best of cheer. I might myself have been the Dean's nearest relative and dearest friend, judging from his outstretched hand and the radiant smile which lighted up his fine features. He apologised for the absence of his wife and daughter, who had departed by a train previously fixed upon, while he, on receiving my telegram, had at some inconvenience generously put off his own going for an hour or two that he might respond to my wishes. It was the only chance, as he meant to stay abroad for a year. Absence from work had been ordered for him; and, indeed, though vigorous in speech and movement, he looked very spare and worn.

Would I come at once to the library, he asked, to lose no time? Barely an hour remained before he had to start. The luggage was gone, and everything had been arranged. He was leaving the place in charge of a couple of old servants. These facts he mentioned casually, and then he asked—How about food? Would I like?——

'Nothing at all, thanks,' I said hastily. 'That is all provided for.' By which I meant that I could get something to eat at the station by-and-by.

The Dean looked perhaps a little relieved. 'Then you have friends in the place. That is right,' he said, and I did not take the trouble to correct him. I begrudged each moment that was wasted in chit-chat.

Through a much-littered hall we passed into a long passage, which led to a second passage, and that to a third. Then we went up a little winding staircase and into a large library—oblong in shape, with three windows, all on one side and all placed so high that no one standing on the floor could see out of them. It was a lofty room, and the walls were absolutely lined with bookcases, interrupted only by the windows and by a single oil-painting over the mantelpiece. The very door was a part of the bookcases, opening inwards, as I noted in passing. I remembered nothing further about the matter.

Two cups of coffee and some biscuits stood waiting, and the Dean offered me one, hoping that it was not cold. Again I had to decline, time being far too precious to waste in coffee-drinking.

It was not quite easy to bring the Dean to a point. He was in the unsettled mental condition of one about to start on a long journey; so that something of a wrench was needed to carry him from an atmosphere of luggage and railway-tickets to the perplexities of Saxon history. Moreover, he liked to expatiate upon the merits of his library, upon its quiet and retirement. No sound of passers-by could penetrate those thick walls, and its position cut it off entirely from all household stir. 'When I am here I seem to be in a world alone,' he said, smiling. I listened impatiently, not guessing how soon those facts would possess a keen interest for me. With an effort I turned him to the subject of my book; and he leant back in an easy-chair, his pale hands lightly joined. 'Yes, yes; you wished to ask me something,' he said.

I dashed into my explanation. In the train I had conned it over, thrusting away superfluous words; and I flatter myself that the difficulty was well stated. At first the Dean's eyes wandered, but in three minutes I had his attention. Once or twice he gently nodded his head. 'Good! Well put!' he murmured. Then, when I paused, he sat lost in thought.

'Yes, I could say a good deal to help you if there were time,' he murmured. 'But'—— he took out his watch, looked at the hands, and laid it, face upwards, upon the table. 'A few hints are the most that I can manage. If, however, you would care to remain here for an hour or two after I go, pray do so. I can direct your attention to a few books, into which you might dip. Here'—— he walked across to a bookcase between two of the windows, and began pulling out one volume after another. 'Have you pencil and note-book? In a couple of hours you may do a good deal if you are a rapid reader. What time must you start?'

I hesitated. 'At ten, perhaps; but, if necessary, I can stay longer.'

'Right.' He stood for several minutes, turning to passage after passage with the secure rapidity of a man at home in his books, slipping in scraps of paper as a guide to me. Then he returned to his seat, and the flow began. He spoke with few pauses, not fast, but steadily; and the breadth of knowledge shown was amazing. He never hesitated for a name, a date, a fact. I was kept hard at work, scribbling memoranda of what he said, scarcely needing to ask a question, only jotting down page after page of thoughts for future consideration. Time flew on wings. I could have listened thus for twelve hours at a stretch.

Suddenly he broke off in the middle of a sentence. 'Time is up. I shall miss my train.'

'But you were saying'—— I gasped.

'Nothing of importance. Merely as to—— You will find all that you really want in one or another of those books.'

'If you could just have told me'——

'My dear friend, I *must* be off. I am under a promise. Nearly ten minutes past the time I fixed; and the carriage is outside, waiting. Half a minute more may mean the loss of my train. No, no; not a moment. But stay as long as you wish. Pray do. Make any use of my library. Good-bye! They ought to have reminded me of the time! Good-bye, good-bye!'

One grasp of the hand, and the venerable Dean was gone, literally with flying coat-tails. No schoolgirl ever rushed more frantically out of a room, or banged a door behind her with more excited ardour. I could hear his feet going down the winding stair and along the passage beyond, till lost in distance. Then came a pause; and soon I heard, faint and far, the sound of receding wheels, after which silence settled down upon the place.

I carried the lamp closer to the pile of selected books, and sat down, resolved to make the most of my opportunity. First one volume, then another, I searched into, glanced through, and copied from, with eager energy and enchained interest. Those passages to which the Dean had specially referred me proved to be hardly less weighty than his spoken suggestions. He was a wonderful man, I thought; and I smiled at the recollection of his impetuous flight.

The striking of a clock somewhere in the room aroused me. Ten! Just time to put my things together, speed to the station, and catch the 10.30. But—those volumes still untouched! What could I do? To leave them would be heart-breaking. It did not at the moment occur to me that I might, after the honeymoon, ask leave from the Dean to pay another visit to his library. I was full of my work, absorbed in the present research; and, after all, the second train would do. Why not wait and travel by that? Laura had said that she did not expect me by the earlier train. So down I sat, hastily munching a biscuit to allay cravings which insisted on making themselves felt. Hardly surprising, since I had had only one cup of coffee since early lunch.

Almost instantly I was again deep in my work; and this time nothing disturbed me—not even the striking of eleven and twelve o'clock. When at length, feeling somewhat stupefied, I lifted my head and looked round, conscious of failing light or sight, the little clock struck ONE with silvery impressiveness.

'Hollo!' I muttered. 'I had not a notion how time was going.' Was I faint for want of food? That question came naturally, for the room seemed cold, and the light was very dim. Then I saw that the lamp had burnt away all its oil, and was quietly dying out. With a hasty spring I reached the mantelpiece, found a box of matches and a red candle in a diminutive candlestick, and lighted the wick just as the lamp-flame ceased to exist.

The large room looked weird and ghostly in the pale flicker of one tiny candle, and I caught

myself shivering—partly, doubtless, from want of food, partly from the chill of a spring night, inevitable even when the days are fairly warm. I stretched myself, yawned, drank a cup of cold coffee, and disposed of three or four biscuits. After which I returned the books to their places, mentally thanked the Dean for solid help afforded, folded and tied together my papers, and turned to leave the room.

Turned! But which way? No door was visible.

A moment's sense of bewilderment, followed by a laugh. It was absurd. I believed myself to have noticed, as we came in, that the door was a part of the general bookcase, and that it faced the three windows; and I ought to have observed its position more particularly when the Dean made his hurried exit, but I had been then too much absorbed to give full attention. It seemed to my recollection that, when he rushed away with flying coat-tails, he had gone in the direction of the wall opposite the windows, but I could not be sure. I had turned so quickly to the books as not to watch his actual departure.

However, the door had now to be found. Once out of this room, I could easily leave the house. If heard I might, indeed, be mistaken for a burglar; but that had to be risked; and no doubt the Dean had mentioned to his servants that he was leaving me in the library.

Had he done so? or had he in his hurry forgotten? It seemed curious that one of them should not have come to speak to me before going to bed. If he said nothing, they would naturally conclude that I had taken my departure before himself.

With the little red candle in hand, I hastily traversed that side of the room which lay opposite to the windows, feeling for the door and searching for tokens of its existence, but feeling and searching in vain. This would not do. I began over again a far more careful examination; and still the result was failure. There was no sign whatever of any possible opening. I felt and thumped, pulled and pushed, to no purpose. A solid wall of bookcases shut me in.

A third time I went over the same ground. Perhaps some spring had to be touched, or some button had to be pressed, or some string had to be pulled. Inch by inch I explored the wall and the adjacent floor; but no break in the shelves became apparent, no spring or string or button could be discovered.

Was it possible that I had mistaken the wall? What if, after all, the door were in the end of the room opposite the fireplace? I went over that side also, foot by foot, with exceeding pains; and still failure rewarded my efforts.

I was getting tired, worried, and anxious. These huntings took time; and the slim red candle, carried to and fro, wasted fast. Soon I should be left in darkness.

The early morning train started at five o'clock; and if I could not get out by then no chance remained of my reaching home in time for the wedding. Perspiration broke from every pore with the bare idea. I pictured the assembled crowd in church, my Laura in her white dress and veil, with a pale face of fear, vainly waiting for her bridegroom. What would she think? What *could* she think?

But this was nonsense, absurdity. The door existed, and I simply had to find it. There was plenty of time, if only I could have been sure of plenty of light. Anyhow, I *had* to discover the door and to make my escape. The thing had to be; and the very notion of serious difficulty was too ludicrous. That I, a sensible, prosaic modern Englishman, should be mewed up in a doorless prison, like any unfortunate knight of the Middle Ages, could only make one laugh. So I told myself, though it made me angry too.

The clock struck one! two! Three hours remained before my train would start.

Slowly and doggedly I went round, testing every inch of those two walls. There unquestionably the door was, if only I could alight upon it. I had not come in at the fireplace-end of the room; that at least I knew with certainty; and the window-side was an outer wall. Again I hammered and shook, I poked and pushed, I tried and tested, making noise enough, one would have thought, to awaken the seven sleepers. But no opening, no sign of a possible doorway, could I discover.

My candle flickered and went out. In breathless despair I dropped upon the nearest seat.

WOOD PAVEMENT AND WHERE IT COMES FROM.

VERY few of those hundreds and thousands who daily travel the wood pavement laid down in so many of our London thoroughfares, or who have at some period in their lives stood and watched the process of laying it, have much idea of where all this wood is obtained, nor have they any idea of the process used in cutting it into blocks of the requisite size. Various kinds of woods from all parts of the world have been tried, and of late years the Tasmanian 'stringy bark,' a species of the Eucalypti, has proved to be the most enduring, and without the glass-like surface of some other hard woods. The stringy bark, which grows all over Tasmania, has a rougher surface than the blue gum, thereby giving in greasy weather a better foothold for man and beast. It is in the south of the island

of Tasmania that the chief supply of timber is obtained, the forests coming down almost to the water's edge, thus making the cost and difficulty of transport very small; in fact, at some of the mills vessels of three thousand tons could partly load alongside the pier, and complete their loading by barges while lying in a perfectly secure anchorage. We will now take a ramble round a typical southern Tasmanian sawmill.

Leaving Hobart by one of the small steamers which run daily to the ports down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, which divides the two islands of Bruni from the mainland, we arrive at our place of disembarkation, and after a drive of a few miles across the island of South Bruni we arrive at our destination. What strikes the stranger's eye at first are the mountains of sawdust which we see in every direction; in fact, the beach is being fast covered up by it. Standing back a little is a comfortable-looking residence, occupied by the manager; and scattered about are the cottages of the employés, many of which have gardens attached, where vegetables and flowers can be easily cultivated. Attached to the mill there is also a general store, where anything and everything can be obtained. The mill has a forty horse-power engine driving the breakdown and circular saws, and it is capable of cutting about thirty thousand feet of timber daily. Leaving the mill, we proceed, under the guidance of the foreman bushman, along a wooden tramway, which runs right into the forest. In the early morning, before the sparkling dew is off the foliage, the whole scene is one of great beauty; and, unlike most of the other colonies, there is plenty of music from the whistling dicks, blue wrens, and other feathered denizens of the Tasmanian bush.

The tramway runs for about three-quarters of a mile on a perfectly smooth level, and then begins to rise with a gradually increasing gradient till we near a portable engine at the end of the tram. This engine is provided with a drum and six hundred feet of wire rope. Its use we shall shortly see. It is in this spot that the logs are loaded on to the trollies and sent down to the mill, the trollies being provided with powerful brakes. The first part of the journey is accomplished by the bare weight of the load, and it finally stops upon reaching the level, where a team of horses drag it into the mill. But the foreman is calling us to come on, and, clambering up a rough track, we find the wire rope all along it, and at its end a large iron shoe, in shape something like a snow-plough; on this now rests the end of a fine log some twenty-four feet long and seven feet in diameter. The foreman and his gang see all clear, give the word, round goes the drum, and, willy-nilly, the log is hauled out to the siding, where it is soon secured on the trollies and despatched to be made into wooden pavement. The foreman bushman's duty is to select and cut down the timber, and when one patch is worked out, to go on till the engine is too far away to be of use. Then comes a short lengthening of the tramway, or the transfer of the engine to the other side; if the former is decided on, the engine is unlashed from the stump to which it has been secured, put upon the rails, and drives itself farther uphill, it being capable of going up a gradient of one in four.

On returning to the mill from the forest we see our log passing through the first series of saws, or the 'breaking down,' as they are called, and then finally the slabs reach the circular-saw bench, where they are cut into planks nine and a half inches wide and four and a quarter in thickness, thus allowing for the shrinkage to nine by four, which is the requisite size for blocks.

The reason that they are not cut into the small blocks at the same time is that the extra amount of handling and storing would greatly increase the cost of production. From a log of the size of which we have been speaking, nearly four thousand blocks could be obtained. As the planks are cut they are shot down to the timber-men, who load up the trucks, carefully examining each plank for flaws, and they are then run out to the jetty for stacking, or shipment if the craft is waiting. In most cases, however, it is sent up to Hobart by the ketch belonging to the mill, where it is again stacked and inspected, and at last finally shipped to Europe. As regards the lasting powers of the stringy bark, that, of course, has to be proved, but judging by the durability of the railway-sleepers on the government lines, a renewal once in seven years ought to be sufficient.

SALVAGE: AN EPISODE.

By Bennet Copplestone.

THE waves were tearing the shingle at my feet, and in front a mile of breakers roared on the terrible White Ledge. Out at sea the flash of a signal-gun cut the darkness, and the tatters of a report trailed down the wind.

'She's on the Ledge,' said the sailor Jim, without excitement.

But Cap'n Tom of the tug *Osukkers*, of which the baptismal name had been *Aux Secours*, pulled out his watch and waited. The gun flashed again, and we listened for the tardy report.

'Eight seconds, good,' timed the Cap'n. 'She's half a mile clear of the Ledge, and drifting into the bay.'

'It doesn't matter,' commented Jim, 'for she's

bound to knock her nose against Straight Point.'

'That's true.' And the subject seemed to be removed from further interest.

I was a landsman and raw to these business-like calculations. To me the drifting ship meant a load of helpless human beings rushing upon destruction, and I turned fiercely on the Cap'n.

'Are you going to let the poor fellows perish without making an effort to save them?'

The Cap'n was unmoved. 'It ain't no business of ours,' he said. Jim was more explanatory.

'You see, sir, there's a lifeboat down to Beale, a new-painted thing, very pretty. They love to play with her, taking her out and upsetting to see how she works. The crew's never had a wreck, and that ship will give them the chance they've prayed after for months. We've got no call to interfere.'

'The Almighty,' put in Cap'n Tom with solemnity, 'has His eye on the Beale folk.'

A coastguard broke out of the darkness. He pointed towards the sea, and cried, 'Do you know who she is, Tom?' The manner of the man was that of one hugging valuable newa.

'No,' said Cap'n Tom. 'Some furrin tramp, I suppose.'

'I thought you didn't, or you wouldn't be fooling here. She's a Dutch steamer bound for Southampton, fifteen hundred tons, in hardware and toys. The propeller shaft's broke. Now, sir!'

Cap'n Tom and Jim uttered a simultaneous gasping roar, and turning, pounded over the shingle at an incredible speed. I followed in their tracks, and, when they reached the high-road leading into Brightmouth, was able to overtake them. The men ran in silence except for the sound of their groaning lungs, striding ponderously like booted elephants.

Five minutes later we stood on the stone pier by Brightmouth jetty. The tug *Osukkers* lay under steam, grinding the fenders as the swell heaved her towards us. Jim dropped in at once, but I arrested the Cap'n for an instant.

'Why?'

'Salvage,' he muttered, jerking away from my grasp and leaping into the tug.

'May I come?' I shouted. The Cap'n had already cast off the fore mooring-rope, and now ran to the stern. 'You won't want a share?'

'No.'

'Jump, then.'

I jumped, and the screw began to throb.

The Cap'n took the wheel, and I stood beside him. Jim was forward on the lookout, and the crew of two tore coal out of the boat's bowels and cast it on the fires.

We ran due south in order to clear the White Ledge, which lay to the east and stretched seawards for a full mile. The gale blew heavily from the south-west, so that, when we were no longer sheltered by the harbour, we received the full weight of the Channel on our tubby bows. It was midsummer, but the deep water is never warm. At every plunge twenty feet of spray shot into the air and rained cold as hail upon my wretched body. For a long ten minutes this misery continued, and then the Cap'n threw the tug's head before the wind. The change was wonderful. The waves sank down, and the gale was left behind, as we rushed down the trail of the disabled steamer. She had a start of about three miles; but the bay was wide, and the *Osukkers* was travelling at three times her speed.

'Shall we be in time to save the crew?' I asked.

'Oh, hang the crew!' grunted Cap'n Tom. 'I'm after the *ship*. She won't go ashore under half-an-hour, and we shall catch her in twenty minutes. The *Osukkers* has heels.'

Presently the heels of the *Osukkers* left the water at every pitch. The wind was on our starboard quarter, and we hurtled over the running seas. The Cap'n let the propeller race as it pleased. 'We ain't a blooming liner,' he observed. We passed the breakers raging on the White Ledge, heading due east for Beale.

'Master,' said the Cap'n cheerfully, 'give me a disabled ship, a valuable one, and I'm a blood-hound.' I reminded him of the eager lifeboat crew praying daily at Beale for wrecks, and he broke into a gale of laughter. 'We pray too,' he cried, 'and the prayers of a salvage skipper are powerful efficacious, especially when he owns a twelve-knot tug.'

We rushed down the trail of the German steamer, and ere long a dark waving patch appeared in the gloom ahead. 'Shake her up,' cried Cap'n Tom. We shut off steam on the lee side of the chase, drifting with her. I saw a thin line strike our bows like a whip-lash. Jim's hand was upon it, and running aft, he hauled on board the bight of a wire towing-cable. Then the *Osukkers* dashed ahead, and, passing under the nose of the quarry, strained out to sea. The rope drew taut. I fell instantly upon my back, and a wave rising over the quarter washed me into the unprotected cockpit. When I painfully arose the tug was toiling at full speed with little way. Cap'n Tom watched for the Bremener's bows to drag round. 'She's got to come away ten points, good,' he said. 'Hurt yourself?'

The wind was now almost abeam, and every sea broke on board. The awful drag astern held the tug down, and at every interrupted plunge she shuddered with effort. Cap'n Tom gravely regarded the superfluity of water, and, trusting the wheel for a moment to my hands, he battened down the hatches and drew tarpaulins over the engine-room gratings.

We drove across the waves, the German ship following like a black ghost. I stood, a forlorn

spar, amid the rushing water. 'There's more water than we want,' admitted the Cap'n, 'but it serves to keep our little kick-up covered.'

When Straight Point was at last cleared, the tug seemed to draw out of her grave perils and joyfully to stand inshore for shelter. But shelter came too late. The wind and the waves had done their work. The tarpaulins had been stripped away, the engines moved amid a wash of water, and the crew of stokers vainly dived into black pools and strove to feed our fires with streaming fuel. Cap'n Tom's face dropped with the steam-gauge. The tug's heart was failing her for want of fire. 'Oh! shake her up,' roared the desperate skipper; and there came back a hoarse, undisciplined murmur, 'Shake her up yourself; we can't.'

The tired propeller flapped feebly and then stopped.

I saw the towing-rope curl up over our stern and the tall hull of the German sweep towards our rudder. Jim's long body shot past me, the rope was cast off, and with a dying flicker of the screw we wriggled aside. As we lay with head to the wind the rolling German vessel slid away into the darkness, the yells of the helpless sailors tearing at my heart.

'She's lost,' I cried.

'Well, she's got a powerful lot of water to be lost in,' growled the Cap'n. 'Oh, hang! there goes the fool popping again.'

'Two days later, about midday, I chanced upon the Cap'n and Jim. They looked rather hilarious.

'Good luck, mister,' roared the Cap'n when yet a great way off. 'Come and wet it.'

'Ship was taken up by a tug out of Westhaven, and is safe in port,' said Jim.

I wetted it.

'Your joy is most generous after our night of disappointment,' I observed kindly.

The Cap'n smote Jim a terrible blow upon the shoulder. 'Hark to that. We're noble fellows.'

'The gentleman is what they call soft,' remarked Jim reflectively. 'Say, sir, can you figure—do sums?'

I asserted that my 'sums' were models of skill and accuracy.

'Half of fifteen hundred pounds is seven hundred and fifty pounds, ain't it?'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Two shares for the Cap'n; three for the tug—which is only another name for the Cap'n, cursed old Jew; one for Jim Cornish—that's me; one for Bob Westlake; and one for Fat Jack. How many's that?'

'Eight.'

'What does each one figure out at?'

I solved the difficult problem and presented Jim with the result.

'Ninety-three pounds fifteen shillings,' he repeated. 'It sounds a lot, but I shall understand better if you put it in beer. How many quarts of'——

'Oh, come,' I said, laughing. 'Enough beer to swim in—to float the tug in.'

While Jim silently contemplated his unlimited good fortune as measured in beer the Cap'n entered into explanations.

'The Dutchman would have gone ashore but for the *Osukkers*, so we had first claim. I ain't a blooming Scotchman as wants everything, so I arranged with Cap'n Winks of the *Mary Jane*—her that finished the job—to join as partner over this salvage. I says, "Halves," and halves it was. Then we telegraphed to the owners at Bremen, and got the skipper of the steamer to telegraph too. We said, "The salvage tugs *Osukkers* and *Mary Jane* saved your ship *Kaiser*, and claim £1500;" the skipper said, "It is all right—they did;" and the owners said, "Done; apply for cash at Southampton." You see, sir, the Admiralty judges love salvage-tugs. They say that British commerce couldn't get along nohow without us, and we ought to be encouraged. Owners wouldn't pay us if they could help it; but they've got to, the judges are that sharp. So you see, sir, we haven't done badly over that little trip the other night. When we go out again you may come if you like. It's in what the newspapers call "the cause of humanity," and there's nothing like humanity, especially when it's properly rewarded.'

Cap'n Tom shook my hand, with tears in his eyes, and turned to hide his manly emotion in the flowing bowl.

FLAWED ROSES.

It was here on the terrace they plaited this morn
The crown for the bride;
And these be the roses rejected in scorn,
Flung idly aside—
Flawed buds, which they reckoned not fit to be worn
On her tresses of pride.

Pale blossoms that drank of the sun and the dew
Like your lovelier kin;
Here's the track of the snail as he crept over you,
Silver-shining and thin:
And lo! on this bud as it broke to the view
Where the sly worm crept in.

Here, pressed to the stone yet a-lean to the light,
You were shapen amiss:
And the spider has woven his tapestry slight
Like a veil over this.
Each meant to be perfect, yet failed by some blight,
So was baulked of all bliss.

Frail flowers, plucked to perish, disdained and cast down,
I gather you now—
Hark the peal of the bells!—not to weave in a crown
For a beautiful brow;
But only to wither, shrunk, faded, and brown—
My heart tells me how!

A. S. F.

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MODERN SHELLS AND PROJECTILES.

THE idea of hurling explosive or fiery missiles into the ranks of an enemy on the battlefield is one of great antiquity. So far as reliable historic data exist, the first occasion of their use in actual warfare was about 327 B.C., when Alexander the Great, while attempting to extend his conquests to India, was opposed by arrows tipped with a fiery composition. No further progress in this direction, however, seems to have been made until the eighth century, when it is recorded that rockets containing a highly combustible mixture were frequently thrown in a burning condition amongst the enemy. Prescriptions for preparing such rockets are given by Marcus Græcus, who lived about the end of the eighth century, and whose manuscripts are still preserved in the National Library at Paris. It is also recorded that rockets of this description were used by the Saracens against the Crusaders, causing great discomfiture in the ranks of the latter. Such appliances as these, crude as they undoubtedly were, furnished the germ from which the modern projectile has evolved. To trace the development of such missiles up to the present day would be a task of considerable difficulty; it is only proposed here to give a brief account of the shells and projectiles at present used by the armies and navies of the higher civilised nations.

Four chief varieties are now employed in active warfare, each being constructed to attain a special object. They may be classified as follows: (1) shrapnel, or man-killing shells; (2) shells whose object is to destroy earthworks and fortifications; (3) armour-piercing projectiles; and (4) star-shells, used to provide light when a searchlight is not available. It is proposed to give a brief description of each of these in the order given above; and it may be here stated that each variety is made to a standard size, so that all may be fired at the discretion of the officer from one and the same gun.

The shrapnel, whose object is the destruction of human life, is one of the most deadly weapons of warfare the world has ever known. It consists of a hollow cylinder of iron having an oval-pointed end separately attached—the pointed end securing a less resistance to flight and greater steadiness. Down the centre of the shell is a small tube, open at the pointed end and communicating with a charge of powder at the base. The body of the cylinder is filled with bullets, numbering in some instances upwards of five hundred. When it is desired to fire the shrapnel, a 'time-fuse' is placed in the mouth of the inner tube immediately before loading. The time-fuse consists of a conical piece of wood bored to a certain depth, and filled with powder. A hole is bored from the exterior of the fuse to the contained charge of powder, through which the flash of the burning fuse may communicate with the powder at the base of the shell and cause it to explode. The actual firing of a shrapnel, therefore, consists of three distinct operations—namely, the ignition of the fuse, which is brought about by the burning of the cordite or powder in the gun at the moment of propulsion; the ignition of the charge at the base by the agency of the fuse; and finally, the explosion of this charge, which blows off the head of the shell and liberates the enclosed bullets, allowing them to scatter over an extremely large area. A shrapnel, in this manner, produces a result equal to that of five hundred rifle-bullets.

A simple experiment may be made to illustrate the manner in which the 'deadly hail' from a shrapnel is distributed. If a number of peas or small pebbles be confined in a paper bag, the mouth of which is insecurely closed, and the bag be projected forward mouth-foremost, it will open during flight, and the contents will be observed to escape and scatter in various directions, much in the same manner as the jets of water from a watering-can. The blowing out of the end of the shrapnel allows the contained bullets to disperse in precisely the same manner that the opening of the paper bag during flight admits the escape of the peas or pebbles.

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It is obvious from the foregoing that the most advantageous place for the shell to burst would be at a short distance in front of the enemy, so as to obtain the maximum effect—a result which scientific gunnery has rendered possible at all distances within the range of the gun. By the use of the Ballistic Tables compiled by the Rev. E. Bashforth, late Professor of Mathematics at the Artillery College, Woolwich, the distance of any given projectile from the gun after the lapse of every fraction of a second may be accurately determined; and the results for each class of shell are recorded in the range-table possessed by every officer in charge. All that is necessary, therefore, is to arrange to burst the shell at a given moment after firing, which may be done by adjusting the fuse so that the flash from it shall reach the bursting charge at the desired moment. As previously described, the fuse is bored immediately before loading; and marks on the fuse indicate where it must be bored to flash at any required time. By these scientific processes it is possible to obtain results of surprising accuracy, the error not exceeding a few feet in a range of several miles. It is this precision which renders the shrapnel shell such an extremely deadly missile.

When the object is to destroy fortifications or earthworks, a shell is used which contains a large charge of powder or picric acid (sometimes called 'melinite' or 'lyddite'), and which, unlike the shrapnel, has no bullets in the interior. Further, such shells are arranged so as to explode on striking, the fuse previously described being replaced by a percussion-cap, which brings about the explosion of the charge when the shell strikes in exactly the same manner as the firing of an ordinary rifle. In outward appearance this shell resembles the shrapnel, the pointed end being hollowed out for the reception of a screw-plug containing the cap, which is inserted immediately before placing in the gun. The action in this case is comparatively simple. When the shell strikes an object, the pointed end becomes embedded to a greater or less extent owing to the tremendous velocity with which it is projected. The concussion produced by the impact of the point fires the cap, which in turn ignites the bursting charge, and the shell bursts into fragments with terrible violence. Such a shell in action is exactly equivalent to a charge of explosive placed in position for blasting purposes, and produces an equal effect; the fragments of the shell, in addition, often causing great loss of life. In the naval engagements during the recent Chino-Japanese war, cases were recorded where a single shell of this type, striking some object on the deck of a battle-ship, not only wrought great havoc amongst the appliances in the vicinity, but by the fragments produced on its bursting killed upwards of forty men. When it is known that the largest shells contain nearly two hundred pounds of explosive material, such terribly devastating results can be readily realised.

The armour-piercing projectile differs from the two former in containing no internal charge. It is practically solid, and has a cylindrical body and pointed end. The object of this projectile is to pierce the steel armour of a vessel, and it must therefore be composed of an extremely hard and strong material to achieve this end. A special kind of steel is used in the manufacture of this class of missile, which, whilst not sufficiently hard to develop brittleness, possesses sufficient toughness to resist crumpling on impact. The point is specially hardened, so as to render it capable of penetrating the best quality of armour-plates. The destructive capacity of these projectiles is enormous, and the extent to which they will penetrate the hardest steel is truly surprising. Captain Orde Brown, R.A., has published a rule, based on actual experiments, which states that 'an armour-piercing projectile will penetrate a distance equal to its own diameter for every thousand feet of striking velocity.' Thus a shot of this kind fired from a ten-inch gun, and striking at two thousand feet per second, would penetrate twenty inches of steel; at fifteen hundred feet per second, fifteen inches; and so on. The latter velocity would easily be obtained at close range, and in the event of the projectile striking truly, the thickest armour-plate possessed by any warship afloat would be completely penetrated. The blow struck in this case would be equal to that produced by a weight of seven hundred and five tons falling a distance of ten feet. Recent improvements in hardening or 'Harveyising' the surface of armour-plates, however, have greatly diminished the efficacy of armour-piercing projectiles; and it is probable that with recently manufactured plates the actual penetration would only be one-half as much as stated in Captain Brown's rule.

The fourth class of shells used by the armed forces of this country—namely, star-shells—do not partake of the destructive character of those previously described. Their object is merely to furnish a light by means of which the movements of the enemy may be clearly discerned on a dark night, and surprises thus avoided. In their mode of action they resemble a shrapnel, and are arranged so as to burst in mid-air by the agency of a fuse and bursting charge. They contain a special composition, consisting of barium nitrate, chlorate of potash, and powdered magnesium, which is inflamed by the bursting charge and produces an intensely brilliant light—a similar composition being employed for flash-light photography. By means of these shells a very large tract of country may be illuminated, and in this manner any attempts at night attacks may be discovered. Star-shells of this kind proved extremely valuable during the recent frontier campaign in India, and contributed very

largely to the success of the various expeditions against the hostile tribes.

With such missiles as the foregoing, it is evident that warfare at the present day has far greater capabilities for destruction than at any previous period of the world's history. When we consider, likewise, that any of these projectiles may be hurled enormous distances with great accuracy, we may well stand aghast at the possibilities of a great European war, and fervently hope that the potentialities of such deadly munitions may deter the nations from resorting to the arbitrament of an armed conflict.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER IV.—RUTH LEAVES CABLETHORPE.

RUTH'S was an inner room, beyond Hettie's; for Hettie, being the first to rise ever since Ruth could remember, had always been mindful of her delicate sister's repose. Ruth lay down upon her bed, in a dressing-gown, without firelight or lamp, well content to rest there and catch the sound of John's strong voice when their old servant, shuffling across the hall with plates and dishes, happened to leave the parlour door ajar.

Presently Ruth heard the shuffling feet of the servant on the stairs. She knew that the woman, having served the evening meal, was coming up to see what she could do for her.

'I need nothing, Mrs Mumby,' said Ruth, turning her face to the wall. 'It's only one of my headaches. I shall be well to-morrow.'

Mrs Mumby, who was a maiden sister of the crusted waiter at the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn, shaded her candle with her hand and leant down over Ruth's pillow. The light was full upon the old woman's wrinkled face. Ruth glanced up, and saw there a look of kindly concern for her. 'Why, Mrs Mumby, what is the matter?'

Mrs Mumby touched Ruth's hot forehead gently with her horny hand. 'Don't *you* go falling ill, miss.'

'I'm not going to fall ill. But'——

'What, then?'

'I am going away.'

'Going away?' and Mrs Mumby expressed her incredulity by breaking into a low, croaky laugh.

'Yes. You will take care of Hettie, won't you?'

'Why, bless you, *she* don't want no care-taking! But there,' said Mrs Mumby, patting Ruth upon the shoulder; 'get to bed and to sleep. Going away indeed! I've no patience with such talk.'

Ruth was not displeased to find that the old servant refused to take her threat seriously. In fact, she had too often expressed this same threat before. But this time Ruth was in dead earnest. She was sternly resolved upon flight at last.

She would go to London. But she had no thought—none at the moment—as to what she should do there. Her one thought was to escape from this sense of uselessness and nonentity. She would put this miserable love for John Jarvis out of her heart. She would go where there would be nothing tangible or intangible to remind her of the past. She would go forth at daybreak, take the earliest train to town, and return to Cablethorpe no more. She walked about her room, thinking over her determination and trying to perfect her plans. She must write a few pencilled lines to Hettie, endeavour to justify her conduct, and crave her forgiveness. She crept into bed at last, and waited with wakeful eyes for the dawn. She heard Hettie moving about softly in the adjoining room after a while; then all was silent.

Ruth fell into a doze. But she soon started up, her heart beating fast, to look out of the window for a faint indication of daybreak. At this moment the old clock on the staircase began to strike.

'Five!'

Ruth had packed a small valise; and now she was quickly dressed, with a thick cloak over all, and ready to start. As she went noiselessly through Hettie's room she placed the letter on the bed beside her pillow and passed on. She chose the back way. The kitchen door was softly unbarred, the garden was soon reached, and as Ruth went out into the fields she caught a glimpse of light in the eastern sky over the dunes to seaward. Turning presently into a narrow lane, she reached the High Street. How strangely loud, how full of echoes, her footstep sounded as she hurried through this old town of Cablethorpe in the dawning light!

There was nearly an hour to spare when Ruth reached Cablethorpe Station. She sat down in the waiting-room—where a porter was making desperate efforts to kindle a fire—and tried to keep her excited thoughts under control. She was overwhelmed with consternation at the step she had taken. Something might occur at any moment to defeat her project. Every sound startled her; every passing step on the platform outside filled her with a dread that Hettie had discovered her flight. The train came lumbering into the station at last. She took her place, drew the curtain across the window, and sat in breath-

less expectation until Cablethorpe was left far behind. She was alone in the carriage. She put down the window now, and let in the wind upon her flushed cheeks. There was a delicious keenness in the air, and presently the sun came blazing up out of the east, spreading a wintry warmth and glory over the fenlands. She had started on her first long journey alone. London was unknown to Ruth. It was a place about which she had read strange things—about which she had conjured up a hundred visions. It existed in her imagination as a vast city of marvellous contrasts, a city that could not be surpassed for its wealth or indigence, its piety or crime. Until to-day—until she found herself hurrying towards this great centre—she had never fully realised, though it had often crossed her thoughts, that the day might come when it would be her destiny to be whirled into London, and alone.

It was long past midday when London was reached. Ruth deposited her valise in the left-luggage office, and then went and sat down in the refreshment-room at King's Cross Station to try and think what should be done next. Where should she find a lodging? The thought did not greatly disconcert her. Even a delicate woman with a spirit of independence cannot long dwell on the gloomy side of life. She was a fair pianist, and would be able to pay her way by teaching music. Three or four pounds, it is true, was the extent of her capital. But how many a woman had made an independent start in life with less—without as many shillings! Meanwhile Ruth was getting hungry. She ordered some dinner—for an obsequious waiter was hovering round her chair—and realised that the start in life had been made.

An hour went by. Then she hastened out of King's Cross Station, bent on looking for a room, and walked quickly through the streets. She presently found herself in the chilly, gloomy district of Pentonville. She wandered from street to street. She was growing weary. She looked in at parlour windows as she went along, where there was frequently a fire burning brightly, where lamps were being lighted, where merry faces peered out while the curtains were being drawn; and sometimes the laughter of children would reach her ear. Tears came into her eyes. She thought of John, of her sister Hettie, of the home from which she had so impulsively turned away. She understood for the first time what such glimpses of fireside life must be to the outcast and homeless. And now she began to get afraid of herself. Dread looked out through her tearful eyes; she was alone in London; and the night had closed in at last.

. . . . . .

Tudway had joined his ship. Mrs Clitherow had packed his box and prepared his breakfast, and had listened in a motherly way to all his talk about Hettie Beek. She had known him ever since he was a boy; for he had always spent his holidays with his uncle in Nelson Square, where he had nearly driven the landlady crazy with his mad pranks and practical joking.

Upon a certain wintry afternoon, having carried up the captain's dinner, it chanced that Mrs Clitherow stood at her front parlour window looking out upon the round garden in the old square. She was a little, chubby-faced woman, with black hair and dark, good-natured eyes. There was frequently a wistful look in them. This expression may have been caused by a natural anxiety for lodgers. The inquiries about her drawing-room floor were very few and far between. There were lodgings to let in nearly every house in Nelson Square; and it never seemed to occur to any one to turn out of Southwark Road, when hunting for 'apartments,' and take up their abode here in peace and quietness.

The square was a quiet, peaceful place, even of an afternoon. There was only one street out of it. This led to the broad highway. There was a little one-bar gate in a back corner, by which it was supposed you could also get into the great thoroughfare; though even Mrs Clitherow, who had lived in Nelson Square nearly twenty years, had never ventured to attempt an exit in that direction. While the landlady was still standing at the window, with no light except a flickering street lamp to enliven her, a four-wheeled cab rattled into the square. The little woman's interest was instantly roused. It was such an unusual occurrence. But when the cab presently drew up at her house and the cabman jumped down to open his cab door, her curiosity knew no bounds. She was beginning to wonder whether a guinea a week for her drawing-room floor would be considered exorbitant, when who should alight and come up the steps but Ruth Beek! Before the girl had time to knock or ring the landlady appeared and welcomed her with kisses on both cheeks.

'Why, Miss Ruth,' said Mrs Clitherow, 'whatever's brought *you* to town—and all alone too? Dear, dear!'

Never waiting, never seeming to expect any answer, Mrs Clitherow began to help Ruth off with her cloak and bonnet, and then she knelt down to put a match to her parlour fire.

Ruth sank into a chair and sat watching the landlady with a troubled face. 'I have come to town because—because'—— She gave way now, sobbing bitterly.

'There, there! Never mind, my dear, what's brought you. I'm sure *I* am pleased enough to see you. There! Wait till I've got you some tea,' said the landlady, becoming brisk, 'and then you shall tell me all about it.'

The fire was soon burning brightly in the little front parlour; and Ruth felt grateful for the warmth and glow—grateful for her escape out of the crowded thoroughfares. She lay back wearily in her seat and closed her eyes. Nelson Square

seemed to her a delightful haven. The roar of traffic in the Southwark Road fell upon her ear like the noise of a distant sea. She listened in drowsy abandonment to the turmoil, recalling to mind her flight at daybreak through the High Street of Cablethorpe, her journey to London, her wanderings in the neighbourhood of Pentonville. It was while still peregrinating there, indeed, undecided where to choose a lodging, that she had determined to seek shelter at Mrs Clitherow's, at least for one night. On the morrow, when she had rested, she would even break that link which connected her indirectly with the home at Cablethorpe.

(To be continued.)

NEW TREATMENT OF LOCKJAW.

By Mrs Percy Frankland.

THE science of immunity—the study of toxins and antitoxins, or, in more homely language, poisons and their antidotes, as we may respectively designate that great field of research which has for its ambitious aim the banishment of disease from our midst—has already attracted investigators of the most diverse nationalities into its seductive provinces, amongst whom many have reaped a rich harvest of discoveries and left a golden record of results graven in its roll of fame. Just ten years have elapsed since the malignant microbe of lockjaw, or tetanus, was first successfully separated from its harmless associates by a young Japanese student investigating bacterial processes in Dr Koch's laboratory in Berlin. Kitasato's discovery was of immense importance, for it opened the avenue not only to a better understanding of the nature of this terrible disease of lockjaw, but also to the study of the most efficacious means for arresting its fatal course in those unfortunate individuals who had fallen victims to its machinations.

As more and more progress was made in the production of antitoxins, a substance probably chiefly associated by the general public at the present time with the new cure for diphtheria, as our knowledge concerning the methods of elaborating these potent destroyers has advanced, science has become possessed of a number of antitoxins of different kinds which can be handled and applied with almost as much ease and simplicity as the most common of our household drugs or family remedies. Statistics have shown of what service some of these so-called new cures have proved; and we have records of successes achieved hailing from all parts of the world—in the prevention of cholera, plague, yellow fever, diphtheria, as well as in compassing the lethal action of the venom of serpents. Lockjaw has, however, proved a very troublesome subject to master, and whilst encouraging results have been from time to time received of the efficacy of its antitoxin, there have also been many disappointing instances recorded in which its use has not been attended with any success. These antitoxins, it will be remembered, are simply the blood of animals which have been artificially rendered incapable of having, or immune to, any particular disease, such blood being designated, according to its origin, 'anti-diphtheria,' 'anti-tetanus,' 'anti-plague' serum.

So far the application of these various antitoxins has consisted in simply injecting some under the skin of the individual it is intended to relieve; but a short time ago some investigations were published which bid fair to reveal an entirely new aspect of the whole study of the preventive treatment of disease. For these extremely important researches we are indebted to Dr Roux of the Paris Pasteur Institute, and his discovery will undoubtedly mark a new era in the history of preventive medicine. The distressing symptoms of tetanus all point to its being a disease affecting the nervous system of its victim. Now, the failure in so many instances of the antitoxin to mitigate in any way the progress of the disease shows that either it was incapable of arresting the passage of the virus to the nerves, or that the antitoxin never itself reached these centres. 'Let us try if we can attack the seat of the disease direct, and place the antitoxin where the activity of the toxin is greatest,' exclaims Dr Roux, and with characteristic scientific enthusiasm, he at once proceeds to put this bold idea into execution, and we shall see presently with what results. But in order to dispel any erroneous impression which may arise as to the nature of these experiments, which involve the introduction of material direct into the brain of an animal, he tells us expressly that when a harmless substance is used, or an antitoxin in such an operation, the animal suffers absolutely no ill results whatever, and experiences no sort of subsequent pain or inconvenience.

The results of Dr Roux's cerebral inoculations are of the most remarkable character. In the first place, he has discovered that the brain substance or nervous tissue of an animal possesses a special affinity for this tetanus poison—that the latter is attracted as if by a magnet to these centres of the body. Secondly, a very small quantity, quite harmless under ordinary circumstances, introduced direct into the brain infallibly destroys an animal with tetanus symptoms. This affinity of the nerve-cells of the body for poisons has been brought out in the case of other poisons also. For example, rats are proof against diphtheria, and will survive a dose sufficient to kill

several rabbits; but if some of the virus be introduced direct into their brains instead of under their skin these animals succumb to this poison. The same has been shown in the case of rabbits and morphia. These animals can stand a large subcutaneous dose of this substance, but an extremely minute quantity put into their brain kills them. This shows that rats as regards diphtheria poison, and rabbits in the case of morphia, are able, under ordinary circumstances, to withstand these substances. What may be the constitution and character of this extremely well-organised system of defence undoubtedly possessed by these animals is as yet a problem, and one which is daily exercising the speculative ingenuity of the highest scientific authorities. We have seen, however, that by placing the toxin in a different position, its lethal action may be immensely augmented; now we shall see what results follow the different placing of the antitoxin, and Dr Roux's next endeavour was to find out the action of the tetanus antitoxin as regards the lethal relationship which exists between the tetanus toxin and the nerve-centres.

Here we come to his most astonishing discovery. The tetanus antitoxin, or anti-tetanus serum, when put directly into the brain possesses the power of breaking off or entirely annulling the fatal association of the tetanus toxin with the nervous system. A single drop of anti-tetanus blood added to a dose of the poison sufficient, under ordinary conditions, to destroy an animal, entirely checkmates the lethal action of the toxin, and the latter may be introduced with impunity into the brain of an animal. Still more striking are the experiments which show that a few drops of blood introduced into the brain of an animal infected with tetanus will arrest the progress of the disease and save the animal's life, although a very much larger quantity of the same blood introduced in the ordinary way under the skin fails entirely to prevent an animal from falling a victim to tetanus. What a vista is here opened up of what medical science may in the future accomplish! It is not sufficient to localise the disease; we must also localise the remedy. Who can say what the application of this great discovery may achieve in the case of epilepsy for example? Again, Dr Roux's researches have enlarged the active sphere of poisons and vastly extended their horizon, and to correctly define a substance as a poison now, more than ever, demands the subtlest skill and the highest scientific attainments.

A BRIDEGROOM ENTRAPPED.

CHAPTER II.

IF I had not succeeded in finding the door with the help of a light, I was not likely to do so in pitch darkness. Dawn is happily an early matter in the end of spring, and till dawn should begin I had to wait. Indeed, some measure of rest had become needful; for, between hard work, distress of mind, and starvation, I was pretty well done for.

The thought of a bell occurred suddenly; and why it had not occurred earlier I am unable to imagine. To ring and rouse the household would surely be an easy matter. In the darkness I felt about for a bell-handle or bell-rope or electric button—though, as the lamp burnt oil, the bell was not likely to be electric—and once more my efforts were crowned with failure. No handle or rope or button came to hand. I was still hopelessly immured.

Tired though I was, sleep proved to be out of the question. I do not think I kept my eyes closed for sixty consecutive seconds. If I tried to do so, an image would at once arise of Laura weeping in church for her absent bridegroom. A hundred times I writhed under the misery of that imagination. A hundred times I clenched my fist over the folly of which I had been guilty. What mattered Saxons, historical difficulties, manuscripts finished or unfinished, compared with her peace of mind? Why had I come at all, under such circumstances? or why, if I did come, had I not had the common-sense to learn my way out of a room as well as into it?

But the angry asking of these questions made not the smallest alteration in my position? I remained a prisoner; and time was passing fast.

With the earliest gleam of dawn I was astir. The windows first claimed attention. I pushed beneath one of them the library steps, and climbed up, intending to look out; but the ground-glass defied my efforts. In vain I struggled to get the window open. An upper pane alone seemed to be movable, managed by a cord, like a church window. To get high enough for a peep out was not possible. Window number two I tried, with the same result. In a lower pane of window number three, however, I found one large spot of unground glass through which I could see. Alas! to no purpose. The height was far greater than I had expected. An acrobat alone could have made his way down with the aid of a rope, and I had no rope; neither was there aught of the acrobat in me. I had never been particularly good at athletics, and a glimpse of the rough-paved court below showed what a climber might expect if he fell.

Later on, no doubt, people would be in that court, and I might communicate with them, if only through smashing a pane of the Dean's glass; but at present the household appeared to

be wrapped in profound slumber—so much of the household as remained in the house. 'Two old servants,' the Dean had said, would be left in charge; but two alone could hardly keep this great place in order. They might be left in charge, but surely younger servants would remain also. At all events, they would not have departed in a body within an hour after the Dean had taken himself off. Even if only two were in the house—a most unlikely thing—those two would in time get up; and sooner or later one of them would come to the library, if but to dust and put it straight, and with no thought of the unhappy would-be bridegroom immured within. But how late they might choose to lie in bed, having no especial reason for getting up early, who could venture to say? That they would appear soon enough to release me for the five o'clock train was not to be hoped for.

Again I set to work, stamping, pushing, pulling, growing frantic under failure. Those grim bookcases seemed to frown upon me with a vicious derision, as if they understood and would not let their prisoner go. Not a shelf cracked; not a board yielded. Now and then, by way of variety, I tried shouting for help, banging the walls—or rather, the books upon the walls—and yelling 'Fire! Fire!' in hope that somebody might come to my rescue. Dead silence was the sole response. The servants plainly slept out of hearing.

Despair again crept over me. Three o'clock was long gone by; and four o'clock arrived. One hour only—half-an-hour—if I wished to reach the station in good time. I redoubled my exertions; and still the walls of books in solemn unbroken rows shut me in.

At last, without seeking for it, having repeatedly sought in vain, I stumbled upon a bell in a queer, unlikely corner, hidden behind a curtain. I pulled it vehemently, savagely, again and again, the wire each time yielding with a feeble creak, as if out of order. Nobody responded.

Five o'clock struck. Too late! I could not be in time for our wedding.

I flung myself down on a sofa and gave way to weariness. Nothing more could be done. I *had* to wait. My best exertions now could only enable me to send a telegram; and by-and-by might do for that. I resolved to lie patiently till somebody should appear.

But time passed, and patience again failed. No sound broke the stillness; no voice or footfall could be heard. The Dean had boasted pleasantly of his quiet study; and the silence gripped my nerves. I would have given anything for a murmur of human life. Once for ten minutes I dropped into an uneasy sleep; and immediately I was in church, waiting for my bride. When at last she appeared she was not Laura, and I woke with a start, in a cold perspiration from head to foot. 'No more sleep for me!' I said aloud, and I walked the room with restless steps.

Six o'clock struck. Seven o'clock struck. Eight o'clock struck. How much longer was this to go on? The silence had grown awful, and I was ravenously hungry.

A fit of fierce resolution seized me. I went up the library steps, poker in hand—looking no doubt like an escaped lunatic—and smashed a big pane of glass. The broken pieces fell clattering upon the stones below; but nobody called out or showed surprise. I called, shouted, yelled for help, but no voice answered. Could it be that the whole downstairs household had eloped, the two old domestics included, and that I should be left to die a slow death from starvation?

Leaning far out, I saw, to my delight, a black retriever, chained to a kennel. That meant some one coming sooner or later. The dog, at least, would not be left to die for want of food. I shouted again, and he wagged his tail, which was the thing I least wanted. If I could rouse him to bark furiously it might draw attention. I fetched bits of coal and flung them at him, and he wagged his tail anew, as if I were inciting him to a game of play. He seemed almost as forlorn as I was myself, poor fellow!

Nine o'clock struck. Ten o'clock struck.

I fell into a fresh agony of impatience. Unless I could get a telegram off in less than an hour it might not arrive in time to stop Laura from going to church in her bridal dress. A bride and no bridegroom! The thought was too ghastly. I sat down, hid my face, and groaned. Then I walked the room anew, in a fever of excitement, feeling almost as if I should go out of my mind. Those wretched Saxons!—that miserable book!—to have brought me to such a pass as this! Would Laura ever forgive me?

Once more I climbed the steps, looked out of the broken pane, and shouted at the pitch of my voice; and again I ransacked the walls in an absurd hunt for a door which all the while lay close to hand. By this time I was reckless; and the Dean's hair would have stood on end had he seen how I dragged out his cherished books by the dozen, and flung them to the ground.

For a time I think I was slightly delirious. The entrapment was so perfect, yet so ludicrous. The thought of my poor Laura drove me wild; and both hunger and thirst had me in their grasp with a clutch which grew worse hour by hour. Better to have put off the publication of my book for ten years than to have risked this misery. Other Saxon histories existed, but no other husband for my Laura. What *would* she do?

Eleven o'clock struck!

I watched the clock-hands with a dazed stare. They went at a startling pace; even the slow hour-hand seemed to trot, and the other positively raced. I could picture to myself all that was going on two hundred miles away. I could see Laura's first disappointment on learning that I had failed to arrive by the earlier train, and I

could hear her laughing yet half-pained comments on my absent-mindedness and devotion to books. I could imagine the dressing for the ceremony; the driving off; the fears expressed of a late train; the uncomfortable waiting of everybody in church; the pale and troubled face of the dear little bride on finding that I was not there; the condoling and lugubrious looks of friends. Then, as minute followed minute, I heard the cruel whispered surmises, in which some were sure to indulge, as to the true reason for my absence. Soon a messenger would walk in who had been sent to meet the train, and would say that I had not returned at all. And Laura would—no, I did not think she would faint. Girls in these days do not drop off into unconsciousness so readily as their grandmothers did; but she might suffer all the more acutely for not fainting.

Twelve o'clock struck!

It was over now. No wedding could take place. Laura's father would give her his arm, in his manner of old-fashioned courtesy, and would conduct her out of church, boiling over with wrath, though perhaps not saying very much. 'The man's a villain!' That would be his one remark. And Laura—would Laura trust me? or would she too suspect me of having played her false? I could not be sure. I could only picture how, if she did make some little effort to defend me, her brother would draw in his breath, muttering between clenched teeth, 'Don't speak of him!—the brute!'

It was all at an end now; and my Laura sat at home a forsaken bride. How should she ever dream of the real explanation?

One o'clock struck, and no one came. Two o'clock; and still I was alone. I had searched anew, shouted afresh, pulled the bell-handle again and again, all to no purpose. My brain swam, and I began to wonder—Was this a dead world into which I had wandered? I was growing faint for want of food, and my face looked ghastly, as seen in a small mirror over the mantelpiece and under the oil-painting of the old gentleman. The eyes of the latter haunted me dismally.

How the afternoon passed I cannot tell. It crept by somehow. I had fallen into a mood of dull endurance, having resolved to make little further effort until towards evening. It was evident that the domestics left in charge had taken themselves off for the day. Now and then the dog howled, as if he too felt lonely. I felt sure that I should hear his pleased bark the moment any one entered the yard.

Two, three, four, five o'clock passed in succession.

Would nobody ever appear?

I thought I would write a letter to Laura, which should explain all, in case—well, in case I never got out, but remained in durance vile till I died of slow starvation. All things considered, such a consummation seemed hardly probable—at least it hardly seems so to me now; but I had reached a stage of unlimited pessimism. So I made my way to the Dean's study-chair, which stood close to his heavy writing-table, and placed myself where he was used to sit. Despite failing limbs and dizzied brain, I was not even then without a grim sense of humour at the absurdity of the whole affair.

As I took up one of the Dean's pens, having placed a sheet of the Dean's paper in readiness, something yielded slightly under my right foot. I hardly noticed the fact, but began to write:

'My dearest Laura,—What must you have thought of me? But it is through no fault of mine. I am shut up in the Dean's library, quite unable to find a way out. It sounds ridiculous, but'——

It did sound ridiculous, and I went off into a helpless fit of laughter, laying down the pen and holding my sides. Something again yielded under my foot. Involuntarily I pressed harder, glancing up as I did so. The board sank, and a crevice appeared in the wall just opposite the middle window, part of the bookcase bulging outward.

With a shout I sprang to my feet. My heart beat wildly, and for a moment I believed what I saw to be a delusion of the imagination. I rushed across—pulled—and the door opened easily.

'Free!' I gasped, and leaped outside, in terror lest the walls should close upon me of themselves, so low had I been brought by starvation. 'Free!' Then I reeled backwards against the baluster of the little winding staircase, at the top of which I stood.

Somebody was coming along the passage below. If I had not that moment let myself out, I should have been rescued a minute later. I could neither see nor hear clearly for the mist in my eyes and the buzzing in my brain.

'Tel—telegram—Laura!' I muttered. 'Couldn't help it. Couldn't get out, you know. I've been in there—ever since—starving'——

'You poor dear unfortunate John!' Laura's own voice exclaimed, with a burst of laughter. 'You dear, funny fellow! How *could* you do it?'

Evidently she had not heard my utterance, and I made an instant effort to pull myself together, braced by the merriment in her voice. 'I—er—yes—how kind of you to come!' I faltered, holding on to the baluster with a firm clutch, for the passage below seemed to be nearly over my head. 'I—er—very much occupied, you know—couldn't get away from the books—taking notes, you know—longer about it than—er—I expected.'

'Take care, child; he's nearly off,' a masculine tone remarked. Unfortunately, though Laura had not heard what I first said, her father *had* heard.

I am bound to confess that it was I who fainted on that occasion; not Laura. Laura is a vigorous modern young woman, addicted to bicycles, and never at a loss. The first words which reached my understanding as I emerged

from an unpleasant fog were, 'What a mercy he will have me to take care of him! These literary people *are* so helpless!'

. . . . . .

Afterwards, of course, I heard more. The Dean, in his hurry, forgot to say anything to the servants about my being in the library, and they took it for granted that I had gone away first. That the Dean had not rung for any one to show me out was unnoticed in the general bustle; also, he had a way of often showing his friends to the front-door himself, after his genial fashion. Five or six of the domestics remained in the house; but they slept late next morning, as I had surmised, and then they went off for a jaunt of several hours' duration, leaving only one deaf old woman and a child in charge. This could hardly have been the intention of the mistress of the house, and I have reason to believe that some of them lost their places in consequence.

The old woman had passed her day in a part of the house where no sound from the library could reach her; and though the child confessed to having noticed certain queer sounds, she either thought nothing of them or was afraid to speak. Both old woman and child were in dire terror of the dog in the yard, and, though supposed to look after him, they were careful not to venture in that direction.

The Dean was a kind-hearted man. From London he took the trouble to send a telegram to Laura, whom he had known well in her childhood: 'I congratulate you; he is a capital fellow; left him in my library.'

For once the slow morning train was punctual to a minute in its arrival; and as a friend went to the station to meet me, my non-appearance could be early proclaimed. All thought of assembling in church at the hour fixed was given up, since I could not possibly be in time for the wedding; so that haunting scene of my imagination had no foundation in fact. Instead of anything half so tragical, friends appeared to have indulged in a good deal of fun at my expense, and Laura had to defend me from attacks all round touching my unpunctuality, general unpracticalness, and supposed preference for Saxon antiquities over modern weddings. While all this was going on, and the bride whom I had pictured as forlornly weeping in white was really chatting gaily in green, another telegram came in, at first regarded as from me. It proved to be a second from the Dean:

'Going on boat. Uneasy as to J. S. Forgot to show him how to open library door. Peculiar arrangement. Hope all right.'

That was enough for Laura. My continued absence and the lack of any telegraphic explanation made clear that things were not 'all right.' She started with her father by the first train, and found me, as already told, when I had just succeeded in making my escape.

Why the Dean did not telegraph to his own servants has always been a puzzle to me; and how I failed to find sooner the trick of the door has always been a puzzle to everybody else. Laura tells the story against me to this day, ending regularly with a gay—'Just like him, poor dear fellow!'

Of course there is not a man of my acquaintance—letting alone the women—who doubts that he, in a similar position, would have managed to release himself in half-an-hour. Perhaps it is rather curious that I should not have thought of the neighbourhood of the writing-table, where the Dean usually sits; and that I should have lost so much time in tugging at a disused bell-rope in a corner, instead of finding the bell-handle at one side of that same table. But such is life! We are all subject to our little weaknesses, one way or another. And nothing is easier than Columbus's egg—when once the secret has been made known.

As for my history of the Saxons, which cost me so many hours of misery, the volume came out in due time, and was extremely well reviewed. How far the world has been the better for it I cannot say; neither is it needful to state precisely how many copies were sold. I have not yet made a fortune by means of that book.

A TRIP ON THE NEW CONGO RAILWAY.

By Rev. W. Holman Bentley, of the Baptist Mission to the Congo.



HE Congo Railway is complete, so there is now direct and easy communication by rail between the ocean-going steamers arriving at the port of Matadi, on the Lower Congo River, and the fifty steamers plying on the 11,000 miles of waterway lying open from Stanley Pool, on the Great Upper River and its affluents. The river is navigable from its mouth to Matadi, a distance of 100 miles; beyond this point, for 200 miles, rapids and cataracts bar the way, and those who wished to reach the Upper River had to tramp overland for twenty or thirty days, over hilly, stony roads, through woods and jungle-paths.

Commencing in 1886, the engineers had to face more than half their difficulties and expense in the first twenty miles. At the twenty-fourth mile a station was opened in 1893, but was little used. In 1896 the half-way point was reached, and in May the Tumba station was opened for traffic. Stores and transport agencies made their appear-

ance as if by magic. For two years that has been the point from which the natives carried the loads on their heads to Stanley Pool, instead of from the Lower River as formerly. Now all the line is complete, and the native transport no longer exists.

I took an early trip on the railway when it was only open as far as Tumba, before things were properly organised. The company were delightfully frank with their passengers in those days. 'You travel at your own risk entirely; we incur no responsibilities, and can only do our best to convey you to your destination. We do not want passengers or freight, for we have enough to carry for ourselves, in the rails, iron sleepers, bridge materials, &c., which choke our base. However, as you are to be our future freighters, we will oblige you, by conveying you and your goods; but you must put up with the inconveniences of our already congested traffic.'

My wife and our three-year-old girlie were to go home to England, and I had to see them off. The trains had been very irregular, and it was not safe to send them alone. The rains had been very severe; embankments had been washed away; there had been recently a big slip in one of the cuttings, and hundreds of men had been at work clearing the blocked line. Traffic had only been resumed three or four days; so I had to go as well. There were a hundred possibilities.

It is only one hundred and fourteen miles from Tumba to the port of Matadi; but the single ticket for my wife cost two hundred and thirty-three francs (£9, 6s. 4d.)—two francs per mile; my own, being a return ticket, was three hundred and fifty francs (£14); its number, 0001, showed that it was the first return ticket issued; it was available for four days.

The train was to start at half-past five in the morning, so we had to send the baggage overnight, and were advised to be very early, to get a seat, for there were many passengers, and only one carriage. The dawn had not broken when we passed the three factories of the trading companies to take our places. Across the line a cannibal Bangala from the Upper River stood as sentry, guarding the long transport store of the Congo government; externally the man had been made into a smart black soldier, in fez, blue tunic and knickers, and red girdle. Higher up the slope were the quarters of the State officers, built of mats or boards with grass roofs. Farther away to the left, beyond a swampy stream, one thousand native carriers were still sleeping in a long open shed, packed like sardines, their feet to their fires.

We started with excellent promptitude at half-past five, to the tu-tu of a horn, *à la mode belge*. It was a comfortable carriage, with pivoted, cane-seated chairs, glass windows, and sun-blinds—everything so far very convenient.

The *conducteur* was a native of Sierra Leone, who had been educated in a mission school, while the engine-driver and stoker were blacks from Senegal, who had learned something of their profession on the railway there from Dakar to St Louis. They knew little of the properties of steam, save that it would burn you as it flies from the cocks; and as for mechanics—well, if you twist a certain cock a whistle results; a certain lever causes the starting of the machine, or, returning it, the stoppage; and so on. A leather thong round the waist is loaded with Moslem amulets done up in leather, black and shining. Fairly intelligent men, but quite illiterate. The trains, therefore, over a great part of the distance, were in the hands of Africans only—no white men in charge. The Congo State Government, as well as the Railway Company, make no distinction as to colour in their employés. If a black man is found equal in every way to a white man, he is paid and treated accordingly. Efficiency of work is the test. Only natives of Africa are permitted to travel second-class; they are allowed to sit on the trucks on the top of the passengers' luggage and general stores, amid a constant shower of hot cinders from the engine. For this they pay twenty-three francs (19s.) from Tumba to Matadi. Many make use of it. Some sixty or eighty soldiers were on our train, *en route* for Boma, the capital.

For a while we rattled briskly on, stopping two or three times to take water for the engines where the railway crossed a good stream. Two or three coast natives would be in charge of the pumping station, and would have to keep the 10,000-litre tank full. The track wound about among the low hills, which were torn by torrents in all directions. Ten miles to the north rose the cliffs and steep escarpment of the plateau of Bangu, 800 to 1000 feet above the broad railway valley. After a while we came to the steep climb of Kimpese to cross a hill-range. We ran up a valley between two spurs, turning sharply round at the head of the valley, ever ascending, back out of the valley on one of the spurs, twisted round over the spur, up another valley, and back out again through a cutting in another spur, and round once more on the first spur, and so to the top. A wonderful piece of planning and climbing. Then a long, winding descent, and we reach an embankment and a fine iron bridge, ninety yards in one span. There we stop, for the bridge over the Kwilu River is not yet completed, and we must cross on the wooden trestles. The wooden temporary work had been several times washed away after heavy rains, for the river rose twenty feet sometimes. In another fortnight it was to be cleared away; meanwhile a light engine, which stood in a siding eighty yards behind us, was to push us across, and our heavier machine would return to Tumba with a train of rails, goods, and a truck of cattle for the railhead.

While the engine was being uncoupled I seized the opportunity to make a few notes, for such a

trip was worth describing. I inwardly wished that there would be some interesting 'incidents;' although, for the sake of my wife and child, I hoped that it would be a safe journey. I had scarcely written half-a-dozen lines when something happened. I was conscious of a crash and shock; my pivoted chair whirled round with me; the roof-lamp flew against the glass door of the carriage beside me, and shivered itself and the glass; a shower of paraffin, a violent jerk backwards, and a tangled heap of passengers in the middle of the car! Some one said that the shunting-engine had dashed into us. Scarcely had the word been uttered than we saw the same engine dashing at us again! Crash! the chairs whirl, a back jerk afterwards, and the passengers once more in a heap on the floor, some cut. A bolt for the door ensued, and some struggled through the narrow windows. The injured were examined. The wild engine came steadily up to the train this time, as if nothing had happened. The engine-driver was soundly abused by the local authority, and fined; but it was hard to ascertain what had happened, except that the moment the steam was turned on, the engine had rushed at full speed at our train, each time from seventy or eighty yards. Once more we entered our carriage, and were pushed over the fine bridge, and started on again. My ardour for 'incidents' was much cooled.

A run of thirty miles over hilly country, then we pulled up at the half-way station Songololo. 'All alight, please! The train goes no farther to-day; these two tents are at the disposition of passengers.' We had not been warned of this at Tumba, but had started hoping to reach Matadi that day. I believe that a notice was posted at Tumba later on in the day, that for the next fortnight trains would take two days over the journey. Two large single-roofed tents in the fierce sun were thus offered. As my wife and child were with me, a wooden shanty was found for us. Every one was kind, and ready to help. There were no shops where food could be obtained; only water could be supplied. We might buy bread from a bakery forty miles away, when a service train came in in the evening. Fortunately, we had a midday meal with us, and I had brought something for the return journey. Songololo is a fairly flat spot in a wilderness, thinly inhabited, and well stocked with game; elephants, buffaloes, and antelopes are to be found. About two hundred black workmen had their huts there—platelayers, ballasters, and engine-cleaners. There were also shanties for the white engineers. I asked one of the natives what we were really stopping for. 'No coal; not a pound of it on the station. Three trains are in the sidings unable to go on.' They were only able to supply half rations of coal, until a new supply came from Europe in a fortnight's time. That morning they were clean out of it, but a coal train was due in the evening.

A blanket on a board floor makes a hard bed, so we were prepared to get up at five o'clock next morning, to be ready to start half-an-hour later. We did not get away, though, until half-past eight. All desire for further 'incidents' had vanished.

It was an interesting ride, for great engineering skill was needed to make a railway in the mountainous country toward the port. Sometimes we ran into masses of hills, through which no way seemed possible; but a sudden twist would reveal a torrent in a gorge between two lofty hills, and we wound round beside it on a terrace in the steep, wooded banks. We enjoyed a good deal of this sort of travel, through beautiful forest and mountain scenery, now following a torrent in its ravine, rapidly descending with it, until it turned aside into a larger stream; crossing this, ascending it, then a sharp corner, and the ascent of one of its feeders—another torrent—in a densely-wooded ravine, until we come to a cutting in a *col* (high water-parting), and down the other side into another system of torrents. The whole of this part of the road is a marvel of courage and skill, and very thorough work—no scamping anywhere. No one would have thought a railway possible in such a country.

At length we pulled up in a wooded gorge at a little station. There was no population to need a station there, but there was a good stream, and the station was required as a point on the single-track railway at which trains could pass. We were telephoned to wait here an hour, for the director-in-chief was coming up, and his train had the block-staff. There was time for us to bathe in the stream, the Ndwizi. Quartz was everywhere about, but amid the micaceous sand and quartz pebbles no gold has been found, although such a likely place. How very convenient to stop and enjoy a bathe in the middle of such a ride on a hot day! So much better than the feverish rush of railway travel at home! One day the engine-driver lost his hat on the way; but he stopped the train and ran back for it a quarter of a mile. Why not? The bathe over, we strolled round. A native at the station had some bananas for sale, but had no shame in asking a franc for each single banana!—so exorbitant have become the prices along the line. Demand creates no supply out here; it only drives up the price of things. When Tumba railway station was opened a new route of transport became necessary. When the first caravans arrived in a district, even where food was plentiful, exorbitant prices were demanded and paid. The women who made the food being able to get the barter, cloth, &c. they wanted with one-tenth of the labour, one-tenth of the food previously made was supplied. Prices rose higher, and the unfortunate carriers had to pay these fearful prices or go hungry. Then, when ordinary people in the towns wanted to buy food—orphans, unmarried young men, old people—the women would not sell to them; they kept the food for the carriers; so all suffered, and because they could not pay

such prices, the manioc was allowed to rot in the ground. This has occurred again and again, and many have died in consequence. Wealth is a great curse to these people—hunger results; while poverty means an abundance of food. So this rascal would have a franc for each single banana on his bunch or not sell at all, and this in a land of bananas! I had to go without. I would not pay such a price. Fowls were five to seven francs each, and small into the bargain. Such is the overreaching avarice of the African.

The director came, and we started; but after eight miles there was another long wait. The first store was here, so refreshments were found, and tins of delicious sterilised milk (not condensed). Thence only twenty-four miles lay before us. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, so we were sure of getting to Matadi all right.

We came into the station of La Mia, at the foot of the last great climb over the Mpalabala Mountain, the greatest engineering feat of all. Over this part of the railway we had a white engine-driver; nevertheless our engine left the rails at the crows'-feet of the station points, and all its eight wheels were buried in the ballast in a most awkward place. Jacks and all needed tools are carried by each engine, for such things often happened then. It was soon evident that the engine could not be on the rails until the small hours of the morning. There was a three-roomed shanty on the side of the hill. A black clerk from Sierra Leone was in charge of the station; an Italian engineer had one room. He offered us everything he had in his pantry; begged us to take anything we liked: most kind he was. We took some macaroni to eke out our supplies, for now we had been two days *en route*. We spent our second night in the shanty.

At three o'clock in the morning they succeeded in getting the engine on the rails; but it was five o'clock before we were all on board and started again. We wound our way up the long climb of 360 feet, and descended with great care the 830 feet on the other side. This part of the line is a wonderful piece of construction. A terrace had been cut in the steep side of every ravine that scored the side of the mountain, in and out again, then round a spur into another ravine, and over a light cobweb (iron) of a bridge, eighty feet above the torrent. The lines were laid in a sharp curve on the bridge, so that the train could swing out of the ravine on the other side. The plan of the railway in these ravines is like a U, the curve of which is on the bridge. The bridge is three times the width necessary for the narrow gauge (thirty-two inches), so that there is room for the curve.

At length the Mpozo River was crossed, roaring and tumbling on its way down to the Congo; then the route lay on terraces along the precipitous slopes of the Mpozo gorge. The carriages overhang the rails, and the way is so narrow that from the windows of the carriage, in some places, you can only see the Mpozo foaming on the rocks 100 to 150 feet below you; while the track winds round such fearfully sharp curves that the speed has to be reduced almost to a walking-pace.

In the early days there was a terrible accident in that Mpozo ravine. A truck of dynamite, with some forty workmen on it, was standing in a siding; an engine came to pick them up; the driver ran his engine too heavily on them; the dynamite exploded, and blew train, line, trucks, and everything and every one to smithereens and down the precipice. Higher up the hill, engines have more than once derailed and crashed down into the ravines. Last time that happened, the stoker was in the act of adding to the fuel in the furnace, and the jerk threw him into the firebox of the engine as it tumbled. Now the way is well ballasted and settled in this part.

As we rounded the mouth of the Mpozo a great crocodile lay, with his mouth wide agape, on the sandbank below us, unmoved by railway whistles and rattling trains; he was used to them. We reached Matadi at half-past six in the morning. On my arrival I called attention to the fact that the time for my return ticket had almost expired, and an extension was granted.

The town of Matadi ('rocks') is a rocky place, built on the steep banks of the river; the houses, factories, and stores are perched about wherever a terrace can be made. The river there is rather less than a mile wide, in a gorge a thousand feet deep. The repairing shops of the railway are there, stores and station ground, and a pier, so that the ocean steamers can discharge into the trucks.

My return journey had also its 'incidents,' for as we were climbing a steep bit with many curves, in a cutting twelve feet deep, we suddenly pulled up. The engine was off the rails! I gathered firewood, and grass for my bed, and prepared for another night out. After an hour the engine was on the rails. We started, backed a yard or two, and then forward, and off the rails again at the same place. It was five o'clock, and not until half-past seven did we get right again. Once more a start, and off the rails again, two feet farther on; so once more the jacks were placed, but it was half-past eleven before we started again. This time we did succeed in passing the bad place, and ran along fairly well, but we had a heavy train.

Passing the Lufu River, we commenced the steep ascent beyond, but half-way up came to a standstill. The engine was not strong enough. We backed a little, and tried again and again, but it was no use; so we dropped down the hill again, and were left standing on the bridge, at two o'clock in the morning, in the dark, while the engine took up the fore-part of the train. Happily nothing came up behind us, although we had passed no telephone station for the last eleven hours. There was a station a mile beyond, but they would not trust that engine down again;

they sent another, which, with a down passenger train, had been waiting for us to pass ever since eleven o'clock the previous morning. When we reached the station the down passenger train passed on, and we continued our way to Songololo, where we stayed five hours. Thence our train consisted of the first-class carriage, a cattle-truck, and two trucks heavily loaded with rails, and on these a number of bags of the State mail.

After passing the Kwilu, the engine that took us on was quite unequal to its task. We would run half-way up a hill, fail, and back down to the bottom; wait a quarter of an hour to get up steam, and try again. Sometimes the attempt would not be made without a stoppage to get up the pressure. So we progressed. We did reach a siding; but the driver was in a dilemma. The cattle could not be left, for they needed water and food; the trucks must go on because of the mails, and the passenger carriage would be wanted at once; so he went on. It took us six and a half hours to do that last twenty-four miles into Tumba.

These difficulties and troubles of the first days are now over; the service is improved, and works well. I came over the same ground last October in thirteen hours in comfort and safety, and without an 'incident.' The railway has been completed to Dolo, Stanley Pool, and round to Leopoldville, a distance in all of 250 miles. In the first days of June the first 'personally conducted' party of tourists started, under the auspices of Messrs Thomas Cook & Sons, to be present at the official opening of the railway. So the great victory over Nature has been won, and the long reaches of the Upper Congo have been connected with the world.

A fast service of steamers is to run between Antwerp and the Congo in eighteen days; the railway is to do the whole distance from Matadi to Stanley Pool in twenty hours. A fast steamer for the Upper Congo is to be sent out in pieces, to be reconstructed at Stanley Pool; she is to do the journey thence to Stanley Falls—1000 miles—in eleven days; so that it will be possible to go from Antwerp to Stanley Falls, in the very centre of Africa, in thirty-one days—a triumph of Belgian energy and perseverance.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

COMMUNICATION IN TRAINS.

MR F. HOLLINS, telegraph engineer and superintendent of the Great Eastern Railway, deserves the thanks of the community for having devised a system of electrical communication between passenger and guard which has met with the approval of the Board of Trade, and which is given freely to the world, for it is not protected by patent. In a central position in each compartment of the railway carriage is placed a lever switch working right or left against fixed stops, with a notice above it in bold print: 'To communicate with the guard in case of urgent need, move handle against either stop. Penalty for improper use, £5.' Such movement rings bells on the engine and in the guard's van, while at the same time a red disc is projected from either side of the carriage from which the alarm has come. The lever handle remains fixed against the stop towards which it has been urged until released by the guard with a special form of key, and the bells continue to ring until such release has been effected. The circuit can also be used for exchanging signals by a prearranged code between guard and engine-driver at all times. But perhaps the most valuable feature of the invention is found in the circumstance that the necessary electrical connections between one carriage and another is carried through the same india-rubber tube which operates the brake—that is to say, the operation of joining up the brake-tube between carriage and carriage also establishes electrical communication throughout the train between passenger, guard, and engine-driver. Such an apparatus has long been needed to replace the wholly inadequate contrivances at present in use on our railways, which are generally reported to have 'failed to act' when occasion for their use has arisen.

THE SALMON AND ITS FOOD.

It has long been a question among naturalists and anglers whether or not salmon and its near allies feed in fresh water, for it is a fact that food is rarely discovered in the stomach of a salmon, sea-trout, or sewen which has been in fresh water for any length of time. The subject has been commented upon from the time of Izaak Walton, and has formed the theme of many a discussion among fresh-water anglers. With a view to settle this interesting question, the Fishery Board of Scotland have made a series of investigations, and as a result have issued a report on the life-history of the salmon. This report is edited by Dr D. Noel Paton, who has been assisted in his work by many experts. The general conclusions arrived at are: (1) That there is no reason why salmon should feed during their stay in fresh water, as their bodies contain sufficient nourishment for all their requirements. (2) During their stay in fresh water the material accumulated in the muscles steadily diminishes, and there is no indication of the loss being made good by food. (3) There is every indication that during this period the organs of digestion are functionless. The case of

the salmon, it is pointed out, is not exceptional in this power of abstaining from food for a long period—the male fur-seal, after coming to land, being able to live for more than three months without food. It would seem that this characteristic of the *salmonidæ* is a wise provision of Nature, for in some of the small rivers to which salmon resort for spawning purposes there could not be found sufficient nourishment to meet their wants if they retained the enormous appetites which they have while at sea. Anglers at least are glad to know that, although salmon are not regular feeders in fresh water, they are not averse to an occasional snap at a fly.

A NEW TORPEDO-NET.

As a protection against the action of torpedoes, our warships were provided with wire-netting shields, or cripolines, which can be extended by spars, so as to form a wall around the vessel's sides. Upon which some ingenious inventor gave the travelling fish-shaped destroyer a cutting implement at its head which could penetrate the wire screen. A new form of crinoline has now been introduced which possesses a mesh of such construction that it cannot be pierced. But the invention probably comes too late; for if any lesson is to be learned from recent events, it is that the torpedo in naval warfare is of such secondary importance that it may be almost neglected altogether. We have learned lately that fighting ships armed with modern guns need not get to close quarters to work terrible destruction upon one another. A couple of miles separating the attacking vessel and that with which she is engaged is regarded as a near range; and no torpedo is effective at a quarter that distance. Quick-firing guns and accurate marksmanship are the far more important items to attend to, and American perfection in both these respects has really determined the issue in the present war.

A MOUSE MOTOR.

It has become the fashion among enterprising traders to attract attention to their shop windows by the exhibition of some moving object, generally actuated by clockwork. A distinctly novel idea in this direction is that recently adopted by certain American bicycle dealers, who have succeeded admirably in not only attracting attention to their wares, but in showing at the same time the perfection of their workmanship. They show, in brief, how the wheel of a cycle may be driven by mouse-power. The bicycle is either attached to a frame or hung to the ceiling—so that the front wheel is clear of the ground and can run easily. Just above the top of this wheel and fixed to the steering head of the machine is a mouse-cage with no bottom, but so close to the tyre that the animal within has no room to escape. The weight of the mouse is sufficient to give the wheel an initial movement, and the poor little creature trying to run to a refuge provided for it in the cage keeps up the motion in treadmill fashion. Usually there are two mice in each cage, and one or the other is generally doing work on the wheel.

POLAR EXPLORATION.

The *Fram*, which did such good service in Nansen's expedition, has once more started northwards from Christiania under the capable leadership of Captain Otto Sverdrup. The chief objects of this second Norwegian expedition is to discover the northern limits of Greenland, and to study the formation and trace the origin of the palæocrystic ice, while many problems of minor importance will be left for solution to the five scientific men who constitute part of the staff of the ship. The *Fram* has been much altered and improved in various ways, and the expedition carries a very complete outfit of necessary apparatus in the way of sledges, canoes, &c., with a large number of dogs. Antarctic exploration does not seem just now to be faring quite so well as it might. Failing to obtain the expected support for the enterprise from the British Government, the Council of the Royal Geographical Society are endeavouring to obtain the necessary funds to start a Southern expedition under their own auspices, and they are inviting subscriptions towards that end. At least fifty thousand pounds will be required to defray the expenses, and the society itself heads the list with one-tenth of that amount.

TESTING COAL BY THE X-RAYS.

M. Couriot has demonstrated in a note communicated to the Paris Academy that the Röntgen rays can be profitably employed in the examination of coal, peat, lignite, coke, &c. Pure carbon, whether it be in the form of coal or diamond, is perfectly transparent to these rays, while the flinty matter which goes to make up the slag- and clinker-forming portions of the fuel is opaque. If, therefore, a sample of coal be examined by means of the rays and a fluorescent screen, the amount of carbon as compared to less valuable constituents can be very readily determined. It is a curious characteristic of these rays that most of the bodies which are transparent to the eye—with the exception of a few, including the diamond and mica—are quite opaque when examined by this method; while coal, charcoal, jet, &c. are perfectly transparent, as noted by M. Couriot.

THE POTTER'S WHEEL.

One of the oldest mechanical contrivances known is the potter's wheel, the products of which, dating many centuries before our era, are dug up in all parts of the world. It is still in common use; but the recent manufacture by a totally different method of a very common piece of pottery—namely, the flower-

pot—suggests the reflection that more valuable specimens of earthenware may possibly be turned out by the new process. A machine by which flower-pots can be produced at the rate of sixteen per minute, and at half the cost of the older process, the invention of Mr William West, a well-known orchid-grower, was recently exhibited at Walthamstow, Essex—in which district there happens to be many pottery-works, where perhaps the introduction will not at first be regarded with the favour which it deserves. The new machine presses the clay into a mould, and turns out pots smooth in the interior, less liable to fracture than those of ordinary make, and so dry that they can be placed in the kiln almost immediately.

A NEW BULLET.

It is not altogether pleasant reading for a man of humane disposition to learn that the War Office has adopted a new bullet, on the ground that the ordinary Lee-Metford missile is not deadly enough. Although the Lee-Metford has a terribly long range, it does not disable an enemy as effectively as is thought desirable, men being known to have gone on fighting after half-a-dozen such bullets have gone through their bodies. Such a bullet, too, has been known to pass through two or three men consecutively, penetration being its characteristic rather than shock. The new bullet has the same diameter (·303), length, and weight as the Lee-Metford, with a nickel case filled only partly with lead, the conical end being left empty. Its action on entering the body is to open out and lodge there; and it is spoken of as the 'man-killing bullet' in contradistinction to the piece of lead which it supersedes, which is known as the 'man-penetrating bullet.' This new and ghastly messenger of death is being manufactured at Woolwich at the rate of two million rounds of ball cartridge per week, and it will be used for the first time in the Soudan expedition.

THE EVOLUTION OF SMALL ARMS.

An interesting paper with the above title was lately read at the Royal United Service Institution by Lieutenant-colonel Lockyer, chief inspector of small arms. The lecturer showed how the old muzzle-loading Enfield was in 1866 superseded by the breech-loading Snider, a mere stop-gap until something better could be introduced. This happened in 1871, when the Martini-Henry weapon—in his opinion the best military breech-loader ever made—was adopted. Then came the cry for magazine rifles; and in order to keep pace with other European nations the Lee-Metford was adopted in our service, certain alterations being subsequently made in the arm, such as the enlargement of the magazine to hold ten instead of eight cartridges and the substitution of cordite for black gunpowder. A great advance was made when one description of cartridge was adopted for all rifles, carbines, and machine-guns. The lecturer said that for a long time it had been his desire to see one universal pattern of firearm in the hands of all services, and the weapon which he favoured was the carbine. It weighed two pounds less than the rifle; and although it did not make such absolutely accurate target practice as the rifle, it was far more handy in the field, where bull's-eye shooting was not required. With regard to machine-guns, he believed that their evolution was still in progress. The Maxim, although a good weapon, could scarcely be called an ideal automatic gun. What was wanted was one which could go on firing steadily and certainly, it being a minor consideration whether it projected three hundred or six hundred shots per minute. Lord Charles Beresford, who occupied the chair on the occasion of the lecture, expressed the opinion that if the carbine were the better weapon it ought to be adopted, but that it would not be advisable to make such a sweeping change without practical test on a field of action.

LUCIFER-MATCHES.

It is to be hoped that the agitation which has recently been made with reference to the terrible disease common in match-factories, and known among the poor workers as 'phossy jaw,' will lead to the abandonment of the employment of yellow phosphorus in the manufacture of matches. It would seem that the settlement of the matter is really in the hands of the public, for if all people would insist on using safety-matches only—we mean those that will only strike on the box in which they are contained—the use of yellow phosphorus would cease. This chemical gives off a poisonous vapour which, when inhaled by the match-workers, leads to a most fearful disease, which principally attacks the jawbone. As long ago as the year 1848 it was discovered that when phosphorus was exposed to heat under certain conditions it assumed a new form, its yellow colour changing to red, no poisonous vapour rising from it, while at the same time it could no longer be ignited by simple rubbing. Excellent matches were at once made, the chemical being mixed with sulphite and antimony, and painted on the box, while the matches themselves consisted of a composition innocent of phosphorus, but which would ignite when brought into contact with it. The patent for these safety-matches has long ago run out, and any one is free to make them. Yet to save themselves a little trouble a large section of the public prefers matches of the older pattern, and a demand is therefore created for an article the manufacture of which is fraught with evil to the workers. The man who invents a match made with red phosphorus, which will strike on any rough surface, will not only reap a large fortune, but will be a public benefactor. It is satisfactory to note that an inquiry into the subject of making lucifer-matches

with yellow phosphorus has been ordered by the Home Secretary.

POULTRY-FARMING.

A report has recently been issued by the agricultural department of the Lancashire County Council, which gives the results of an elaborate experiment carried out for the Council by Mr Thomas Carr, who maintained that it was possible to keep fowls confined to a grass run, or at liberty about a farmyard, in a healthy condition, at the rate of 200 to one acre, and to show a profit of not less than five shillings per fowl from egg production per annum. A plot of land at Preston was set aside for the experiment, on which was built, under Mr Carr's direction, a roosting-house, a laying-house, and two shelters. A special feeding-trough was used, from which the fowls—thirty in number—would scratch the contents, while they could not spoil it. Sufficient food for the day—consisting of 11 parts Indian meal, 11 parts cockle-seed, and 2 parts bone-dust, and sometimes corn screenings and mixed peas—was placed in the trough each morning. The experiment continued for a year, careful accounts being kept of the cost of food, &c.; the number of eggs laid during the period being 3730, fetching a shilling per dozen. The balance-sheet shows a profit of nearly nine pounds; but it is only fair to note that there is nothing allowed for labour, and experience has taught us that even on a small scale fowls cannot be economically kept without a considerable amount of attention. But the experiment plainly proves that cottagers and others who have the opportunity of giving poultry space and attention can make them pay, provided that they are in reach of a market for the eggs, to say nothing of the chickens, for which there is always a demand.

THE FRESCOES AT WESTMINSTER PALACE.

The wall paintings in the Houses of Parliament have, during the last two years, been undergoing a cleansing and restorative process, under the able direction of Professor Church, and a parliamentary paper has recently been published showing the progress of the work. Here mention is made of an apparatus of novel design which the Professor has devised, and which he hopes will prove an effective aid in his work. This contrivance produces a powerful air-blast charged with bread crumbs, which can thus be projected upon the surface of the paintings. The apparatus has been returned to the makers for certain modifications, and the Professor hopes to employ it advantageously when the required alterations are completed.

SEA-SICKNESS.

In the notes on sea-sickness which Dr Hugh Taylor contributes to the *Lancet* there is not much comfort to be derived by the sufferer from that distressing ailment. He tells us—speaking from a five years' experience in the North Atlantic passenger service—that the doctor has no means, either by drugs or otherwise, of controlling the sickness; something which may act as a palliative to a patient during one voyage being useless the next. He has never seen any of the quack remedies do the slightest good; and although he has seen relief afforded by certain remedies which he names, his remarks go to show that regulation of the general health is, after all, the best safeguard from the more distressing forms of *mal de mer*. A farewell dinner or jollification is, he tells us, the worst possible preparation for a sea voyage; a far more sensible, but less festive, prescription being a blue pill and seidlitz powder.

'THE WHITE HEATHER.'

I BRIBED you with a promise,
One idle August day,
To guide you where the heather rare
Concealed its charmed white spray;
And as we went together
I dreamed, 'twixt hope and fear,
The fairy flower would give me power
To tell you all, my dear.

Though love had made me silent,
Mine eyes could call you fair.
You hummed a song the way along
To show you did not care.
The honey-hearted heather
Sprang ripely far and near;
And many a flower was red that hour,
But none was white, my dear.

Some blooms were rudely ruddy,
And some were palely pink,
And some so light—nay, *almost* white—
We had to stop to think.
And once an alien daisy
Made you exclaim, ''Tis here!'
Ah! many an hour we sought the flower
And found it not, my dear.

I doubt my search turned careless.
Perhaps the treasure grew
Snow-pure and sweet before my feet
Those times I looked at you.
Yet, is Romance in ruins
Because, as eve drew near,
I found the power, without the flower,
To tell you all, my dear?

J. J. BELL.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligiblity, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE GOLDEN BARS.

By JOHN STAFFORD, Author of *Vicar of Wrocksley*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

DAME DRUCE sat in the porch topping and tailing gooseberries. That is a task which frees the mind and allows of excursive thinking, as every one knows who has tried it; and Dame Druce, whose brain was of nimble sort, liking always to be up and doing, was subjectively anywhere but in the garden porch of Springfields. Pleasure sat at her lips, and in her soft, dark eyes, which she would raise at whiles to dreamily gaze from, then lower again with a gentle rise and fall of bosom which told of a sigh of gladness. Apart from the intermittent chip-chop of a chaff-cutter away in the barn, and the distant humming of a threshing-machine, it was still and peaceful enough at the old farm; but presently there was a noise afoot which made the dame half-turn her head and stare anxiously away. Then she smiled, and looked down anew. The noise had ceased.

'What lungs, to be sure! an' only eight hours old! He'll be fit to shout sparrers from the corn by next harvest. Bless 'em both! She'll be another woman after this. She's been over lonesome at times, poor thing, wi' the master out so much.'

After a few minutes more of musing the dame looked up again, this time with a jerk. It was at the sound of footsteps approaching. The tread of them was heavy, and the gravel of the path gave loud protest; but it was some seconds ere the newcomer, who had entered by the little side wicket, became visible. Dame Druce had hardened her face for a beggar.

And not unlike a beggar's was the tall figure which paused in front of her. Shabby, unkempt, unwashed, with a chin of stubble, and a general hang-dog air all over him, Mark Ruthwood looked not at his best that morning. The dame's face said so with all its expression.

'Well, Mark, you've been drinking again. Your hands are all of a shake, an' your eyes have the sunset in them. Was there ever such a sight in Shirley! We'll stand you in a field to scare the rooks. It would be a bold bird as would come within half a mile of you. Mark, you've drowned your self-respect, as well as your wits, an' your very soul must be panting for life after such seas of beer. When *will* you reform, Mark?'

'How is she now?' was all that Mark Ruthwood said, looking down at her.

'Why, it seems only yesterday when you was one o' the smartest young fellows in Shirley Kings; an' if you'd married all the lasses as lost their silly hearts on you, you'd have a dozen o' wives now to see that you shaved o' mornings. If you'd only kept your nose out o' Baxter's tankards you might a' been the squire's baily by this, an' earning an honest living, 'stead o' creeping about under cover o' night an' stealing it. How many rabbits did you wire last night, I should like to know? The parish won't have a bunny left in it, if'——

'How is she now? I asked,' half-growled the man. 'How are *they?*'

The dame looked up with softer gaze.

'They are both doing well, Mark, an' a finer boy was never born in Shirley. Nine pounds if a penny weight, an' as vigorous as a pike. An' yet the master's ridden off to Wanborough with eyes fit to fire a rick-yard, so ablaze wi' wrath they were. A hornet in the post-bag, I reckon; though he looked none too blithe before Simon brought it. He is such a man to worrit. He can't lose a cow wi' rinderpest without going on as if he'd lost a herd; an' now the grey mare is down wi' the glanders, he—— Mark!'

Ruthwood, who had turned impatiently away, looked back at her.

'Mark, you can have a job if you go down to the ten-acre field. They're cutting the oats, an' half the men have trapesed off to Berridge Fair.

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I'll lend you a hook an' a fagging-stick, if you care to earn the shillings. I know you can do your half-acre a day—or are you too lazy grown?'

'Lazy? No; it isn't that,' said Mark, with an ugly flash; 'it isn't that, dame.'

'Well, then, it's because your old bad feeling against master still rankles in you. I wonder you dare come nigh the place if the thought of him so poisons—— But there! I didn't mean to hurt you, Mark. Will you do a little turn for me, an' I'll give you a cup o' cider? I want a few potatoes from the bottom garden. Sally will give you a bowl, an' you'll find a fork in the tool-shed. Thank you, Mark.'

Dame Druce paused at her task, and looked away with eyes which now had sorrow in them.

'Poor lad! poor lad!' she muttered. 'It's been going on now this six year, an' he's as much in the toils as ever. Why don't he leave the place an' put half the world 'twixt him an' Shirley, if only for her sake? He might know she could never have paired with him in spite of all the flirting; he'd no chance at all, comely as he was, against the master. Well, well! it's a sad tale, an' time hasn't done telling it, as far as I can see.'

The good lady bent to her work anew, and some minutes passed before she looked up again. A horseman at full gallop was nearing. She sat listening, and then rose.

'He's never been to Wanborough an' back in this time,' she said to herself; 'but that's Captain's gallop right enough, an' he's carrying a power o' wrath in the saddle if I'm not greatly mistaken.'

She looked in the direction of the yard, and with some misgiving saw that Ruthwood was there. He had earned his cup of cider, and was standing talking to Hugh the cowman. They both turned as the horseman drew nigh. They saw Godfrey Harvey. Hugh slunk away, but Mark stood his ground, while the young yeoman trotted through the open gate into the yard. Without doubt there was a good deal of wrath in Captain's saddle. There was more when the eyes of the two men met. Harvey pulled up.

'What are you doing here?'

The words came quietly enough, but there was an ominous shake behind them, and the yeoman's heated face had lost something of its colour. Mark looked at him square.

'Plainly, I am standing here, Godfrey Harvey.'

The other twitched, but held himself in.

'Did I not tell you,' he said in the same quiet way as before, 'that if I found you on any part of my property, whether farm or land, I should horsewhip you?'

Mark's fists tightened.

'For the sake of the sick one there, and the little life beside her, let us have no quarrel now. I'——

The whip was across his face before he could say another word. It descended again, but Mark hooked his elbow and warded it. Again it cut the air, but with a quick upward thrust of his hand Mark caught it by the middle, and with a pull which nearly unseated the rider he wrested it away and flung it across to the dunghill. Harvey's feelings at this seemed to have paralysed him. He sat blazing down at Mark, who, longing to spring upon his assailant, stood wrestling with himself. All at once across the fearful silence came the small cry of a child. The yeoman's face changed as if he had thrown a mask off. He jumped from the saddle and turned to Dame Druce, who had come up wringing her hands.

'Here, dame; give this fellow a quart of beer and send him off. I must get indoors. Poor little devil! he may well cry at seeing the daylight of such a world as this, curse it!—Mark Ruthwood'—turning sharply round—'you crossed a desperate man just now. For both our sakes steer clear of me in future.—Hugh, put the cob up, and give him an extra dose of oats. He has earned it.'

Saying which Harvey passed rapidly into the house. Mark followed his figure till it had disappeared; then, with an odd look in his bloodshot eyes, as of a man dazed and yet murderously conscious, he turned and went his way.

It was Hugh who drank the quart.

'He took it quietly, ma'am,' said he over the lip of the pot.

'Ay, he took it quietly,' said Dame Druce; 'but the master might have followed his whip but for one thing.'

'And what might that have been, ma'am?' asked Hugh, who had only lately been hired at Swanley Mop.

'What might that have been? Gi'e me the pewter, and get back to Captain.'

CHAPTER II.

FROM that day onwards certain rumours grew apace concerning the ancient farm of Springfields. By the end of a month the rumours had condensed to certainty. Then people shook their heads and wondered and sorrowed. It was such an old place, such an old family. Who in the county had been more looked up to and honoured than the Harveys? The talk traversed the length of generations, but dwelt mostly perhaps on the eccentric Silas Harvey, the great-grandfather of Godfrey.

In the inglenook of the 'Blue Boar' Mark Ruthwood sat one night and listened. But hardly with the air of an ordinary listener. Saying nothing, but keeping his best ear to the company, he sat with glistening eyes, betraying now and again a slight movement of the hands or a shuffling of the feet to show the tension of the moment's feeling. All he heard is of little concern here. But he seemed to have gathered enough when

closing-time came to strengthen some purpose, which, as he moved away, showed itself in all his bearing. He forgot his stoop, his slouching gait, his habitual listlessness. One might have said as he passed along that for the moment he was the Mark Ruthwood of old days, when as a farm student at The Uplands—Grace Harvey's old home — he had been considered the handsomest young fellow in Shirley Kings.

He walked on through the starlit ways musing of the inn-talk of the evening. Not that it was matter new to him, but that, hearing it afresh just now, it had taken a newer meaning. There are thoughts which flash upon us; thoughts which slowly evolve, born of a thousand others, like the cells of our tissues. Mark strode on, appearing to be in a blaze of mental light. And on his face was writ 'Eureka!' as plainly as nerves and muscles could make it. An odd result of village gossip concerning an eccentric yeoman.

Mark's father—long since dead—had done much to make Silas Harvey a kindly and interesting figure to his thoughts. As he went along now, he recalled—and not with idle purpose—that his father, as a boy, had been a great favourite with the old man; that he had had books given to him; that he had been allowed the run of the house; had been shown its secret places, its monk's hiding-holes, and once — favour of favours—the entrance to the secret passage which, in older days, had connected Springfields with the Priory—now a shapeless ruin on the slope of the hill where the railway-cutting was.

All this, and much else, Ruthwood remembered as he tramped his way under the stars, following the guidance of the hedgerows, heedless apparently whither they led him; heedless of the hour, of everything, except the things his brain was busy with. He stopped at last at the 'whoo-whoo!' of an owl. He looked around. He had mounted a rise, and the remaining lights of Shirley Kings were visible to him, with one small glimmer from Springfields a few roods down the slope. The bird cried again, and Mark's head turned to the sound. It came from the ruined Priory. He stood gazing around; then mounted a gate near by, and walked slowly up the rise to the roofless remains of the ancient edifice. In ten minutes or so he reappeared, and returned with resolute steps to his lodgings at Shirley Kings.

Mark's candle was burning late that night. Besides his wasted but still handsome features, his unbrushed hair, his stubbly chin, his large but blood-streaked eyes, the little flame threw light on divers things—a couple of clay pipes, a half-used 'screw' of shag, a bottle of ink, and a number of letters and legal-looking papers which had evidently just been studied. With all these there were littered about a number of books—books of age, calf-covered, dog-eared, and generally shabby, but precious still, seemingly, to the ne'er-do-weel of Shirley—perhaps because they had belonged to his father. One of these he had in front of him now; not reading it, but poring intently over a faded fly-leaf which had on it a rude-looking drawing or plan. It was dated a few days before the death of Silas Harvey, and with a word here and there of direction declared its purpose undeniably. It was a guide to a hidden treasure.

Mark contemplated it, smiled slowly, and rubbed his hands. Then he leaned back and smiled up at the ceiling. But the plan on the fly-leaf drew down his eyes anew, and again he rubbed his hands.

'*Gil Blas!* once the property of Silas Harvey; now mine. His very name in the corner! What could be plainer?'

THE HAUNTED CHAMBER AT GLAMIS CASTLE.

A SUGGESTED SOLUTION OF THE MYSTERY.

THERE are few stories of haunted chambers in ancestral castles better known than that which is connected with Glamis Castle. Several variants of the tale are given; but these all have in common the notable peculiarity that the location of the mysterious chamber is unknown. In this respect the legend differs from the common ghost-story. It is not a bedroom where some crime has been committed, and which the spirit of the wronged person haunts at the midnight hour, causing terror and dismay in the heart of the luckless temporary guest. There are no indelible blood-marks shown; no clanking fetters are heard; no white lady is ever seen pacing the oaken floor with restless steps, and wailing her griefs upon the startled air. So far as is known, the ghost of Glamis has hardly ever been seen by mortal eye; though sometimes, it is alleged, on stormy nights, when the wild wind whistles around the quaint towers and gables of the ancient structure, the sounds of blasphemous language may be heard above the raging fury of the elements. Hence the mystery of Glamis Castle is more profound than the average ghostly tale; and yet it may be possible to suggest a very simple explanation of it.

In 1791 Sir Walter Scott visited Glamis Castle, and he refers to this event in his famous *Quarterly Review* article on 'Landscape Gardening,' published in 1828, and also in his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, issued in 1830. The former deals only with the exterior of the Castle;

but in the latter Scott incidentally mentions the secret chamber, and describes his own 'eerie' feelings during the night which he spent at Glamis. Unfortunately Sir Walter did not relate any of the traditions which he heard in connection with Glamis Castle, though these would have been quite within the scope of his work.

The first reference in literature to the ghost of Glamis is to be found in *The Picture of Scotland*, by Robert Chambers, published by William Tait of Edinburgh in 1826. The passage forms the foundation of all later allusions, and may here be quoted:

'As in all other old Scottish castles, there is a room in Glamis supposed to be haunted, and therefore shut up. But in the intricacies of the Castle it is supposed that there is also one which, if discovered, would be found to present a scene far beyond the simple horrors of a haunted chamber. Alexander, the Earl of Crawford, so notorious in Scottish history for his rebellion against James II., is popularly known in Fife and Angus by the descriptive appellation of Earl Beardie, and is, moreover, invested with all the terrible attributes understood by the term "a wicked laird." Certes he was, according to Bishop Lesley, "a verrey awful and rigorus man to all baronnes and gentlemen of the cuntry, and keist down mony of their houses in Angus quha wald nocht assist him, quhairof sindrey remains yit unbiggit again in this our dayis." It is the tradition of Glamis that he was playing at cards in the Castle, when, being warned to desist, as he was losing, he swore in a transport of fury that he would "play till the day of judgment." On this the devil appeared in the company, and they, room and all, disappeared. It is not known in what part of the house this room is situated, but it is well enough understood that, if ever discovered, Earl Beardie will be found, with all his party, still playing, and to play till the end of time. Some go the length of affirming that, on windy nights, the doomed gamesters are heard stamping their feet at one another, and mingling their impious exclamations with the passing blast.'

There can be no doubt that Robert Chambers obtained this tradition on the spot, and it is certain that the legend is still repeated in the district, and is well known wherever ghostly tales are current. The late Earl of Crawford and Balcarres (then Lord Lindsay) in his *Lives of the Lindsays*, published in 1836, relates the story almost in the words of Robert Chambers, referring to *The Picture of Scotland* for his authority. Andrew Jervise, in his *Land of the Lindsays*, published in 1853, alludes to the legend in the same terms. In the account of Glamis Castle given in A. H. Millar's *Historical Castles of Scotland*, published in 1890, some additional particulars are noted. The passage runs thus:

'There is a well-known tradition current in Forfarshire to the effect that there is a mysterious chamber in Glamis, the entrance to which is only known to three persons at one time—the Earl, the heir-apparent, and the factor on the estate—and that 'Beardie,' the fourth Earl of Crawford, is confined within its walls, doomed, as the penance for a hasty vow, to play dice till the day of judgment. It is hopeless to convert lovers of legendary lore from their belief by telling them that an authentic record declares that Earl Beardie "tuik the hot fever and died in the year of God ane thousand four hundreth fifty-four years, and wes buried with great triumph in the Grey Friars of Dundee in his forebears' sepulchre;" but it would be wrong for the incredulous scoffer to conclude that the tradition as to a secret chamber is altogether unfounded. We have the best authority for stating that such an apartment exists, and that its entrance is concealed, though the story of Earl Beardie's connection with it is a popular delusion.'

Quite a different version of the Glamis legend is given by J. H. Ingram in *Haunted Homes*, published in 1884. This writer alludes to 'an ominous chamber, said to be now cut off by a stone wall, and none is supposed to be acquainted with its locality save Lord Strathmore, his heir, and the factor of the estate. This wall is alleged to have been erected some few years ago by order of the late proprietor, in consequence of certain mysterious sights and sounds which he had both seen and heard.' The late Earl of Strathmore succeeded to the title in 1846 and died in 1865, so that the period of this 'alleged' closing of the entrance to the haunted chamber must have occurred between these dates. The cause of this action on Lord Strathmore's part is given by Mr Ingram on the authority of a correspondent of Dr Lee, and is in these terms:

'There is no doubt about the reality of the noises at Glamis Castle. On one occasion, some years ago, the head of the family, with several companions, was determined to investigate the cause. One night, when the disturbance was greater and more violent and alarming than usual—and, it should be premised, strange, weird, and unearthly sounds had often been heard, and by many persons, some quite unacquainted with the ill-repute of the castle—his Lordship went to the haunted room, opened the door with a key, and dropped back in a dead swoon into the arms of his companions; nor could he ever be induced to open his lips on the subject afterwards.'

Dr Lee's informant supplies the only record of a spectral appearance at Glamis. The story is as follows:

'On one occasion a lady and her child were staying for a few days at the Castle. The child was asleep in an adjoining dressing-room, and the lady, having gone to bed, lay awake for a while. Suddenly a cold blast stole into the room, extinguishing the night-light by her bedside, but

not affecting the one in the dressing-room beyond, in which her child had its cot. By that light she saw a tall mailed figure pass into the dressing-room from that in which she was lying. Immediately thereafter there was a shriek from the child. Her maternal instinct was aroused. She rushed into the dressing-room, and found the child in an agony of fear. It described what it had seen as a giant, who came and leant over its face.'

Here are the details of the usual ghost-story, with the customary lack of corroboration. No other instance is known of the appearance of a figure, mailed or otherwise, at Glamis. It is important to notice that the only point in which all these stories agree is as to the existence of a secret chamber. One of the writers quoted above refers to this statement as being 'on the best authority.' The following incident, bearing upon this point, was related about thirty years ago by an aged, superannuated servant, who had long been in the service of the Strathmore family. On one occasion, early in the present century, when the Strathmore family was from home, some of the inquisitive domestics set themselves to discover the locality of the secret chamber. The plan they took was effectual. They went through every room in the castle, and placed towels outside of every window. There was one window which had no towel, and of course it was concluded that it belonged to the mystic room. It was said that when Lord Strathmore returned and found that the secret had been so far discovered, he dismissed the ringleaders in the conspiracy, and bound the others over to perpetual secrecy. To this day the exact position of this mysterious room is known only to three persons at one time.

An examination of the evidence shows that the oral tradition was in existence about a century ago, and that the earliest printed record dates back for over seventy years. Earl Beardie was dead three centuries and a half before the former time, yet his name may have survived as a nursery bugbear, just as that of the Black Douglas was used to terrify children in Sir Walter Scott's early days, as testified by the rhyme:

> **Hush ye, hush ye, do not fret ye,**
> **The Black Douglas shall not get ye!**

The evil reputation of Earl Beardie was a local Forfarshire superstition long after he had gone to receive the reward of his misdeeds. A story, therefore, which had any mystery connected with it would naturally be associated with his name. Hence the secret chamber at Glamis need not have been constructed previous to 1454—the date of Earl Beardie's death—so as to link his name with it. Indeed, it is far more likely to be an erection of a much later date, when the name of the 'Tiger Earl' had been canonised in an evil sense.

It may here be explained that many structural curiosities at Glamis Castle have been only recently discovered. A splendid fireplace in the drawing-room, which was not known to exist, was accidentally found a few years ago; and a secret staircase, which appears to have been built about 1670, had been closed up, and was discovered in 1849, when some alterations were in progress. The principal renovator of the ancient Castle of Glamis was Patrick, first Earl of Strathmore, who was born in 1642 and died in 1695. In the *Book of Record*, written by this Lord Strathmore, and published by the Scottish History Society in 1890, he gives very full details of the work done by him at Glamis Castle. For instance, the construction of this back staircase, so long forgotten, is distinctly described; and from his references to certain leaden statues which he had erected in the grounds these works of art were recovered from their undignified seclusion in some of the cellars, and have been restored to their original positions.

When confronted with a mystery like that of the secret chamber, one naturally turns to the *Book of Record* to see if it contains any allusion to this apartment. The diligent student of that remarkable book will find two curious entries that seem to have some bearing on this subject. Writing on 24th June 1684, Lord Strathmore records the following transaction:

'Agried with the four masones in Glammiss for digging down from the floor of the litil pantry off the Lobbis a closet designed within the charter-house there, for wch I am to give them 50 lib. scotts and four bolls meall.'

The work of constructing this closet or small chamber was more serious than the Earl had contemplated. Judging from similar chambers which he caused to be made at his other residence of Castle Lyon (now Castle Huntly) in the Carse of Gowrie, this closet was probably dug out of the thickness of the wall. On 25th July there is another reference to this closet, which shows that its construction was an arduous undertaking:

'I did add to the work before mentioned of a closet in my charter-house severall things of a considerable trouble, as the digging thorrow passages from the new work to the old, and thorrow that closet againe so that as now I have access off on flour [one floor] from the east quarter of the house of Glammis to the west syde of the house thorrow the low hall, and am to pay the masones, because of the uncertainty y^{r}of dayes wages, and just so to the wright and plasterer.'

From these precise entries it is plain that in 1684 the first Earl of Strathmore caused a secret chamber or closet to be constructed, with an entrance from the charter-room. This was by no means an unusual thing, for many noble Scottish families have had frequent occasion to conceal documents that would have compromised them in times of war, and even a charter-room might not have been secure against the searches by enemies. The first Lord Strathmore himself, for instance,

was deeply implicated in a Jacobite plot with the Earls of Southesk and Callander in 1689; and though he afterwards became reconciled to William III., it would be useful for him to have a secure hiding-place for treasonable papers. Several of his descendants were concerned in the risings of 1715 and 1745, and a chamber of this kind would be useful either to secrete documents or to afford shelter to a fugitive. The third Earl of Strathmore died of wounds he received at Sheriffmuir in 1715. By that time the masons who had constructed the secret chamber thirty years before would have passed away, and the lingering rumours of its existence would be linked in the popular mind with the mysterious Earl Beardie. For obvious reasons the successive Earls of Strathmore would not seek to dispel this superstition, and thus the simple 'closet designed within the charter-room' has been elevated to the dignity of a haunted chamber. At least this suggestion is a reasonable one. Certainly the secret of this mysterious closet has been faithfully kept alike by the Earls of Strathmore and their factors. In the middle of last century this secrecy was of vital importance. It has since become habitual and traditional.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By Thomas St E. Hake.

CHAPTER V.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY IS DISAPPOINTED.

WHEN Mrs Clitherow presently returned with the tea-tray, and proved herself generally sympathetic, Ruth satisfied her natural curiosity by relating how, since her father had left them in somewhat straitened circumstances, she had resolved to support herself until, at least, their affairs at Cablethorpe took a more favourable turn. Her sister Hettie — as Mrs Clitherow already knew—took an active interest in the business; nor was she unacquainted with the fact that her brother Gabriel had 'gone abroad;' but nothing of the true cause of the disaster had reached the landlady's ears. Ruth did not think it needful to enlighten her further on family matters.

'Ah well, my dear,' was Mrs Clitherow's comment when Ruth had concluded, 'what a world it is—aren't it? But come! Now that you're rested a bit, won't you go and say "How d'ye do" to Captain Tudway?'

The captain had just dropped asleep in his arm-chair—his usual habit after dinner—when there came a knock at his door. That he should be dreaming at that very moment about his nephew and Hettie Beek—dreaming that he had bought Edward a partnership in Beek & Son's business, and that Hettie had become his wife—was natural enough. He had been thinking of little else for weeks past—ever since the day that Edward went to join his ship. In fact, it had been his pet idea—the dream of his life—from the hour that the ship-breaker's daughter had run into his room in the days when he was himself an able-bodied seafaring man. In compliance with his gruff, sleepy injunction to 'come in,' Ruth now appeared, and the captain, looking up blinkingly, exclaimed:

'Bless my eyes! What cheer, my dear?' and clapped his knee to wake himself up completely. 'Why, who would ha' thought it? Come in, come in. How's Hettie?'

When Ruth had brought a chair to the captain's side and had kissed him on his weather-beaten cheek—because she had known him so many years—she said: 'Hettie is well. Have you news of Ted?'

'Why, no, no. Have you?'

She assured him that no news had come to them since Tudway had paid them a hurried visit on his way to London to join his ship.

'Ah!' said the captain, with one of his knowing winks, 'just dropped alongside to wish Hettie good-bye, didn't he?'

'Yes.' And Ruth drew a deep sigh.

Captain Tudway had still a keen enough ear. 'What's in the wind?' said he suspiciously. 'Speak plainly, my dear. Hettie isn't a-going to throw my nephew over, is she?'

Ruth stared blankly into the captain's face.

'What can you mean?' said she in an under-breath. 'Hettie has never promised to marry him.'

'Never promised to be Ed'ard's wife?'

'Never! I wish she had,' said Ruth. 'If she marries any one now, Captain Tudway, I—I think it will be John.'

The captain looked perplexed. Then suddenly clutching at the arms of his chair, he exclaimed, 'Bless my eyes! You can't mean John Jarvis?'

'Yes, I do,' said Ruth in a broken voice. 'John has been devoted to her for years. And now — I mean ever since father's death — they are thrown together over the timber business, and'——

'Stop a bit,' said the captain; 'let me think! Het—Hettie never promised to be Ed'ard's wife?'

Captain Tudway looked frowningly towards an arm-chair on the opposite side of the hearth where his nephew had sat on the night before

he had last set sail. Maybe in the dim light of the lamp overhead, or in the confused state into which his brain was thrown by Ruth's words, he supposed for the moment that Edward was there. Hadn't Edward led him to believe, when they drank Hettie's health in that parting glass, that the dream of his life was on a fair way towards fulfilment at last?

Ruth began to perceive that there had been some misunderstanding, and she now hastened to do her best to make the situation evident to the captain. 'Let me tell you,' said she, 'what Hettie told me the very day after Edward's visit. They went on board your old ship, and had a talk together in your cabin. He asked her to be his wife, and Hettie, confessing to him that father's business was in a bankrupt condition, would not hear of any engagement. Even if she loved Edward—and she told me she had very grave doubts—she would never promise to be his wife when father was on the brink of ruin. I wish with all my heart she cared for Edward!—with all my heart I do.'

Long after Ruth had left him—long after the little household had retired to rest—Captain Tudway sat there conning over all the girl had disclosed.

In that old cabin on board the *Nancy*, where the dream had been first conceived, his nephew and Hettie had met and scattered all his secret projects for their happiness to the four winds. That Edward loved Hettie Beek—and with all the constancy of a first love—the captain could not doubt. But since the girl had rejected him—if he had understood Ruth rightly—and the ship-breaking partnership must be rejected too, the chances were that any thoughts his nephew might have entertained of making this voyage his last one would now be abandoned. He would have an increased zest for the sea; for a seafaring existence, with a ship of his own instead of a wife, had been old Captain Tudway's own destiny. That was how he had met a disappointment in early life. His nephew would experience the same fate.

He sat brooding over his pipe until midnight was past. Then he rose with difficulty, leaning on a stick which he kept within reach, and limped across the room. He stopped beside the sea-chest; and, after several futile efforts, which were accompanied by suppressed groans, he succeeded in kneeling down. He unlocked the chest and drew forth, one by one, a number of canvas bags. He placed these bags on a table and sat down before them. They contained the gold with which he had thought to buy a share in Beek and Son's business. He heaped up the sovereigns before him, and contemplated the pile with a rueful face. With his elbows on the table and his head resting upon his hand, his appearance would have suggested the miser to any casual observer. But there was, in truth, nothing avaricious in Captain Tudway's nature. His one thought while amassing this wealth had been for his nephew's happiness. He had seen in its glitter the possible realisation of a dream that to a miser would have been a constant source of mental torture and disquietude. It was like the preparation of a feast to which the captain had secretly entertained thoughts of inviting others, and with the knowledge that his own enjoyment of it all would be increased thereby. He had been reluctantly compelled to sit down to it alone to-night, and without an appetite. There was only one touch of the miser in his present mood—the gold which he had heaped up year after year with accumulating delight was the only substantial part of the dream that remained to him now; and he felt less inclination to part with it.

The noise in the great thoroughfare, which had begun at daybreak, gradually succeeded in waking Ruth. At first she had a confused idea as to where she was and what all the noise meant. But the whole truth soon dawned upon her. Mrs Clitherow had given her a small garret beside her own; and when Ruth presently drew up the blind and looked out upon the forest of smoking chimneys which formed one of the background-views of Nelson Square, her heart began to sink within her. How different to the familiar sight of grassy fenlands from her own bedroom window at Cablethorpe! She sat down with her elbows resting upon the diminutive toilet table, her head between her hands, thinking—thinking. She began to realise what serious anxiety her impulsive flight was probably causing Hettie, and she determined to send her a telegram acquainting her with her London address before another hour had gone by. Still, she had no thought of abandoning her project. She had already had some talk with Mrs Clitherow, and was full of the hope that, by giving lessons in music, she might be enabled to earn the few shillings a week which would be needed in order to support herself in this modest lodging.

Some days went by. Hettie had written imploring Ruth to return; but Ruth's only answer was, 'Impossible!' In her walks about London in search of pupils she had plenty to occupy her thoughts. Pupils did not come to her with the rush she had anticipated, though she offered to teach them upon terms that would have appeared incredible to herself a week ago. Her troubles had commenced. She was beginning to have some serious fears that she would soon be getting into Mrs Clitherow's debt. But another thing worried her still more. She could never drive John out of her thoughts. The one motive which had actuated her flight had not been achieved. At the moment of waking each morning his name was on her lips; for in her dreams at night, as in her day-dreams, he was ever before her. Many a slight incident which she had never thought to recall came back to her in vivid detail. Nor

were her reflections of him uniformly pleasing, for John's enduring love for Hettie frequently loomed hauntingly in the background. Still, no recollection of John, however distressful, helped in the least degree to lessen her passion for him. Indeed, she had defeated her own object by her selfish and impetuous step. Instead of blotting out the past, instead of acquiring through this independent course that peace of mind for which she had eagerly craved, she had intensified the memory of it a thousand times.

Then her health began to fail. A morning's walk in London, often fraught with bitter disappointments, wearied her almost beyond endurance. It was upon such a day, after a fatiguing pilgrimage to a distant part of London, that Ruth was met by Mrs Clitherow at the parlour door with mysterious, dumb signallings to step into her room.

'What is it?' said Ruth, unduly alarmed.

'You would never guess. Shall I tell you? Well, then! I've let the drawing-room, my dear,' said Mrs Clitherow, 'at last.'

'Indeed!'

'But that's not all,' said the landlady, with a bright look; 'my new lodger is a friend of yours.'

Ruth's heart began to beat painfully fast. 'Who?'

'He's all alone,' said Mrs Clitherow evasively. 'Run and see for yourself.'

With a faltering step Ruth made her way to the drawing-room floor, knocked timidly, and went in. By the early twilight that looked in across Nelson Square, Ruth saw a man seated with his back to the windows and his hands clasped behind his head. He glanced round, but made no effort to rise. Ruth started, and uttered a cry: 'Gabriel!'

It was her brother. He was a handsome, broad-shouldered fellow of thirty, with a round, good-natured face. Those who had known the father thirty years ago saw him again in this short-necked, thick-set son. He was the last person Ruth had expected to find here. She had believed with every one else that he had gone abroad.

'Sit down, Ruth,' said Gabriel Beek, stretching out his legs lazily. 'I thought I'd give you a surprise! You wouldn't have come up, you know, if you had known who the new lodger was; would you?'

He glanced at her in a shifty way. He never looked long at any one.

'Yes; I should have come, Gabriel,' said Ruth. Then she added: 'Is it all true, this charge that lawyer Burtenshaw has brought against you?'

Gabriel bit his lip. 'It's like you, Ruth,' said he, 'not to condemn me unheard! I—— But first of all, let me hear Burtenshaw's version of the affair.'

She told him in a few words. Mr Burtenshaw had given him the cheque for three thousand pounds against his signature to the mortgage deed. With this money, the lawyer had led them to believe, he had gambled, lost, and then left the country. Her recital brought from him an exclamation of anger.

'Let me speak!'

'Yes; tell me the truth,' said she.

He had a soft, irresistible voice. 'I will! I've no wish to justify my conduct. I candidly admit that I've been greatly to blame,' said Gabriel, with a frankness of manner that would have deceived almost any one unacquainted with his true character. 'But Burtenshaw was the man who deliberately planned the whole business. He threw temptation in my way. He set a trap for me, and I fell into it. Ah! nobody knows the man as I do.'

'Don't look like that,' said Ruth, startled by the vindictive glare that came into his eyes. 'It shocks me more than I can express.'

The look softened. He glanced hopelessly round the room. 'I am a gambler. Can I help my nature?' said he, showing himself, in a word, the pitiable creature that he was. 'The moment that Burtenshaw found my weakness out he began his machinations. He knew that we were in money difficulties, and he suggested a mortgage on the estate. It was cunningly contrived. That three thousand pounds was placed enticingly in my way. I'll tell you how he managed it. I met him in the market-place at Alford, apparently by chance, and he asked me to step into his office. He showed me the mortgage deed. He had got father's signature already. Mine was wanted. He called in his clerk as witness, and the matter was settled. He then handed me the cheque. I saw in a twinkling 'twas an open cheque—one that could be turned into hard cash. I began to understand; and my hesitation to accept it—my suggestion that he had better pay it into the bank—brought a queer look to his face. Ruth,' added Gabriel, with a gesture of sudden despair, 'that look of his decided me. If he had told me in so many words that I was a gambler—that I had not the moral courage to resist this chance—it would have had no effect upon me compared with that look. It was an unspoken insult. I pocketed the cheque and went out. Before the bank closed I had changed the cheque into notes and gold.'

'Were you mad?'

'I *was* mad. I was like one haunted by demons. They pursued me. It was impossible to resist the whispered promises of wealth. The chink, chink as of gold was constantly in my ear, and the sound roused visions of a fortune that seemed almost realised.'

Ruth put her hand before her eyes.

'I played heavily and won. But,' pursued Gabriel, 'my luck changed. Only a few hundreds remained. I turned my back upon cards and determined to go abroad.'

'You didn't go?'

'No. I'm in the City. I've started a timber syndicate,' said he carelessly, 'and my fortune has begun to mend.'

For a while they were silent. Ruth was the first to speak. 'Have you,' said she—'have you never thought of going home?'

Gabriel's face flushed. 'I have never ceased to think of going home,' said he, in a subdued tone of anger that startled Ruth; 'and when I do go home, let Burtenshaw look to himself—and John too!'

'John—John Jarvis! What has *he* done?'

Gabriel regarded his sister with surprise. 'What has he done? Why, you know that he tried his best for years to turn father against me. He wanted to step into my place. When he failed in that quarter he went to Burtenshaw. They planned the whole of this business between them; but I'll be even with them yet.'

Ruth fired up at this. 'John's a man of honour. He wouldn't stoop to plot with lawyer Burtenshaw against our house,' said she; 'on the contrary, he has done everything in his power, since father died, to save the business.'

'Ah, you always did take John's part,' said Gabriel, 'and against me, too! Who's Jarvis, I should like to know?' he added sneeringly.

'The best friend we've ever had,' cried Ruth.

'My worst enemy,' said Gabriel. 'I hate him! When I think of the man—when I think of all his insolence and opposition—I could strike him down. It's a wonder we've never come to blows. We shall yet.'

He rose as he spoke, with his face so flushed and his gesture so threatening that Ruth caught him by the arm. 'Gabriel, Gabriel!'

Again recalled to himself, he mastered his anger and sank back in his chair, and sat there breathing hard like a baffled bulldog. Ruth regarded this incident with intense concern. Gabriel's enmity had revived; there was no moral influence such as her father had exerted over him to check it now; and she began to entertain serious fears for John's safety.

Then came the terrible recollection of her own helpless position. At any moment Gabriel might start for Cablethorpe, as he had threatened to do, and bring other and greater disasters upon the house! She had been warned. John was in peril; but what could she do all these miles from her home to avert a catastrophe! She sat in her garret lodging in Nelson Square, deep into the night, with her throbbing head resting on her hands—thinking, thinking.

MILITARY RIFLES, AND HOW THEY ARE MADE.

NOW that a new rifle of the latest pattern is in the hands of all our home forces—Regular, Militia, and Volunteer—it may be of interest to the general public to know how these rifles are made, and what the weapon is that 'Tommy Atkins' holds with which to defend his Queen, his country, and himself.

Judging from the results attained by Volunteers in the shooting for the Queen's Prize at Bisley this year and also last year, when seventy-six men in the first six hundred were able to put on 'possibles'—that is, seven bull's-eyes in seven shots at five hundred yards, it may fairly be claimed that in the Lee-Metford rifle we possess the finest weapon held by any nation, and one that is immensely superior to any other.

As we examine the two types of firearms in use in 1815 and 1898, a feeling of amusement strikes one at the idea of the 1815 one being in any degree considered a weapon of precision; but we cannot forget the fact that with it, imperfect as it was, our troops held their own and defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. Just about the time our beloved Queen came to the throne, a great improvement was made in the means of exploding the charge, a percussion-cap being substituted for the flint and steel; and in 1842 a percussion smooth-bore musket was put into use. Other improvements followed in quick succession. For some time it had been a known fact that by means of spiral grooves cut in the bore of the barrel, and using a conical bullet, the bullet would be caused to spin and so take a straighter course; so that, about the time of the commencement of the Crimean war, the 'Enfield rifle' superseded the smooth-bore musket, and was found to be a great improvement on all previous weapons, and, although a muzzle-loader, did good work in that campaign, the men who formed 'The Thin Red Line' having to trust to that and cold steel for their protection. About 1865 a system of loading from the breech was adopted, and was at once proved to be a great improvement. The 'Enfield' was converted to the breech-loading system, and in that form was known as the 'Snider,' from the name of the inventor of the system. After a few years an entirely new rifle was adopted by the War Office, in the shape of the Martini-Henry. This rifle was on what is known as the 'falling-block' system, and was a splendid weapon, with a calibre of ·45 inch; and, as the results of the shooting done with it show, it was very accurate, would stand a lot of knocking about, and was easily kept in order. It was discarded by the regular army about 1890, when it was considered necessary to adopt some form of rifle which could be loaded and fired with greater rapidity; the present rifle—that is, the 'Lee-Metford'—being the one decided upon. The 'Martini' was still in use

by the volunteers until the end of 1896, when the task of replacing it by the 'Lee-Metford' was commenced, and by the time this article appears the whole of our British forces will be armed with the same type of weapon.

The new rifle is, according to the 'Red Book,' a magazine-rifle with a 'bolt action,' a ·303 bore, and the Metford system of rifling. Taking the most important part—the barrel—first, we will suppose the reader to go through the Royal Small-arms Factory, Birmingham, where they are made from the rough material. Here we see the ordinary outfit of a large smiths' shop, with the addition of a powerful steam-hammer fitted with dies of the shape of the barrel in the rough. Standing at the forge are the smiths with several rods of mild steel about an inch and a half thick and about two feet long in the fire getting white-hot. Seizing one of these in a pair of tongs, one man places the glowing mass on the die constituting the anvil of the hammer; another man pulls over a lever, and a succession of deafening blows are rained on the plastic material, which seems as soft as putty, and in a few seconds we see the rod of steel drawn to nearly twice its former length, with a portion at one end about four inches long left about an inch thick. After cooling, these rough barrels are stacked in a store until they are required by the 'driller.' In the older form of rifle the barrels were made by winding a ribbon of steel on a mandrel and forging together, so forming a tube which was bored out afterwards. Now the barrels are forged solid and drilled through, the drilling being commenced at each end, the holes meeting in the middle.

The operation of drilling is one requiring great care, as the hole to be bored is very long, with a diameter of barely a quarter of an inch. The drills are kept cool while doing their work by means of a stream of soap and water injected into the hole by pneumatic pressure. After the barrels are drilled they are bored out and polished. This is an operation of the greatest nicety; as, when the barrel has left the boring-machine, a gauge is placed in one end of the hole and the tester's thumb at the other, and if the barrel is bored correctly the column of air will support the gauge when the barrel is held upright, and will allow it to pass through quite easily when the thumb is removed. After boring, the barrel is examined for faults, and if passed is handed to the 'rifler,' who presides over a cleverly-constructed machine which cuts the seven spiral grooves in the barrel which cause the bullet to spin and so go straight to the billet it is intended to reach. After rifling, the outside of the barrel comes in for attention and is turned to proper size; the rear end is chased with a screw to attach it to the body; the chamber to receive the cartridge is bored out, the outside polished, and several minor details executed, when it is ready to be tested at the 'proof-house.' If it passes this ordeal satisfactorily it is fitted with sight-block, fore and back sights, and is finally browned and stacked up, ready to be fitted to the other completed parts. As the rifle consists of about eighty parts it is not necessary to describe the details in the manufacture of each part minutely; but the forging of components is the same in each case—that is, all the parts are roughly stamped by a steam die as nearly the necessary shape when complete as possible.

The next part to the barrel in importance is the body—that part which carries the bolt and has the important duty of holding the barrel, stock, and butt together. This portion undergoes, from the time it is forged by the smiths, an amount of shaping, drilling, slotting, and screwing which leaves one almost in doubt as to whether any of it will be left; but when it has finally left the shaping machines, and is ready to be case-hardened in parts and browned, is a most beautiful specimen of what modern appliances can do in shaping up irregular masses into smoothly-working mechanism. Roughly speaking, the cost of labour alone in making the body is eleven shillings. The bolt is the next important item: this, when seen in the finished state, is not unlike the familiar bolt which the careful householder pushes along at night when he wishes to close his door against unwelcome intruders. Upon examination it is seen to be hollow, and contains the striker which explodes the cartridge, and the mainspring, a long spiral spring. A piece screwed into the front end is called the bolt-head, and is used to carry the extractor and also to retain the bolt in its place; and a curiously-shaped piece at the rear end called the 'cocking-piece' has the 'striker' screwed into it. After the bolt is fitted, the trigger, with its spring, sear, and guard are fitted, a long bolt to hold the butt to the body is tapped into the body, and the working parts of the rifle are practically completed, with the exception of the magazine.

The magazine is an attachment which enables the soldier to hold in reserve a number of cartridges which can be fired when occasion requires with the loss of the least possible time in reloading. It consists of a sheet-steel box containing a platform which is pushed up by a spring. When the cartridges (ten in number) are pushed into this box, the platform is pressed down and the cartridges are kept in place by a shutter moving in the side of the body, called the 'cut-off.' When it is required to use magazine fire, the cut-off is pulled out and the platform presses a cartridge up into the breech as soon as the bolt is drawn back, and replaces another as soon as the empty case is ejected, so that the soldier has only to open and close the breech to reload his rifle without putting his hand into his pouch for each cartridge. If he does not require to fire from the

magazine he can close the cut-off and load and fire in the ordinary way, one at a time.

We now come to the woodwork, which is in two parts, and is made, for the most part, from Italian walnut on account of its special fitness for the purpose. The butt is shaped in a lathe from blocks of wood which are chucked in the lathe as oblong blocks, and are turned out by a very ingenious arrangement as rifle butts, only requiring to be sand-papered up and polished to be fitted to the rifle. The other part, or fore-end, is turned out and shaped in the same way, being cut with recesses to take the magazine, which passes through it into the body, the 'dial-sight' (for long distance firing), lower band, and nose-cap, and is drilled to receive a short clearing rod. The butt-plate is about the last item we need consider; this is a brass plate fitted to the end of the butt, and contains a hinged lid or trap which covers up a hole (bored up the butt) which receives the bolt used to screw the butt to the body, and also serves as a receptacle to contain a brass oil-bottle and 'pull-through,' these being an absolutely necessary part of the outfit of the rifle, as with 'cordite' ammunition rusting sets up so quickly after firing that it is necessary to clean out the barrel as soon as possible.

After all the components are finished they are taken into the 'viewer's' department. In this shop each piece is carefully examined, and if free from faults is handed over to the 'assembler.' He puts the whole weapon together; the butt is then stamped with the date, &c., of manufacture, and the rifle is complete.

In connection with the rifle, the bayonet must next be considered—in fact it is a part of it; and, as so much depends at times upon cold steel, it becomes a necessity that the material used should be of the best and of the finest temper. After the Egyptian campaign an outcry was raised about 'corkscrew bayonets and leaden swords;' but 'Tommy Atkins' has now no need to fear that the bayonet or sword he carries will fail him at a critical moment, for the test that the blades undergo is of the most extreme character. Taking the bayonets first, the blades are forged from the finest steel, and after being hardened and tempered are taken to the testing machine, which is a curved block with a hole at one end, and is covered with a wire guard to protect the workman. The point of the blade is placed in the hole and the blade is bent to the curvature of the block, and to pass the viewer must spring back perfectly straight. I may say that very few fail to pass the test; those that do not, in most cases, breaking short off in preference to bending. After testing, the blades are ground up and polished, fitted with hilts and scabbards, and find their way to the store, to be issued with the rifle as a part of it. The swords issued undergo an even more severe test than the bayonets, as, after hardening, they are ground to shape, fitted up with hilt, &c., and are taken in hand to be tested when they are virtually complete. The first part of the test is carried out as follows: The sword is placed with its point in a 'shoe,' which holds it upright, the plunger of a press is then brought down on the top of the pommel until it has pressed the blade down no less than five inches, thus causing it to bend out at the side to a corresponding amount. This might be considered a severe enough test, but that is only a part. The sword is next taken out of the press and is examined. If it has sprung up perfectly straight it is allowed to undergo the second part of the test. Standing in front of an immense round log of timber, the tester takes the sword and with his full strength strikes the flat of the blade across the log twice and the front or cutting edge once; if the blade stands this test it is considered proved, and is stamped with the proof-mark on the side first bent, and is then fitted to its scabbard.

This, then, is the way that our rifles are made, and their accuracy and finish are a proof that the British army is in possession of the finest in the world; and as regards our swords and bayonets, when the need to use them comes, our soldiers may feel that on the end of their rifles or in their hands they really carry a 'trusty' blade.

In conclusion, I may say that the R.S.A. Factory at Birmingham, with its two thousand machines, is only the smaller part of the manufacturing establishment, the bulk of the rifles being made at Enfield Lock; the Birmingham factory taking the repairs.

COLD STORAGE AND OUR FOOD SUPPLY.

By E. H. Jackson.

ONE of the most remarkable trade developments of recent times, and one that has undoubtedly come to stay, revolutionising as it has the food supply of the whole world, is that of the preservation of perishable food products in cold stores by mechanical means.

The utilisation of refrigerating processes for commercial purposes has developed so wonderfully within the last few years as to suggest endless possibilities. What our ancestors deemed impossibilities have become to us matters of every-day simplicity, and articles of food which they regarded as luxuries, only to be obtained at certain seasons of the year, are now, owing to

these refrigerating processes, almost every-day articles of diet.

Twenty years ago the science of refrigeration was in the most embryo state, and its possibilities not even dreamt of. The pioneers, who in 1880 despatched (after numerous mishaps) the first consignment of 400 frozen sheep from Australia, little thought their venture would attain to such proportions or prove of such value to the sheep-breeders of the colonies.

In 1880, 400 carcasses were imported into this country; in 1881, 17,275. In 1882 New Zealand started with 8800; and then in 1883 Argentina shipped 17,000; while in 1897 the totals respectively amounted to the enormous figures—Australia, 1,394,500; New Zealand, 2,696,000; Argentina, 2,068,000; or a combined total of over six millions.

Nor is this all—to these must be added the 758,000 cwt. of frozen beef received.

At first frozen meat was looked upon with suspicion. People could not be persuaded that it was, to say the least, palatable; but cheapness and improved quality in course of time made many converts, though in some parts of England and Scotland the prejudice partly remains, but it is slowly and surely dying away.

It is calculated that we are dependent on the outside world for 36 per cent. of our beef, mutton, and pork; for of the 123 lb. consumed per head last year in this country, 79 lb. (say 64¼ per cent.) were of home production and 44 lb. (say 35¾ per cent.) imported.

It is needless to say that although frozen beef and mutton form the chief staple of the cold storage business, they do not form by any means the whole of food products that are, by means of refrigeration, rendered available for the consumption of the teeming millions of our population. The supply of home-grown meat, poultry, game, fruit, &c., is very disproportionate to the ever-increasing demand, so it has to be supplemented by thousands of tons of food from abroad.

Three years ago rabbits, that fearful pest to the Australian sheep-grower, were first shipped in a frozen state to this country; and the rapid growth of this branch of the business is very noteworthy. For the first nine months of each of the last three years we have received from Australasia 18,000 cwt. in 1895, 52,600 in 1896, and 131,280 cwt. in 1897; so that last year's imports amounted to more than seven times those of 1895. In all we received in 1897 over 10,000 tons, equivalent to 400,000 Australian sheep. This year's imports are expected to be on a still larger scale.

Frozen salmon from the rivers of British Columbia, splendid fish weighing from 15 to 45 lb., are now steadily entering into competition with the fresh salmon caught in the English, Scotch, and Irish waters; while lately a special consignment of New Zealand trout arrived in splendid condition.

Turkeys from Canada arrive for our Christmas dinner by the thousand; while frozen fowls from Russia, geese from France and Italy, fresh eggs, six months old, from Russia and the States arrive almost daily in vast numbers.

In the last year or two our Australian cousins have entered into competition with the Danish and Dutch farmers in supplying us with fresh butter. Nearly 200,000 cwt. arrived from our colonies last year, and the butter is of such excellent quality that the foreigner will have to look sharp after his trade or, despite the difference in freight, he will lose it.

Nor must we forget the thousands of barrels of apples from America (where they have been kept in cold stores for months) which arrive in Liverpool when our stock of apples is exhausted; milk from Norway, frozen solid; while hares, game, and various foods too numerous to mention, go to swell the list of good things the good fairy 'Refrigeration' enables us to obtain. We are not indebted to cold storage for *frozen* goods alone for increasing our food supply, but also for meat that has been chilled only; much that, without refrigeration, it would be impossible to deal with except in certain times of the year, now enters largely into our ports from America.

The fact that the supply of home-grown meat was inadequate induced the Americans to improve their herds. For many years the best of our cattle and sheep have been purchased for exportation to North and South America, where the rich pastures afford more extensive grazing than can be found in this country. Cattle-raising has become a great industry, and now the descendants of our own pedigree animals are returned to us as food for the people.

Large numbers of live cattle are imported into England every year, and killed at Deptford and Birkenhead, the ports of debarkation; but one important factor which operates somewhat adversely against the importation of live cattle is that of health. Animals penned up in close confinement on a boat for a week or longer fall off in condition; and, as they more or less suffer from sea-sickness during the voyage, it is not surprising to find that their flesh deteriorates in quality. This fact was not lost upon the American shipper, and some few years ago a scheme was devised whereby *chilled* beef could be sent across the Atlantic in a condition which would enable it to compete successfully for popular favour with the prime cuts of animals bred and fed at home.

The scheme gradually succeeded, until at the present time a very large proportion of the foreign beef consumed in this country comes to us in a chilled state. The refrigerating chambers on board ship, kept at a temperature slightly above freezing-point preserves the meat in a chilled condition, so that it is perfectly sound and wholesome when placed upon the British markets.

The principal firms engaged in the chilled-meat trade are located in Chicago, where they have extensive works and the most elaborate plant and appliances for carrying on the business. The animals are selected, killed, and the beef conveyed in refrigerated vans by special trains to New York and Boston, where it is transferred to some of the best and fastest liners afloat. These vessels are provided with exceptional facilities for carrying the meat. In less than a fortnight from the day the animals are killed the beef is offered for sale in the English markets. It suffers no deterioration during the voyage, and keeping it in the chilled state has the effect of making it tender and improving the flavour and quality. Between 20,000 and 30,000 quarters of chilled beef are now sold in England every week.

During the last two years the supply of English pork, owing to the prevalence of swine fever, has become somewhat limited; and, in order to meet the existing demand, the American shippers have added to their beef exports consignments of chilled pork.

So important has the carrying of frozen and chilled produce become that there are now over 150 steamers fitted with special refrigerating machinery and cold rooms for dealing with the trade, and several others are now being fitted up. Ten years ago a boat bringing 30,000 carcasses was the largest, now several are being built to carry 100,000 carcasses per voyage.

We have thus far only treated of the exporting and despatching side of the question. We will now take that of the importer. With such vast quantities of perishable goods pouring into the country, it is imperative that cold stores should be erected at the ports to receive them on arrival. The imported products cannot be disposed of to advantage as quickly as the ships discharge; it is impossible to arrange supply and demand to a nicety, and the conditions vary. There are now stores in London capable of holding 1,250,000 of 56-lb. carcasses; there are stores in Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow, and other large towns, with a capacity of about 980,000 carcasses; while in several smaller towns the municipalities are proposing to erect stores, or individual traders are setting about the business.

It is obvious that this almost miraculous power of preserving the perishable is of enormous advantage. It does more than merely retain in good condition stocks from abroad; it also retains any surplus stock of home-grown produce left by the variations in the tastes of the public and the vagaries of the weather. It enables dealers to buy with much more freedom than they could before the days of cold stores were known. Take the case of a butcher or poulterer as an example. A few years ago he was forced to purchase almost from hand to mouth. His stock must be fresh, as his means of warding off putridity were small. Consequently he was compelled to buy on a comparatively small scale, and to buy often. In a business community like ours no one needs to be told the effect of this system of trading. Buying small quantities, he had to pay a high price. When the stores were erected great possibilities were opened out to him. His fears of overstocking himself were diminished. If he did not sell quickly he knew the danger of loss was reduced to a minimum. Unsold goods he could leave at the stores, on payment of a reasonable sum, until such time as customers came along. This was satisfactory from the dealer's point of view. What was the effect upon the public? It having become possible to buy at a cheaper rate, competition quickly gave the consumer his share of the reduction. Prices fell, the purchasing power of money became greater, and the whole community benefited. The poor were able to get better bargains, the rich to add to their luxuries.

In fact, such is the benefit to be derived from the establishment of a cold store that it can safely be predicted that ere long there will not be a single town in the British Isles without its cold store for the accommodation of frozen meat, dairy produce, and other perishable but preservable food substances.

A PARTIAL BLOCKADE.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE HAYTIAN REBELLION.

By F. T. Bullen.



HE condition of affairs in Cuba, and the position of that island before and during the struggle with Spain, when backed by the United States, has necessarily turned many people's thoughts in the direction of Hayti. The two cases have sufficient similarity to warrant serious comparison and many dubious surmisings as to the future of Cuba when viewed in the light of Haytian history during the last twenty-five years. This may well be said even while recognising to the full the ability and fearless patriotism of many who have fought and toiled strenuously for their ideal of freedom both in Hayti and Cuba. Nor do these reflections for one moment imply that any idea of a continuance of present misrule in Cuba, however modified, is for one moment to be enter-

tained. The marvel is that seeing how utterly such tyranny failed to maintain its bad eminence in Hayti it has so long survived in the sister island. Of course there was this important difference between the two cases, that matters were complicated in Hayti by the presence of two sets of rulers, French and Spanish, who each claimed half of the island. Both were hated impartially by the revolutionists, who have a far larger proportion of pure negro blood among them than is the case in Cuba; and both were inclined to thwart one another's plans while apparently taking concerted action.

A striking object-lesson in the conduct of the Haytian war was to be seen in what, for want of a better term, was called 'the blockade.' (The last blockade lasted, nominally, from November 1888 to July 1889.) The combined fleets of France and Spain had the job in hand; but, although there had then been little done to settle the question of an 'effective' blockade, their proceedings were an utter farce. To the ordinary commerce of the island it made no difference at all. Trading vessels came and went as they chose without any hindrance to their operations except in the natural shrinkage of trade, which of course was great. So much was this the case that when, on her way home, our large steamship left Kingston in Jamaica for Port-au-Prince, there was no excitement or apprehension among the large number of passengers we carried, not even a suggestion of danger or detention. As we drew near the apex of the gradually narrowing gulf whose shores converge upon Port-au-Prince two warships became visible, one on either side of the harbour's mouth, but some three miles seaward of it. Although apparently at anchor, they both had steam up and flew their national colours in storm-flags, one French, the other Spanish. To our usual sea-courtesy of dipping our ensign as we passed between them they vouchsafed no notice. Doubtless they did not feel too amiably disposed towards any vessel flying the well-known red ensign, but they made no overt show of unfriendliness beyond this sulky unresponsiveness.

At first the harbour seemed entirely deserted; but when we reached the hulk in which our cargo was stored pending our arrival we discovered lying alongside the mole a long, low steamer of some 700 or 800 tons register, whose two schooner masts raked aft, with the short funnel, at a preposterous angle, giving her a most slaver-like appearance. She was painted a gray-blue—masts, funnel, boats, houses, and hull—so that she was difficult to descry at any distance. Her appearance would have drawn a seaman's attention anywhere, here it did not need the tiny 'stars and stripes' fluttering over her taffrail to inform us that, whatever her ostensible name and port of registry might be, 'Yankee filibuster and blockade runner' was writ large all over her. She had evidently accomplished her inward errand, whatever it had been, and was now placidly lying without a sign of life about her except the tiny blue vapour hovering over the funnel that spelt 'banked fires.'

Ashore the condition of the forlorn and dilapidated town afforded ample interest. Once it had evidently been a quite important city for this part of the world. But now, after subjection to years of maltreatment at the hands of its former as well as its present masters, it was but a succession of ruinous heaps, unfit for decent habitation; and the state of anarchy masquerading in the guise of a government gave the final touch of hopelessness to the place from our point of view. The negro was 'on top' and meant to stay there. Also he had made up his mind that here, if nowhere else in the world, the white man should recognise the fact or pay an exceedingly heavy price for contumacy. Gorgeously-attired darkies fantastically armed and barbarously bedizened with tarnished gold lace and draggled ostrich plumes strutted about the filthy footways, demanding instant and servile recognition from all white men unfortunate enough to meet them; and, as the number of officials was great and the reins of power constantly shifting, it was well-nigh impossible to avoid the grave crime of neglecting to salute adequately and promptly some feather-brained negro dressed in a little brief authority. Most of those white men who for their sins were compelled to do business in this abominable place found it safest to compromise by saluting impartially all the gentlemen of colour they met, feeling fairly sure that the swift kaleidoscope of Haytian politics would bring every nigger on top sooner or later, even if for only a few hours.

To this wretched condition of things we owed the loss of thirty good men's lives. A party of men from our ship went ashore one evening, and in the course of their walk were met by some cock-a-hoop official of whom they took no notice. His scarecrow escort at once demanded abject apologies, which were not forthcoming, although some sea-ribaldry on the subject of niggers collectively was freely tendered. In the subsequent scrimmage our fellows were badly mauled and hauled off to the calabozo, an unspeakably filthy collection of huts islanded in a lake of sewage. Twenty-four hours in this inferno sufficed to reduce men accustomed only to the briny purity of sea-air to such helplessness that when their heavy fines were paid they could barely crawl over the ship's side to get aboard. Every man of them was at once placed on the sick list, the doctor's face lengthening considerably upon his examination of them. Fortunately we had a shipwrecked crew with us as passengers, who were only too glad of a chance of employment, so that we were not shorthanded, and the cargo was completed without delay.

At about ten P.M. on the last evening a canoe

arrived from heaven knows where, bearing a bulky negro, well-dressed and important-looking, who was evidently an intending passenger. After a hurried interview with the captain and chief officer, two or three hands were called to hoist his baggage on board, which they did with many cursory remarks as to its abundance both of weight and quantity. The canoe disappeared into the darkness, the packages were taken into the saloon, and, with the exception of perhaps half-a-dozen people, no one on board knew anything of the occurrence. As for the new passenger, he became invisible; even the stewards saw scarcely anything of him on the voyage. And nobody seemed curious.

At earliest dawn next morning every member of the crew, when called to get under weigh, noticed almost instantly that the small blue vapour that continually overhung the filibuster's funnel was growing darker and denser. From our own the black masses were rolling in pitchy volumes as the firemen worked with a will, eager to get away. When the word was passed to 'stand by' for hauling in moorings from the hulk, every one, except perhaps two or three, was amazed to see the Yankee suddenly glide from her station and noiselessly sneak alongside of us. Excitement was immediately at boiling-point, and many an eye sought our 'old man's' impassive face, as with arms folded he leaned against the after-rail of the bridge. There was perfect silence on board as the tall, elegant figure of the Yankee commander, in a perfectly-fitting suit of gray silk, and with his handsome oval face shaded by an enormous Panama sombrero, calmly stepped from his bridge on to our deck, where he was instantly joined by our skipper. The pair dived into the chart-room, emerging five minutes later and seeking their respective bridges at once. Our engine-room gong gave out its deep note, succeeded instantly by the command 'Let go, fore and aft,' and the low mellow notes of the sailors' cries as they hauled in the big, stubborn hawsers. We forged ahead slowly, so did our companion, but apparently without effort on his part. Soon we were going full speed for the sea in mid-channel, with our biggest 'house-flag' and ensign flying and every beam and stringer vibrating like a jew's harp tongue under the unusual stress. The Yankee still kept position in the same effortless fashion. Her captain lolled negligently on the bridge, dreamily puffing at a corpulent cigar, his half-closed eyes apparently indicating utter indifference. Not another individual was to be seen on her deck. Our rail on the contrary was crowded with spectators, crew and passengers alike, all with nerves at concert-pitch as we rushed along towards that spot in mid-channel where we should be directly between the two watchers of the threshold. Up till now they had made no sign that they knew of anything going on of interest to them, unless a slight thickening of the smoke wreath from their funnels meant that they were accumulating steam for a dash. They did not move, however, and gradually we drew abreast of them. No sooner had we passed them than our Yankee friend deliberately drew himself up and said curtly 'G'lang ahead,' then, with a sweeping bow and wave of his hat, 'S'long, Cap., my best thanks. S'long ladies n' all.' As he spoke his vessel seemed to leap forward like an unleashed hound, while a very torrent of inky smoke from her funnel overspread the sky, and befouled the pure air with the reek of petroleum. The two warships started immediately in chase, and for some time a succession of fountains in the filibuster's direction as well as the hollow reverberation of guns told us they had hopes of crippling their audacious enemy even at that long range. But he steamed two knots to their one, and in less than a quarter of an hour they gave up the chase. There was considerable trepidation on board our vessel at this time. What more natural than that they should seek some small solace by punishing us who were undoubtedly aiders and abettors of the Yank's escape? Still, even at the sacrifice of a fine dramatic situation, the truth must be told, which is that they did not molest us in any way whatever.

Before nightfall the whole incident, exciting as it had been, was completely obliterated from every mind by the appalling news of a death from yellow fever. One of the victims of Port-au-Prince lay rigid, awaiting the speediest burial possible, and we could no longer ignore the frightful fact that this justly-dreaded plague was enthroned in our small community. Terrible at all times, there is something specially awful in being plague-stricken on board ship. Each looked at his fellow and pondered the problem so painfully demanding solution, 'You or me next?' Next day six of the crew lay moribund in the improvised tent-hospital rigged on the main-hatch. And then a sudden, terrific incident occurred. A big Liverpool Irishman, one of the bosun's mates, had been seized at breakfast-time, and after about an hour's restless writhing in the tent suddenly became furiously delirious. Mother naked, he burst out into the blazing sunshine and flew forward, snatching up the cook's broad axe as he passed the galley door. Nearly everybody was on deck at the time except those off watch; but after a series of miraculous escapes the poor maniac had the solitude of the deck to himself. He did much damage to the panelling of the deck-houses by furious blows of his weapon as he rushed about, and then suddenly caught sight of the quarter-master in the wheelhouse, who, unconscious of any trouble, was calmly steering. Two or three tremendous blows of the axe demolished the door but gave the badly-scared helmsman time to flee. In burst the madman, foaming, and all was instantly quiet. For some time none dared venture

near; while, the engines being stopped, the ship lay like a log upon the sea. At last it was discovered that the poor wretch in his blind fury had hurled himself across the box behind the wheel, and had fallen upon the other side with the edge of his weapon beneath him, inflicting a wound in his chest and throat wide enough to have let out several lives had he possessed them. That evening there were four burials at one reading of the service, and as each solemn plunge resounded alongside it found a painful echo in every heart. For now the destroyer was busy fore and aft. The doctor, cheeriest of Irishmen, worked himself ruthlessly, never seeming to take any rest, and striving with amazing courage to infuse some of his own dauntless spirit into his agonised patients. Yet, in spite of all he could do, for one awful week the number of the sufferers increased daily, although, owing to the dire swiftness of the plague, the dead continually made room for the dying. Then the boilers began to leak, and for an apparently interminable twenty-four hours we lay motionless, while, with that sublime heroism that, while it is so often manifested by marine engineers is so little accounted of, the engine-room staff toiled unrestingly in scorching corners amidst scalding showers to patch up the source of our motive-power.

Not until thirty of our number had gone from among us did the fury of the scourge abate, leaving ten poor haggard wrecks of manhood battling feebly for life, buoyed by the hope of soon coming within range of our own maligned climate, which with all its faults will never tolerate a germ of yellow fever in its uncertain atmosphere. And then the deep blue of the ocean gave place to the well-known dull green of soundings, beloved by the homeward-bound sailor. In a few hours we sighted the Fastnet, that lonely outpost of Britain that has so often gladdened the eyes of the homesick wanderer, but never, surely, was more welcome than to us. While we were still feasting our eyes upon it the unfamiliar form of our negro passenger appeared on deck. After a little anxious search he button-holed the captain, who took him to his state-room. Thence in a short time came sounds of woe in a strange voice. A sharp summons from the captain brought the chief officer hurriedly to join in the conference, but he did not bring peace with him. On the contrary, the angry conversation increased to a perfect uproar, in the midst of which 'robbers,' 'my dollars, my money: where is it?' and so on, were occasionally heard. At last the affair culminated in the distraught darkey being man-handled by several stewards and seamen, who conveyed him in a very tempest of rage to the forepart of the ship and fastened him securely in an empty berth. From that time we neither saw nor heard any more of him until he was bundled ignominiously overside on to the quay at Liverpool.

What had transpired no one seemed to know definitely until some days after, when the negro's version of the story was made public. Then it appeared that he had been Lord High Treasurer, or whatever high-falutin title these fantastic black men bestowed upon their head money-keeper. He had conceived the brilliant idea of levanting, treasury and all, and, what is more, succeeded in carrying it out. Arriving on board our vessel, he was seized with fear lest he should be robbed, and so confided his loot to the care of our two senior officers. They evidently saw through the matter at a glance, but said no word until, coming up Channel, the ex-treasurer blandly desired his money again. He was met by a polite stare of wonder and a grave inquiry as to whatever he could mean. This reception nearly upset his reason, and he raved almost incoherently. Eventually he was, as we saw, ejected from the cabin and confined until the ship's arrival. Then the first use he made of his liberty was to set the law in motion; but, utterly discredited as he was by his compatriots, and without witnesses, he failed completely. What became of him I never heard; and it was not of course the business of the passengers—too glad as they all were to escape from a ship that had for them such unpleasant memories—to inquire precisely what was done with the money or whether it was restored to some equally public-spirited successor to the late Lord High Treasurer of Hayti.

A WISH.

Would I were a tiny flower
Growing in my lady's bower,
That I might throughout the day
Watch her while at work and play;
Hear her, as she moves along,
Humming low some favourite song.
This were life, since life to me
Lies wherever she may be.

If she pluck me, what care I
If at her fair hands I die,
Since that soothing, soft caress
Robs death of its bitterness.
And, when dying, this I know
That those dainty lips bestow
On my form one lingering kiss.
What more pleasant death than this?

But if not the scented rose,
Then the vilest weed that grows
On the pathway, where she treads
As she tends the flower-decked beds.
For thrice happy would I be,
Even if she trod on me;
Since what death were half so sweet
As to die at her fair feet?

Ian Sinclair.

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PROMOTION IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

By DUNCAN CUMMING.

ENORMOUSLY rich in potentialities, the United States is, of all Powers, the poorest in its equipment for prompt action with an army in case of the emergency of war. This fact has been abundantly illustrated by the meagreness of the results obtained by the American troops in the Cuban campaign, after weeks of preliminary work in enrolling, organising, and equipping vast bodies of troops throughout the country, with an accompanying effusion of money and patriotism which has scarcely a parallel in modern history. And it must be remembered, too, that by far the greater part of the men who fought the Spaniards so bravely around the heights of Santiago consisted of trained and experienced regular soldiers.

Very different, in quality and amount, has been the work effected by the American navy in the present crisis. The navy is, and — except at moments when the western 'hayseed' element preponderated in Congress—always has been, the special pet of both government and nation. There is now little foundation for the belief—a belief which was at the root of the Spanish contempt of the American navy at the beginning of this war—that American crews are a decidedly mixed lot as to nationality—that American sailors, in fact, are made up principally of Norwegians, Germans, Kanakas, Italians, with a sprinkling of Japanese, and the Americans indifferently represented. Nowadays the majority of the sailors of the American navy are citizens. Even so far back as 1894, of the enlisted force of the navy, fifty per cent. were native-born Americans, seventy per cent. were American citizens, and over ninety per cent. were residents of the United States; while of the thirty per cent. of aliens, more than one-third had declared their intention of becoming citizens.

And not only does the United States navy stand much better in this important respect to-day, but there never was a time when places in it below the rank of commissioned officer were so attractive to native Americans. Several reasons might be given for this. One is, that the monthly wages of a large number of sailors in certain grades has been greatly increased in recent years, thus bringing the navy pay-list into favourable comparison with that of outside labour. But the chief reason for the great change that has taken place in the conditions of navy life during recent years lies in the hardly observed fact that, as the old wooden ships and the old-fashioned steam-propelled ships have given place to modern marine machines, the navy has become more and more suited to the taste of capable Americans.

This gradual change in the navy has wrought a marked change in the *personnel* of the petty officers and the enlisted men, as well as in the conditions under which they work. It may almost be said of the American as of other navies, that there are no more sailors. The only sailing-ships that ever move from place to place now are the school-ships and training-ships. True, the American navy still ships boys and seamen at wages ranging from nine to twenty-four dollars a month, to whom bounties of three months' pay are granted upon re-enlistment, and it is no uncommon thing to see an enlisted man paid off at the expiration of his three years' term of service with several hundred dollars to his credit. The regular blue-jackets of the United States navy are a decidedly well-paid, well-fed class, altogether much better off than their brethren of the merchant marine.

But now, besides seamen proper, the navy also ships a host of machinists, mechanics, boilermakers, firemen, and what not, at wages sometimes exceeding seventy dollars (£14) per month, besides board

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and lodging, afloat or ashore. The new navy, as it grows, will need an ever-increasing number of men in these special classes—the classes that contain the pith of American ingenuity and skilled labour. There are now many new ships building —five battleships among them, while there are three others for which bids are soon to be solicited —and every new iron or steel steam-propelled monster that is added to the navy creates an increased demand for the skilled and high-paid classes of enlisted men. Already there are hundreds of machinists at seventy dollars (£14) per month, boilermakers at sixty (£12), blacksmiths at fifty (£10), plumbers at forty-five (£9); water-tenders, oilers, firemen, and painters at from thirty to forty dollars per month (£6 to £8); to say nothing of coppersmiths, shipwrights, and coal-passers at wages varying from fifty dollars (£10) per month down to twenty-two dollars (£4, 10s.).

Even the seaman class, the worst paid of all in its lower branches, is very well paid in the higher ranks. The lad that enters as a third-class apprentice, at nine dollars per month, may reasonably hope to become chief master-at-arms at sixty-five dollars per month (£13); or, better still, he may attain to the coveted rank of warrant-officer, with pay and privileges the same as those of the lieutenancy grades — namely, from twelve hundred dollars (£240) to nineteen hundred dollars (£380) a year, exclusive of board and lodging.

Let us glance for a moment now at the interesting class of naval apprentices—the carefully trained boys upon whom Uncle Sam founds his hopes of ultimately manning his ships exclusively with native American sailors of intelligence, experience, and sterling patriotism. If a boy decides to enter the American navy, there are two ways of setting about it. He can go either as an officer or as a common sailor; but in the latter case he must remember that, though he may rise to the honourable and well-paid grade of warrant-officer, he can never hope to tread the quarter-deck as a commissioned officer.

It may be interesting first, by way of comparison, to take a few facts and figures from the British navy, the only other navy worth consideration on the score of pay and promotion. Boys are taken into the British navy between the ages of fifteen and sixteen and a half years, and by diligence and good conduct can rise, as in the American service, to the rank of warrant-officer. They must make an engagement to serve for ten years on attaining the age of eighteen, and after that age they are rated as ordinary seamen of the second class, and ordinary seamen and able seamen as soon as they are qualified. When a boy enters the service he receives gratuities of £5 for outfit and £1 for bedding, and on being rated a first-class boy he receives a further sum of £2, 10s. for clothing purposes. The scale of pay, besides a liberal supply of provisions, is as follows: Boys receive from £9 to £10, 12s. a year; ordinary seamen from £18 to £23, able seamen from £29 to £32, petty officers from £35 to £58, and warrant-officers from £100 to £164 a year. Men are allowed pensions after twenty years' service, or when disabled, of from £18 to £52 per annum; and those who remain in the service after twenty years can obtain larger pensions. Warrant-officers receive pensions rising to £150 a year, and pensions are granted to their widows. To sum up, then, any ordinary boy who joins the English navy has it within the possibilities of his career to become one day a warrant-officer, and to retire with a pension of £150 when he is not necessarily more than forty years of age.

Turn we now to Uncle Sam's side of the account. Boys of good character, who have no physical defect, and who can read and write fairly well, are admitted into the American navy between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years. They must serve till the age of twenty-one as boys or junior seamen, and after that age they rank as seamen or petty officers. They are allowed a sum of forty-five dollars (£9) for outfit. To discover the exact number of petty officers on board a fully-equipped ship is a puzzling affair; but, at all events, the number of these minor prizes is encouragingly large; while still higher up, as the final goal of the common sailor's aspirations, are the four warrant-officerships — held by the boatswain, the carpenter, the gunner, and the sailmaker — whose pay and privileges, as stated above, are the same as those of the junior officers.

The pay of boys enlisted as third-class apprentices is nine dollars (about £1, 16s.) a month; the next promotion to second-class brings ten dollars (£2); the next, to first-class apprentices, eleven dollars (£2, 4s.) a month. Farther up the scale we find second-class seamen apprentices, with nineteen dollars (£3, 16s.), followed by first-class seamen apprentices, with twenty-four dollars (£4, 16s.) a month. The latter two grades correspond respectively to ordinary seaman and able seaman, or simply seaman, whose pay is also nineteen and twenty-four dollars a month. From a comparison of these figures we can see that a first-class seaman apprentice, or a seaman, receives two hundred and eighty-eight dollars (£57, 12s.) a year, a sum which is one hundred and twenty-eight dollars (£25, 12s.) in excess of the highest paid to a first-class seaman in the British service. Even a third-class apprentice in the American service receives more pay than an English naval cadet; a second-class seaman apprentice receives more than an English midshipman; while an American lieutenant or boatswain receives in pay a sum far in excess of an English lieutenant's pay, even with all the occasional extra money allowances thrown in. An English lieutenant's highest

pay is about £185 a year; the pay of an American lieutenant or warrant-officer ranges from twelve hundred dollars to nineteen hundred dollars a year (£240 to £380). This, then, is the income to which a poor boy may reasonably look forward to attaining in the American service; and at the age of sixty-two years he can retire with a pension of three-fourths of his current pay, just the same as a commissioned officer. That is, he can carry with him on his retirement a perpetual order on the Treasury for a sum of from nine hundred to fourteen hundred and twenty-five dollars a year (£180 to £285), the lower figure of which considerably exceeds the £150 which is the utmost limit of the British warrant-officer's pension. The latter, however, has one great advantage, and one which tends to the good of the British service by hastening promotion—namely, that he can carry away his substantial pension of £150 when he is not more than forty years of age. Even if the American seaman does not attain to warrant rank, there is still the middle grade of the petty officer, whose name is legion in the American navy, and who receives from twenty-seven to seventy dollars (£5, 8s. to £14) a month, and can retire with a pension after thirty years' service. Even the lad with a gift for music may easily get himself transferred to the special class that includes musicians, writers, and apothecaries, and here the wages vary from eighteen to sixty dollars (£3, 12s. to £12) a month.

There is a special provision of law to encourage good men to remain long in the service. The ordinary term of enlistment is three years, and by this provision any honourably-discharged man who re-enlists within three months from the date of his discharge returns to the navy with one dollar per month additional good conduct pay. The extra dollar is added at each re-enlistment, and there may easily be half-a-dozen re-enlistments, or, for that matter, a dozen. It means that a good man who sticks to the service for life gets a three months' vacation with full pay every three years, followed by an increase of pay.

It usually happens that the man who thus enlists and re-enlists has reached the grade of petty officer at his third or fourth enlistment, and after that the larger pay of his new rank increases regularly a dollar per month every three years, should he choose to remain in the service. And if physically disabled, a man, after ten years' service, is entitled to a pension of eight dollars (£1, 16s.) a month, and after twenty years' service to half his pay. In addition to these privileges, frequent short furloughs of from three to six days are granted to enable boys and men to visit distant relatives, and always on full pay. A boy has almost unlimited daily liberty, and while in port, if his home is near, he can stay there from Saturday to Monday if he is not in debt.

Reverting again to the skilled workers in the United States navy to-day, the mass of them receive in the long-run better pay than the average wage-workers on shore, without counting the added advantages of subsistence, credit for service, pension, &c. It is true that mechanics in the navy receive nominally smaller wages than men of their trades ashore, but then they are subject to none of the uncertainties of business or weather, or the stoppages caused by sickness. The navy 'goes right on' in times of panic, and there is no docking for illness. Employment and pay are secure for the rest of a man's days, and promotion is almost within his own control. Nearly every walk in life in America has ex-members of the navy in its ranks, for it has been found by hundreds who have been plucky enough to try it that a cruise will do much to educate and develop a bright young fellow who wants to get a few hundred dollars ahead, with a little experience of life thrown in.

The aristocratic organisation of the United States navy has doubtless hitherto kept many self-respecting native Americans from enlisting, but the service is vastly more democratic in practice than in theory. In this respect it offers a refreshing contrast to the army. Anything more pleasing than the harmonious blending of the strictest discipline with the heartiest *camaraderie*, so characteristic of the relations between officers and men on board a well-regulated American warship, is not to be found in any other department of life. True, no enlisted man may hope to become a commissioned officer; but the enlisted man of tried ability and known good conduct always earns the respect and consideration of his superiors. The brutal officer of the deck is almost unknown in the United States navy, and the self-respecting enlisted man is rarely made to feel that any one looks down upon him. And the seaman whose own conduct does not curtail his 'liberty' may see foreign parts as an enlisted man in a satisfactory and instructive fashion. There are hundreds of enlisted men in the navy of the United States who are as thoroughly trusted ashore as the most staid inmates of the ward-room. A man's repute in this regard is not left to mere chance, but is matter of careful record. The young man who makes up his mind to endure with patience a life of discipline and regularity invariably finds the American navy agreeable, interesting, and profitable.

Perhaps these few remarks, founded on a close examination of the subject at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, as well as on the ships and among the men themselves, may serve to explain to the interested reader the reasons for the popularity and efficiency of the United States navy.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VI.—FOREWARNED.

DURING the years that John had known Hettie Beek they had never before passed an evening alone. Her father or Ruth or some other friend or relation had always, either intentionally or otherwise, prevented a *tête-à-tête*. How often he had craved for the chance that was at last given him of declaring his passion! The desire of his life had been to win Hettie's love. He had watched her in childhood playing among the piles of timber, and laughing at him roguishly between the chinks; and he had gradually realised as she grew to womanhood, and his love for her matured, that she could never be won unless he rose to be her equal in state and fortune. He had read that men had risen—risen from the lowest grade—to become the heads of great commercial enterprises; and he had sternly resolved to make himself indispensable to Beek & Son. He had reached that point at last—had passed it—was even within measurable distance of getting the ship-breaking business into his own hands. Fortune had been propitious, so far as he was concerned. Should he let the chance go by? It might never recur.

He had always had good reason to believe that Hettie was well disposed towards him; and although he had never dared to hope that he had more than roused her admiration, John sometimes imagined that he had occasionally caught her looking at him as though he had begun to win some favour in her eyes. He was weighing in his mind how to approach the subject, when a word from Hettie, without any preconceived motive, roused the impulse that he had held in check for so long a time.

'John,' said she as they sat over the fire on the night upon which Ruth was contemplating her flight to London, 'something has happened since our talk together—our talk about reconstructing the business. It has altered my views entirely. But tell me, have you seriously considered the manner of man you are dealing with in Lawyer Burtenshaw?'

'Yes; I know my man,' said John confidently, 'and I am ready to risk everything. Do you think Mr Burtenshaw can hoodwink me?'

'No; but, John,' persisted Hettie, 'when you spoke of retrieving the fortunes of the house with so much earnestness and generosity, it was for Ruth's sake—and mine; didn't you say so?'

'Yes, Hettie; for your sake.'

'But, John, let us suppose,' said Hettie, with a business-like air—'let us suppose that Ruth and I—for reasons of a private nature—had resolved upon other plans. What should you decide to do then?'

'What should I do?' said John, perplexedly.

'Let us suppose,' resumed Hettie, 'that Ruth and I were averse to the scheme—so dead against it, John, that we had determined to go away and depend on our own exertions for an existence—would that really matter to you?'

'Matter? I wouldn't stop here a day,' said John. 'Lawyer Burtenshaw might step in and foreclose whenever he liked. What motive should I have left, Hettie, for rebuilding the fallen house?'

For a while they were silent. Hettie seemed to be pondering deeply. Presently she said: 'We've made up our minds, John, to face the world alone—Ruth and I. We shall have to live in a two-pair back, I suppose, and take in needlework or washing. Doesn't that seem a possible solution?'

'It's madness!'

'It is Ruth's wish,' said Hettie.

John went over to Hettie's chair and bent over her.

'Don't go, Hettie; don't go!'

The colour deepened in Hettie's cheek. But she uttered no word of protest. Her face showed signs of animation which emboldened John to persevere.

'I love you. You know it, Hettie,' he said. 'Stay, and help me. The work is begun. Help me to complete the task. Have I not shown you what can be done? I only need your encouraging word. A look from you has often put new life into me—yes, when I have had good reason to give up every effort in despair.'

His words expressed no absolute revelation. Hettie realised that he was devoted: she had realised it long before Ruth spoke—before she and Jarvis were thrown—by a mutual solicitude concerning the fate of the house—so frequently together. But she had never until to-day fully realised what it meant. There was something in his attitude towards her that seemed to approach nearest to her ideal. He was a man of energy and pluck who knew the worth of a woman's helpfulness. His constancy—his force of character and passion—drew her irresistibly towards him at this moment when the need of it was great indeed.

'You hardly know,' pursued Jarvis, 'what insults I have borne for your sake—borne them

silently. I have been taunted a score of times, when he suspected my love for you, by your brother Gabriel. He did his utmost to drive me out.'

'I never guessed,' said Hettie thoughtfully, 'that I was the cause of Gabriel's injustice towards you. How you must detest him!'

'No! All that will be forgotten,' said John, 'if I can win your love. Is it still your wish to go away?'

'Mine? It's Ruth's wish.'

'Not yours?'

'No—not now,' said Hettie.

She had scarcely spoken—Jarvis was still bending over her—when the parlour door opened, and Mr Burtenshaw stepped into the room. How it was that neither of them had heard his knock, or even his familiar footstep in the hall, was beyond their comprehension. Hettie rose and came forward to greet him with the sense of dread his presence had inspired ever since that night upon which her father died.

'I must apologise,' said the lawyer, with a glance at the clock upon the mantelpiece—'I must apologise, Miss Beek, for intruding upon you at so late an hour. But the matter is urgent.'

He sat down in front of the fire, folded his arms, and tucked his spider legs under the chair. Never had he looked more like a weaver of webs, thought Hettie, than he looked to-night.

'The matter,' said he, looking from Hettie to Jarvis, who sat on either side of him—'the matter concerns you both. It is, therefore, most lucky that I have found you together.'

He scarcely seemed to expect any reply, though he paused with his eye fixed on Jarvis. The manager returned his glance.

'Have you submitted to Miss Beek by any chance,' Mr Burtenshaw asked him, 'the substance of our talk this afternoon?'

'Yes. You might be sure I should do that.'

The lawyer nodded.

'And does'—and he now eyed Hettie keenly—'does Miss Beek approve?'

Hettie met his eye unflinchingly.

'Is it of any consequence,' said she, 'whether I approve or not?'

'Of any consequence?' and the lawyer appeared to be weighing the question carefully. 'No; I should say not.'

'In that case,' said Hettie, 'we'll not discuss the matter. Still, if you should wish to know my views at any time, sir, Mr Jarvis can enlighten you.'

'Ah!'

And Mr Burtenshaw again looked from Hettie to Jarvis. Again there was a pause.

'The matter about which I have come to speak,' the lawyer resumed, 'has reference to this very affair. For since you broached it to me, John, something of moment has occurred. It may alter my plans. When I reached the inn at Willoughby Junction, on my way home, I found my clerk waiting for me. He handed me a telegram. Read it.'

Jarvis took it from the lawyer and read aloud: '*On his track.*—RUSHBROOK.'

'What do you make of it?' said Mr Burtenshaw, scrutinising John's face keenly.

John shrugged his shoulders.

'Nothing? Then I shall surprise you,' Mr Burtenshaw resumed. 'It refers to that scoundrel—I beg your pardon, Miss Beek—I mean that fellow Gabriel.'

'My brother?'

Mr Burtenshaw nodded. 'Rushbrook's the detective.' And he put the telegram into his pocket.

'Now, I'll tell you,' he pursued, after a moment's pause—'I'll tell you what I've come about. If Gabriel Beek returns—if he ever ventures to cross this threshold—I'll not spare him. He has called me a spider at the "Red Lion" inn at Alford a dozen times. He shall have cause.'

The lawyer spoke in a tone of suppressed passion. His look was harsh and resolute, and as he concluded he struck his knee with his clenched hand. Then he rose and took leave of the girl with all the plausibility of a trained courtier. John would have lingered, for he craved to have a word more with Hettie. But the look she gave him—a look of appeal which he could not fail to understand—made it impossible for him to stay a moment behind the lawyer. He went out, therefore, with Mr Burtenshaw's eyes never for an instant removed from his face.

'Now, John,' said the lawyer, taking him by the arm as soon as they were outside Beek and Son's premises, 'I must have one more word with you. Shall we take a turn upon the shore? I'm stifled. One can breathe, and speak more freely too, down there.'

A few steps brought them over the 'pull-over,' where the fishing-boats were hauled into the High Street in rough weather, down on to smooth, hard sand that had been recently washed by the tide. They walked in the direction of Captain Tudway's hulk, towards a wooden breakwater that stretched like the backbone of a whale across the beach at right angles, with its head buried in the dunes.

Between them and this breakwater there was a perfect desert of sand, still damp and glittering from the late ebb; and the white-crested waves were pitching languidly over it on a recurring tide. But there was no sign of languidness among the black, ragged clouds overhead. Swift and shapeless, like the winged demons of a coming storm, they swept beneath the moon, and flung their shadows ominously upon sea and sand.

Mr Burtenshaw, clinging more closely to his companion's arm, was the first to speak. 'I congratulate you,' said he. 'John, you've done a good stroke of business. No need to tell me your secret now. Best felicitations, my friend. She's a woman in a thousand.'

The familiar tone in which he spoke, while nudging Jarvis expressively in the side, brought a resentful flash into John's eyes. An angry word rose to his lips; but the training that he had had in self-restraint for years past now came to his aid. He knit his brows, and watched the angry clouds that were driving in from the sea.

'You're not content with the thought of making your fortune,' pursued the lawyer; 'you've set your heart on marrying that girl. Not bad, John; not bad. We shall work together famously.'

Again the lawyer pressed John's arm. It felt to him as though he were being drawn into his clutches; it was so unlike the pressure of friendship. Still, John could not but admit to himself that, if Mr Burtenshaw was playing a game—as he undoubtedly appeared to be—he had himself thrown down the first card this afternoon.

As though he had half-surmised John's thought, the lawyer went on: 'You wouldn't like to see that fellow Gabriel here again, and at the helm, would you?'

'Not I.'

'You know what would happen?'

'To me? Yes; I should be probably thrown overboard.'

'Head-foremost,' said the lawyer, 'if he knew how.'

They began to retrace their steps. The wild appearance of the night became more evident. A storm was close upon them. The first strong gust of wind struck them in the face as they turned.

'I may count upon you?' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'If that fellow's shadow ever falls within the timber-yard, John, you'll instantly inform me. Don't lose one second. As you value your own happiness, be swift and sure.'

The clouds grew blacker, and the wind swept down upon them with a rush. They quickened their pace, but it was not until they stood within the shelter of the 'Bacchus' archway that the lawyer released John's arm.

When Jarvis stepped into the timber-yard, after taking leave of Mr Burtenshaw, he still thought to find Hettie in the little parlour. He had confessed his love; but before it had been possible for Hettie to answer him—before she had been given time to decide his fate—the lawyer had walked in. Upon what a slight thread hangs the destiny of most men! As Jarvis crossed the yard the lights in the parlour were put out. How complete the darkness at that moment seemed to him! A sense of superstitious dread crept over him as he turned despairingly and groped his way up the warehouse stairs to his old room among the beams and rafters.

Next day the discovery of Ruth's flight created a perceptible change in Hettie's attitude towards John. She appeared to avoid him. He marvelled that he saw nothing of her, except when the vexatious affairs of the house brought them together. Time went by, and John began to wish that Ruth would return, if only in order to restore Hettie to her natural self. One evening, when John walked into the parlour towards the supper hour, he was surprised to see Ruth lying on the sofa, just as though she had never been from home.

'Why, Ruth,' said he, stepping quickly forward and holding out his hand, 'is it indeed you?'

She looked up, blushing and trembling with delight at his kindly greeting. 'Oh John,' she said, making no effort to release her hand, 'I am so glad to see you and—and Hettie again. I—I was afraid I should not reach home in time. I am so very thankful that I have.'

She seemed so agitated, though her eyes expressed intense happiness, that John hastened to ask, 'Is anything the matter?'

'I came expressly to warn you,' replied Ruth. 'I have seen Gabriel.'

Then she related every detail of the scene that had taken place in Mrs Clitherow's drawing-room in Nelson Square. 'You'll do your best to conciliate him, John, won't you?' she concluded. 'He seems so terribly in earnest.'

'So am I,' said John in a firm tone.

Ruth clenched her hands despairingly. 'You won't be warned,' said she. 'I thought it would be so.'

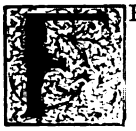
John placed his great hands gently on her shoulders. 'Dear Ruth,' said he, 'don't misunderstand—don't think me ungrateful for this concern you are showing about me. Indeed I am grateful. But don't ask me to conciliate your brother. I can never do that.'

'John! I'——

'No, no! He has opposed me, insulted me at every turn,' John interposed. 'But I've got the upper hand at last, and I mean to keep it, for Hettie's sake and yours, come what may.'

Still John pondered over Ruth's words, and her look and entreating tone were remembered long afterwards. She had come home in haste to warn him of a danger. John had not received so many tokens of kindly thought for his safety, or even for his well-being, that he could easily forget this incident. Besides, her warning had confirmed the admonition which Lawyer Burtenshaw had given him when they took that memorable walk upon the shore; and Jarvis began to look out almost hourly for the return of Gabriel Beek.

TRACES OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN PALESTINE.



EW things strike the traveller more forcibly, on a first visit to the Holy Land, than the evidences which abound on every side that that wonderful little country has had a history of its own since Bible times.

We are very much accustomed to think of Palestine only, or chiefly, in connection with the Bible; perhaps to pore over maps in which the familiar Scripture names appear, marked with tolerable certainty. It is easy and natural that we should lose sight altogether of the eighteen centuries and a half which have rolled over the Holy Land, like every other land, since the latest New Testament times.

When St Paul visited Judæa for the last time, Jerusalem was still standing in all its glory, though the dark clouds of coming doom lowered heavily over it. Of course we do not expect to find it so to-day; but we are apt to forget how many strange vicissitudes it has passed through in the meantime.

When, however, the traveller lands at Jaffa, and begins the journey inland, and still more when he follows the rough tracks that serve for roads among the villages of the 'hill country,' it is brought home to his mind, with an almost disagreeable force of repetition, that the ages which have changed Ancient Britain into Modern England have likewise, as might have been expected, left their mark upon the Holy Land.

It is true that the East is 'unchanging' as compared with the West. In spite of the railway which now connects Jaffa with Jerusalem; in spite of modern hotels at both places, which have sprung up to meet the requirements of modern 'pilgrims' from Europe and America; in spite of tourist agencies and English and German schools and hospitals, and Latin convents and Russian hospices—many things go on in Palestine to-day as they did in the time of the apostles, and for that matter of the prophets, and even the patriarchs. You may still see the peasant following his light Eastern plough in the Plain of Sharon, clad in the striped flowing *abba* of his forefathers; and his team is quite likely to be a camel and an ass, 'unequally yoked together.' The shepherd still *leads* his flock to pasture, and often carries just such a sling as that with which David felled Goliath to the earth. Women still grind the corn for the 'daily bread' of their households, and carry water on their heads from the village well. In fact, countless habits and customs remain to throw light upon the language and narratives of the Bible.

Moreover, a great many places keep their old Bible names, or have returned to them, by preference, for the Roman ones foisted upon them for a time. We have *Beit-lahm* (Bethlehem), *Er-Râm* (Ramah), and so on; to say nothing of those places which recall the names of characters famous in Scripture history, such as *Neby Samwil* (Mizpah, associated with the 'prophet Samuel'), *El-'Azarîyeh* (Bethany, the scene of the raising of Lazarus to life), and *El-Khulîl* (Hebron, the burial-place of Abraham, 'the friend of God').

Then, as regards the inhabitants, there are, perhaps, as many Jews in Jerusalem now as there were in the time of Nehemiah; and there seems to be little room for doubt that the *fellahîn* of the villages (nominally Mohammedans as a rule, but practically heathen) are not 'Arabs,' as they are popularly called, but direct descendants of the ancient Canaanites, who were never thoroughly exterminated or expelled by the Hebrew invaders.

Still, notwithstanding all such links with the remote past—the period which is covered by the Bible history—the traces of the nearer past are, perhaps, even more striking, because less expected. It is natural that the tide-marks of this long intervening period should appear; but the visitor is hardly prepared to meet with them in such profusion.

The old Land of Israel is, as it were, buried beneath layer after layer of mediæval ruins. In Jerusalem it is literally so; and the excavations, by which the Palestine Exploration Fund is seeking to identify many famous sites in and about the city, vividly represent the process of disinterment necessary if the actual Palestine of Bible times is to be recovered from beneath the rubbish-heaps and ruins—material, political and ecclesiastical—of the last eighteen centuries.

'I shall never think of it like this,' was the remark of an American visitor in the modern Garden of Gethsemane; and certain it is that the Palestine of to-day, with all its endless and amazing interest for the Christian student of the Bible, is, after all, in some respects, only the venerable mummy of the sacred Land of Israel, swathed from head to foot, as it were, in the grave-clothes of the bygone ages of the Christian era, though the day of awakening and restoration may be drawing near. On every hand are the traces not only of the more distant but of the nearer past.

Before the traveller is many miles inland from Jaffa, Ramleh makes its appearance. Its name simply means 'sandy' (it is on the Plain of Sharon); but our attention is drawn to its White Tower and its Mosque, which was once a church. Both

belong to the Christian epoch; and the latter is a relic of a Christianity now and for many ages past almost submerged beneath the dominant Mohammedanism. And as the modern pilgrim journeys on, and Jerusalem itself is reached, he is reminded of the fact, at least half-forgotten by many of us, that there have been two distinct periods of Christian ascendency in Palestine: the first that of the Christian emperors; the second that of the Latin kingdom established by the Crusaders, of which Godfrey de Bouillon reverently refused to be crowned king.

Stand in front of the south door of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; at your feet is the last earthly resting-place of an Anglo-Norman knight, D'Aubigni (or Daubeny), a Crusader; but enter the church, and descend the long flight of steps near the north-east corner: here you find yourself in the ancient chapel of St Helena, the British mother of Constantine the Great. Yonder is the niche where, tradition says, she sat and watched, with credulous reverence, the digging (on a lower level still) which was believed to have led to the discovery (the 'invention,' to use the Latin term) of the true cross. This was early in the fourth century, some seven hundred years before the time of the Crusades.

Again, go 'even unto Bethlehem.' The noble Church of the Nativity—which, in all probability, marks the true site of the khan where our Redeemer was born—belongs, like the oldest part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to the fourth century, when the veneration of the 'Holy Places' became a mark of devotion, after the example had been set by the Empress-Mother Helena. But on the ancient pillars may be found the rough autographs of the Crusaders; and when you leave the convent, and walk the streets of 'the city where David dwelt,' the fine-looking Bethlehemites whom you meet—every one of them professing Christians—are a living memorial of the sojourn of these Western knights of old, from whom they claim to be descended.

Now let us return to Jerusalem, and then wend our way along the valley of the Kedron, as it winds south-eastwards from the Holy City. Far down, in a lonely spot about mid-way between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, where the valley has deepened into a gorge, and the heat in summer is so insufferable that it may account for the name it bears (Wâdy-en-Nâr—'the valley of fire') here, among the gray hills of the Desert of Judæa, a strange pile of massive buildings clings to the cliff-side, and climbs hither and thither about the almost perpendicular rocks.

It is the Monastery of Mar Saba, no modern convent, but a venerable Greek Laura, which was already ancient in the days of Saladin and Cœur de Lion. In fact, this is the hermitage alluded to in Sir Walter Scott's *Talisman*. The rocky cliffs around it have been honeycombed for centuries, as they are now, with hermits' caves; and it was here that 'St Stephen the *Sabaite*' wrote ages ago, in the original Greek, the hymn familiar to us—'Art thou weary?' The old Laura looks half a fortress; and, in fact, it has seen terrible deeds of violence in days gone by; as witness that heap of skulls, the relics of hermits martyred by the Persian king Khosru (Chosnoes), in his invasion of Palestine during the later days of the Roman Empire.

We will return once more to Jerusalem, and follow from thence the wild, desolate road which, after passing Bethany, leads, by a succession of long descents, towards Jericho and the Jordan. We are almost exactly in the track of 'a certain man' of old who 'went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers;' it has happened to many since those days. But when we emerge at length into the Plain of Jordan, with its semi-tropical vegetation—the deepest depression, probably, on the surface of the earth—we find no 'city of palm-trees.' Here, indeed, at the entrance to Wâdy Kelt (*possibly* Brook Cherith), is the site of 'Herod's Jericho,' the city of Zacchæus, and of 'blind Bartimæus.' We have seen the remains of a mighty aqueduct which supplied its citizens' thirst in those days. And some distance to the north is a *tel*, or mound, marking the place where 'Joshua's Jericho' once stood. Close beside it is 'Elisha's spring.' But the wretched little village of *Eriha* (Jericho), which lies some way to the east of both the Bible sites, inherits nothing but the name, and seems to date only from the time of the Crusades. The city of Old Testament times has been followed into decay and demolition by the city of New Testament times; and, in the ages since, a new city has sprung up, and all but disappeared like its predecessors, while not a single palm-tree is to be seen.

And so elsewhere; for these are but a few instances. Far and wide among the hills of Palestine, beside or upon the ruins of Hebrew or Roman buildings, you will find crusading castles, now themselves in ruins, and Christian churches, either fallen into decay or utilised as Mohammedan mosques. The Mosque El Aksa, at the south end of the great temple area, was certainly built for Christian worship; while the 'Dome of the Rock,' popularly miscalled the 'Mosque of Omar,' may possibly have been both a heathen temple (when Jerusalem was *Ælia Capitolina*) and a Christian church, before it finally became a Mohammedan shrine.

Truly Palestine has a history in the nearer past which to most of us is all but a blank. As we wander half-bewildered among the relics of Old Testament and New Testament times, mingled with those of the Christian centuries when Mohammed was yet unborn, and relics of the later period, when the long struggle between

the Crescent and the Cross was being waged, now themselves obscured by later changes still, it dawns upon the mind with ever-increasing clearness that the present state of the land and the people of Palestine is the outcome of centuries upon centuries of conflict and desolation, 'change and decay,' which have rolled over it since the days when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judæa.

THE GOLDEN BARS.

CHAPTER III.

IN less than a week it was known pretty well in Shirley that Godfrey Harvey could not possibly hold on after Michaelmas. His mad ride to Wanborough on the morning of the birth of his child was now clearly understood. His lawyer, under stress of liabilities, which in the end had sent him fleeing from the country, had sold the Springfields mortgage deeds to Harvey's neighbour and worst enemy, Squire Stringer of the Grange. Every one knew what that meant. It was known to every one also that several writs and summonses were in the house; for the pock-marked man in brown who had served them had said as much in the kitchen of the 'Blue Boar.' 'Yes, gentlemen,' he had added, 'an' there are more creditors waiting for a spring, you mark my words! Farmer Harvey's a done man—a done man, gentlemen.—Missis! another pint.'

So it was that good folk, as they passed by the old farmstead, gave it a long look as if they had never seen it before; or as if, now that misfortune had fallen upon it, its familiar features had taken a new aspect which wanted gazing at. Harvey would see them sometimes when he looked up from his writing-table—he was often seated there nowadays—and his lips would stiffen and his dark brows draw together at the pull of the moment's pain and bitterness. Then he would look down at his papers and books again to stare afresh at the inexorable figures which spelt ruin for him.

Oh, the curse of it! He had seen it stealthily coming, but, with the tail of his eye, as it were, not daring to boldly look at it. It had heartened him more to look ahead of things; to ride round the farm and note the rich promise of the year; to nurse the hope that, after all his reverses, he might yet be able to parry the impending blow, and in the end win back something of his old financial freedom. But now—it was only too plain—bankruptcy stared him in the face.

He sat in his chair one night and stared back at it. He could do so now with calm eyes and even with a sense of rest. The inevitable, once seen by owners of reason, is both quietening and stimulating. With resignation it will bring to most strong natures a dogged defiance, a do-what-you-will attitude of mind, which will float them over the most turbulent sea of trouble. To-night the low growl of thunder approaching had a sort of menace in it which stirred Harvey strangely. He got up and paced to and fro, and with every fresh growl his jaw hardened the more and his eye took a steelier light. But presently he sank into his chair again with quivering lip. It was at the thought of his wife and child—the thought that the former had still to be told of this disaster; that the latter could never be heir of Springlands.

Harvey's young wife had won a heart to which one passion was the passion of its life. For these many years it had been so, and for four of them she had been the idolised queen of the yeoman's little kingdom. But he, as its ruler, had never intruded his troubles and anxieties upon her. They had been burden enough to him, but he had felt equal himself to the carrying of them, and he had done so, saying nothing. She was as ignorant now of the coming crash as the babe she had borne him. The reflection pierced him through.

He sprang to his feet and resumed his pacing to and fro. The storm-fiends flashed their swords and bellowed at him, while the windows shook under volleys of hail which might have been so much small-shot. Godfrey walked and turned, turned and walked, heeding nothing.

He must have covered a couple of miles when at last he came to a halt, watch in hand. The watch saw a face as hard as brass, a mouth of scorn, eyes which had the devil in them. Harvey, on his side, saw that it was close on midnight. The storm was grumbling its way down the vale, and a faint drip, drip without told him that the rain had gone with it.

'The court opens at ten. At ten thirty the petition will be filed. Good. Now for a turn in the open.'

He left the room, carefully locking the door, as his habit was. Then, reaching for his hat, he moved to the garden exit of the house, but stopped short at seeing a shaft of light across his path. It came from the kitchen. Who could be about at that hour? He pushed open the door and looked in. At the same moment Dame Druce looked up. She was plucking fowls.

'Why so busy, dame?'

He went in and sank down on a chair. A new thought had lamed him. What would become of the dear old servitor who had nursed him as a boy, who had grafted herself by years of devotion on to the life of Springfields till she seemed indissoluble with it?

'They're for Wanborough market to-morrow, Master Godfrey. Sally was tired out with her dairying, an' her head was a-nodding, an' her mouth stretching fit to crick itself; so I sent the wench to bed an' started on them myself. Moreover,' said she, looking across to him with her keen, dark eyes, 'fowl-plucking helps a body to think, just as knitting a stocking does; an' I want to think, Master Godfrey—I want to think.'

He looked at her sharply.

'Yes; I know. You can't hide things from me as you do from the missis. Your face tells most when you fancy it tells nothing at all; an' more than that, there's a public at Shirley with four-ale to loosen tattling tongues. The man in brown likes his four-ale.'

He sat silent with compressed lips.

'But never mind what he may have said, Master Godfrey, or how much may be known in Shirley about your affairs. Have you ever given a thought to the money your great-grandfather drew at the time of the Wanborough Bank scare? Have you ever considered it likely that the thieves who stole in, an' then stole his poor life, as well as the plate an' things, never found the money at all, in spite of their ransacking high and low? Has it ever crossed your mind, knowing as you do of all the queer holes an' corners an' secret places in th' old house, that the money might be lying here now? Or if not here, under the roof, that it might be somewhere near? Think now!'

Harvey did think, and with kindling eyes.

'He drew the money in gold,' continued the dame, 'because he never could abide paper-money of any sort; but, as far as I have heard, not a soul in the place ever saw him handle a guinea of it. How can we be sure, then, whether them thieves did so either?'

'It was a natural inference,' exclaimed Godfrey. 'The safe was found empty, and it was known that he constantly used it for depositing his cash in.'

'Safe! It were little better than a tin box,' cried the dame. 'They make such things different nowadays. He might have turned the lock on ten, or maybe twenty, pounds; but would he put away more than a thousand pounds in such a flimsy thing, with a crowd of dirty pea-pickers within a stone's-throw of his winders? Would he do that and carry his keys to market with an easy mind?'

Godfrey fidgeted in his chair.

'But my grandfather with his own eyes saw him lock up the money!'

'Maybe so. But did he see him unlock it? Did he, now?'

Harvey pushed his hand through his hair, staring at her hard.

'Becky, there's just enough reason in your theory to make it a torture to think of. I would raze Springfields to the ground if I thought its old bowels held in them this treasure. The money, little as it might come to, would tide me over these difficulties, and leave me a bit of margin to forestall others. Is it here, or is it not here?'

'I should say it's not here,' said Dame Druce, making the feathers fly.

'Why?' queried Godfrey, tugging at his hair.

'Because he was so fond of the Priory ruins,' said the dame darkly.

'The Priory ruins! A heap of old stones. The idea is absurd,' cried Godfrey.

'Maybe so; but it's got inside me, an' bothers me like a worm in the head. The Priory, you see, was the trysting-place when he an' Miss Stringer that was were courting. An' it was the post-office, so to speak, where, when they couldn't meet, they planted their notes and things. Many's the time he was seen coming down the hill feasting on a letter he'd found there. He was as blind to watchers as he was to the molehills he'd tumble over. No one could ever find the hiding-place—it was known to them two alone. The poor lady died, as you know, an' the better part of him went to the churchyard with her; but just before his death he took to going again to the Priory—sometimes by the lane, sometimes by the secret passage, which at that time hadn't been walled up. It may have been old feeling as pulled him there; it may have been something else. When a man has money in his pockets or out of them he likes to look at it now and again. Master Godfrey, before you knock down Springfields get your hand in by starting on the Priory ruins.'

'But why, with such a clear head between your shoulders, has all this not occurred to you before?'

'Because I did not know till three hours ago that the passage was not bricked up till your grandfather's discovery of it five years after the murder.'

'And who told you that?'

'Old Jacob Fellowes, who did the work with his own trowel. He came back to Shirley yesterday to stay with his son Saul, Mark Ruthwood's landlord. Mrs Baxter had asked him to bring the barm for to-morrow's baking. I gave him a drop o' perry, an' because he'd had drops before here, in times gone, it took him back to them, an' that's how it came out about the passage.'

Godfrey started up.

'I'll take a walk to the Priory, dame. I should like to study its old features by the light of this theory of yours. It has made

them quite interesting. But I may as well have a light of another sort. Where's the lantern—the dark one?'

'In the usual place, Master Godfrey; just inside the wash'us, on the left-hand shelf. But I doubt whether you'll want a light more than half your time. The sky is ablaze with the sheet-lightning the storm has left.'

INDUSTRIES OF IRELAND.—THE POPLIN MANUFACTURE: A ROYAL FABRIC.

By Mary Gorges.

WE may well name the Irish Poplin 'a royal fabric,' both for its own intrinsic merits and for the favour it has received from our Queen, beginning even before her coronation and steadily continued since. On entering Messrs Atkinson's poplin warehouse, College Green, Dublin, we see enshrined in a glass case against the wall two bits of the poplin ordered by the Duchess of Kent in 1836 for the Princess Victoria. The design is the rose, shamrock, and thistle, wrought in colours and running in bands across a white ground. It has a quaint look now, this remnant of a robe which once adorned the slight figure of the girl to whom the world was opening out its wonder-story, whose heart was beating high with hope and joy and anticipation. How many hopes have been fulfilled, how many joyous anticipations realised, what homage and what triumphs have been hers, of how many pageants has she been the star and centre, since those days of innocent girlhood! And oh! what nights of weeping, what anguish of bereavement, what cares and troubles and perplexities, have embittered that cup of earthly splendour! These little bits of poplin bring it all back; and linking their memories with that of the great Jubilee, not long past, we pause a moment with softened thoughts to 'look upon this picture and on that!'

The young Queen was not long in showing her appreciation of Irish poplin. In August 1837 she appointed Mr Richard Atkinson 'Irish Tabinet Manufacturer to Her Majesty;' and there has never been any great wedding or public occasion since without an order from the Queen for this beautiful fabric, an example followed by the royalties and aristocracy of all lands.

The poplin manufacture in Ireland owes its origin to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when thousands of silk-weavers from Lyons sought refuge in England, and settled at Spitalfields, London, a portion of these subsequently setting up their looms in Dublin in 1693. In the hands of their descendants the trade remains; no one, even now, when all customs and traditions are being ruthlessly trampled down, ever dreaming of infringing the unwritten law which forbids apprenticeship to the silk-weaving outside of the community.

Why this manufacture should take root and prosper in Dublin as it has done I know not; but it is a fact that nothing really excellent in poplins can be had elsewhere, so that Ireland may fairly claim it as a speciality of her capital. In the old streets of Dublin are splendid houses, now given up to dust and decay, down whose noble staircases once fluttered the beautiful women who adorned the Irish Court of the day; and it requires little imagination to picture them arrayed in the lovely brocades of their native land.

But the manufacture had not attained its present perfection and variety till after the Jacquard loom was invented in 1800, when a simple pedal put in motion by the weaver's feet superseded a complicated and difficult plan, by which, when the design was richly figured, the threads were grouped into a system, and raised simultaneously by a child, or 'drawboy,' in the order and at the time required by the weaver.

Poplin is the successful combination of silk and wool, the dyeing of which requires the greatest skill and care, the most delicate shades having to be produced to order. Considering its beauty and great durability, it is relatively an inexpensive material, ranging from three shillings and ninepence to eleven shillings and sixpence per yard, and in brocades from six shillings and sixpence to seventeen shillings and sixpence per yard. The tissue used in the gold and silver brocades is of the pure metal. I was informed by the courteous manager of Messrs Atkinson's firm that they are at present manufacturing a superb white poplin with rich design in gold for a great wedding soon to take place in London. Three pounds five shillings per yard seemed by no means an extravagant price for so beautiful and costly a fabric. These brocades are greatly patronised by the Queen and the Princess of Wales, and notably by our American visitors.

The proverbial reproach of Irish apathy certainly does not apply here, for the poplin manufacture has not been allowed to fall behind in the keen competition of the day. It owes much to the late senior partner, Mr R. Atkinson, who brought to bear on it talent, taste, and a judgment of colours 'seldom equalled, never surpassed.' There is a new light texture, gossamer poplin, in the softest shades, and in tartans and checks, which forms a lovely material for children and young

ladies' dresses, as well as blouses, ties, &c. I find that a dress length of any special colour can be made to order in fourteen days, and any original design carried out. A charming design (of wild flowers, I think) was recently forwarded by a young lady, which, worked out on the ground chosen, produced a most lovely effect.

Little of the old Huguenot blood is left, yet the weavers retain some French characteristics. Thrift is one (though my informant, an employer himself, adds 'not strikingly so'), and they are 'a *very cheerful, contented* body, labour disputes being unknown, employers and employed working harmoniously together.'

Weavers are paid by the yard, and the earning-power varies greatly. Sometimes a man earns a higher weekly wage on a work at ninepence or tenpence per yard than a more clever and experienced workman on a finer at one shilling and fourpence per yard, needing great care. Some of the work runs to four shillings a yard (to the weaver), and in heavy gold brocades to eight shillings—this latter being so severe a test of the man's skill and care that it may not mean more than three pounds a week. Some men have made fourteen yards per day of tartan, requiring six shuttles, at elevenpence per yard (three pounds seventeen shillings per week), and could keep this up for weeks, no machine probably being able to do as much of such fancy work. Still, the average wage hardly exceeds one pound five shillings per week, including elderly men and apprentices, some seeming to find it all they can do to earn fifteen shillings per week.

Several women are among the weavers, and 'they make careful workers, clean and reliable.' I may add that all the warping and winding is done by women.

When Princess Alexandra of Denmark arrived in England for her marriage, she wore, on her entry into London, a poplin gown in a soft shade of lilac, which she had ordered to be manufactured by a Dublin firm for the occasion. On the state entry of Her Royal Highness into Dublin a few years ago, she appeared in poplin of a beautiful olive-green shade, and of a make of poplin then introduced for the first time, and ever since called 'Princess Poplin.' At Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Teck's exhibition of silk textiles at Stafford House, of more recent date, the Princess of Wales testified her appreciation of poplin in the genial way which endears her to every one. Messrs Atkinson's exhibit of poplins there was greatly admired and surrounded by an aristocratic crowd, among whom a way was cleared when Her Royal Highness appeared. The Princess went round the exhibit, looking at piece after piece with keen interest; finally, taking up one and passing it lightly through her hands, she exclaimed with emphasis, 'I *love* poplin!'

AN INCIDENT OF 1870.

AT seven o'clock on the morning of the 2d December 1870, before it was fully light, the Würtembergers surprised us by a sudden, rapid attack on Champigny, which we had only wrested from them two days before after severe fighting and heavy losses. Our troops, who had spent the previous day, after the engagement of the 30th November, in burying the dead and fortifying the houses in the village, believed themselves secure from any offensive return of the Prussians, and were, in consequence, taken at a great disadvantage by this unexpected sally. The Mobiles, numbed and stupefied by their night in the open air, were utterly unprepared for action, and, falling into disorder, retreated towards the plain; but several companies of the 35th proved themselves equal to the emergency, and stubbornly maintained their ground until the arrival of reinforcements. In spite, however, of the heroic behaviour of our troops, the Prussians once more gained possession of a considerable portion of the village, and it was not until the arrival of Trochu's formidable artillery that we succeeded in retaking one-half only of what we had lost, and, even then, merely by disputing it barricade by barricade, and inch by inch, under a raking fire from the enemy's guns. Darkness at last put an end to hostilities and silenced the deafening roar of the *mitrailleuses* which had rattled incessantly throughout the day. Towards five o'clock I found myself, along with a small remnant of the 35th, in possession of a little wayside inn at the entrance to Champigny. It was a wretched place at best, riddled by shot and shell, and offered but scanty protection against the cold; and as I looked at the many poor fellows lying dead within and without its walls, and listened to the groans of the wounded, I thought that it had been dearly purchased. Our first consideration was for the survivors, especially those injured, whose terrible sufferings were cruelly aggravated by the fearful cold; so, after despatching the most urgent cases to the nearest ambulance, we prepared to mitigate, as far as lay in our power, the condition of those who remained. Owing to the amount of débris which the bursting of shells had dislodged from shutters and ceiling earlier in the day, there was no lack of tinder, and in a very short time I had the satisfaction of seeing my sadly-diminished company thawing their stiffened limbs around a blazing fire. With the help of a young lieutenant, named Lacaille, who had some slight knowledge of surgery, I then proceeded to give aid to the wounded, by the

application of rough bandages, torn from whatever came handiest, and hastily improvised tourniquets. The poor fellows accepted our clumsy ministrations with touching gratitude, and bore the rude and awkward handling without a murmur. When we had arranged things as comfortably as we knew how, and divided the scanty rations that remained equally among them, we turned our attention to stopping up as many of the breaches in the walls as possible ; for even under shelter and beside a fire the cold seemed to penetrate to one's very marrow. From some prisoners who had been brought in that afternoon we had received the depressing intelligence that 150,000 Prussians were at that moment massed in the woods of Cœuilly ; and through the gaps in the walls I could see the fires of our outposts, lighted by order of the general in the vain hope of deluding the enemy into believing our forces equally formidable. That night, while the thermometer registered ten degrees of frost, hundreds of our men were camped in the open plain around wretched smoky fires, built of freshly-cut logs, or packed closely together, the better to preserve vitality, crouched shivering beneath the walls of the houses in the village. The trenches, too, where the fight had been thickest, were piled high with our dead ; and, under the cold light of the moon, the frost completed for the dying what the bullets had left undone. In spite of the number of wounded that had been sent off to Paris in the boats flying the white flag with the scarlet cross, the field ambulances were full to overflowing, and presented more the appearance of butchers' shambles than of hospitals.

By the time Lacaille and I had completed our self-imposed duties, and excluded as much of the biting cold as possible, night had fairly set in, and we began to think we had earned a brief respite from our labours. The apartment where we had taken up our quarters was large and spacious, with three good windows, and had evidently been the common dining-saloon of the hostelry, for it was situated on the ground floor, and bore traces of the Prussians' devastating occupation in the mutilated remains of a long table and a considerable number of bottomless chairs which were strewn around. A few of the latter had been cushioned, so we utilised the seats as pillows for the wounded, while the arms and legs furnished capital firewood. As the night wore on, the rough chatter of the men grouped around the fire became more and more desultory, until it finally ceased altogether ; and, utterly exhausted, even the wounded at last found temporary relief in an uneasy slumber. Outside, nothing broke the stillness but the monotonous tramp of the sentries, as, fearful of pausing even an instant in the benumbing frost, they marched continuously backwards and forwards. After the din and roar of the battle, the silence of the night seemed almost abnormal, and I could not help envying Lacaille, who had fallen asleep where he sat, with his back against the wall, and a half-smoked pipe still between his lips.

Although dead tired, I could not even rest quietly in one place, but moved constantly to and fro on one pretext or another, picking my way carefully over the recumbent figures on the floor. This acute restlessness, the result doubtless of over-fatigue, lasted for some hours, and it must have been getting on to three o'clock in the morning when, having thrown fresh logs on the fire and filled my pipe for the third time, I finally settled down by Lacaille's side, and, gradually succumbing to the drowsiness which was slowly stealing over me, fell into a sort of intermittent doze. How long this state of semi-consciousness lasted I do not exactly know, but all at once I was completely roused from it by a heavy fall, succeeded by a low reverberating rumble like the distant dropping of musketry. It seemed to come from the street, and in an instant I was on my feet and had seized a *chassepot*, convinced that the enemy was once more upon us. Rousing Lacaille, who had evidently heard nothing and was still sleeping profoundly, I told him my suspicions, and asked him to follow me as quietly as possible and without disturbing the men, as I did not wish to alarm them needlessly. The icy blast that greeted us as I unfastened the door sent the blood tingling to our very finger-tips, and made us appreciate more thoroughly the comparative comfort of the room we had just left. Not a soul was visible the whole length of the deserted street but one unfortunate sentry, whose shadow cast by the moonlight made him appear gigantically tall, as he shouldered his musket and came towards us with the usual challenge. He saluted respectfully as he recognised us, and in answer to our inquiries assured us he had heard nothing although he had been on duty for an hour, and had passed the hostelry just five minutes before. I was much puzzled by this assertion, but in spite of it insisted on searching the outside of the premises on my own account, and left no corner unexplored, but without discovering the slightest elucidation of the mystery. Lacaille, who assisted me, though in a somewhat half-hearted fashion, was evidently becoming rather sceptical about the matter, and suggested that the fall of some loosened plaster or rafter might explain it. Seeing, therefore, that I had no better explanation to offer, and was likely to meet with little sympathy from either him or the sentry, whose teeth were chattering with cold, I contented myself with a parting injunction to the latter to keep a sharp lookout for anything of a suspicious nature, and led the way back to the house.

Some of the men whom our movements had disturbed looked up anxiously as we re-entered, but, apparently satisfied from our faces that nothing important was amiss, soon settled down

again, and resumed their interrupted slumbers. After warming himself at the fire Lacaille followed their example, and I was once more left to my own meditations. Although baffled I was not convinced, and as sleep was effectually banished as far as I was concerned, I relit my pipe, and began a minute and careful investigation of the room. I don't exactly know what I expected to find; but as I was poking about aimlessly in a heap of rubbish in a corner near the door my foot suddenly caught on something hard, and I narrowly escaped coming heavily to the ground. Stooping down to examine the cause, I saw, to my surprise, that it was an iron ring, apparently firmly attached to the floor, over which I had stumbled, and in an instant a new and brilliant idea flashed into my mind. Noiselessly and with the greatest care, I hastily cleared a space round it, and found, as I anticipated, that it was fastened, not to the floor, but to a trap-door let into it. Of course the natural inference which followed was that there must be cellars underneath of which we had been totally ignorant, and I now felt perfectly convinced that the unaccountable rumbling sound had issued from their depths. What ought I to do? Waken Lacaille and again ask his assistance in what might once more prove a wild-goose chase? No. I felt that it would be *infra dig.* to risk a second failure of the kind, and at once resolved to act on my own responsibility.

Quietly raising the lid, which moved easily on its hinges as if recently oiled, I peered curiously into the murky darkness beneath; but all that I could distinguish was the three top rungs of a ladder, which presumably connected the room where I stood with the premises underground. All was still as the grave, but nevertheless the impression that it was there I must seek the solution of the inexplicable noise grew stronger and stronger within me. Most probably, as Lacaille had suggested, it might be simply enough explained by the fall of some rubbish or plaster; but whatever the reason might be, I felt it incumbent on me as chief officer present to investigate the affair more thoroughly. Having arrived at this determination, I stuck a brace of pistols in my belt, lit a lantern with a brand from the fire, and, drawing the shade across it, returned to the trap-door.

I have heard it stated by people of experience that on the eve of a great danger one sometimes receives a warning; but for my part I can only affirm that as I sat on the edge of the trap, with my legs dangling over the unexplored abyss, I had no intuition whatever of the fate which awaited me below. There was a considerable drop from the floor to the first step of the ladder, and I endured a moment or two of very unpleasant suspense as I hung by my hands from the sides of the hatchway and groped wildly for a footing. I found it at last, however, and planted myself firmly on it; but even then I had to proceed with the utmost caution, as several of the rungs were either broken or missing altogether. The air as I descended smelt as damp and mouldy as a mortuary, and as the icy cold gripped me like a vice I repeatedly cursed myself for an officious fool as I groped my way to the bottom; and had it not been for a certain dogged pertinacity which has always been one of my strongest characteristics, I think I should then and there have gladly abandoned the adventure. As it was, having begun, I resolved to see it through, so continued to descend as noiselessly as possible.

It was no easy task I had undertaken, for, the cellar being deep, the ladder was proportionately long; and, in addition to being hampered by the lantern, my extremities were so benumbed with cold that they had little or no feeling left in them. At last I seemed to be nearing the end of my journey, as I could not feel any other rung beneath where I stood, and was groping helplessly for the ground with one foot, when I was suddenly startled by a sharp rustling immediately behind me. I swung round instantly, and my disengaged hand instinctively closed on one of the pistols at my side; but, to my infinite surprise, the rustling also ceased, and was succeeded by the same impenetrable silence. 'Rats, no doubt,' I said to myself, and was just on the point of uncovering my lantern with the intention of scaring them, when a new and unexpected noise made me again pause abruptly. This time I entertained no doubt as to its origin, for I had unmistakably heard a suppressed sneeze. At this certainty a cold perspiration broke over me as I stood precariously balancing on the ladder, while the danger of my position grew momentarily more imminent. That I had in my recklessness run my neck straight into the enemy's noose I did not for an instant doubt, especially when I remembered that only the previous forenoon the premises had been occupied by the Prussians. I have been through a number of adventures in my day, and run many hair-breadth escapes, but I don't think I ever felt such really abject fear take possession of me as at that moment. I think the darkness had something to do with it; for it is one thing to fight an enemy face to face in the open, and another to find yourself suddenly ambushed by an invisible, and consequently formidable, antagonist. At the thought of being outnumbered and probably butchered alone in that gloomy hole, within hail of my comrades, my manhood revolted; and as my courage reasserted itself I resolved to at least make a bid for liberty.

Glancing apprehensively upwards, I was intensely relieved to find that there was no betraying light visible through the door, which I had left open, as it was situated far from the fire, under a sloping part of the roof, in a remote corner of the room. This fortunate circum-

stance inspired me with the faint hope that my proximity might be still undiscovered; so, under shelter of the friendly darkness, I cautiously began to retrace my steps. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte;* but that seemed likely to cost more than enough, for before I had attained the second, the wood creaked ominously beneath my weight. Discovery seemed imminent, and as if to increase the horror of the situation, I heard the men beginning to move about overhead. The cold, too, had begun to affect me seriously, and my hands, which were stiff as boards, had difficulty in retaining their grasp of the ladder.

I don't know how long I stood dumbly waiting there in an agony of suspense, with my heart thumping fiercely against my ribs—but it seemed to me like hours—before I plucked up sufficient courage to proceed. I had unfortunately begun to ascend with my back to the ladder, as that was the position into which I had fallen when first scared, so my upward progress was beset with even greater difficulties than my downward. I dared not attempt to turn, for I was now so powerless and unwieldy with cold that an uncertain or clumsy movement would probably cost me my life. With infinite care, however, I managed, by placing my hands on the rung above my head, to raise myself one degree higher, and had again paused to recruit before attempting another, when suddenly there was a loud exclamation overhead. In the excited state of my nerves this proved the proverbial last straw. With the unexpected shock I started and fell forward, almost losing my balance, and in a frantic effort to retain it the lantern slipped from my hold and fell crashing to the ground.

An ominous pause succeeded this catastrophe, in which I automatically counted the laboured beating of my heart, and then, as the oil ignited and flared blindingly up in my face, I heard a brief ejaculation of surprise, followed by a guttural German oath. The next instant I was dragged roughly to the ground; my arms were rudely pinioned to my sides; while at the same time I heard the unmistakable click of a pistol, and felt its cold muzzle pressed hard against my chin.

When Lacaille awoke and discovered my absence he was not at first surprised, as he supposed I had—as he termed it—got another attack of the fidgets; but as time went on and I failed to return, he became uneasy, and, on finding the open trap-door, seriously alarmed. His first idea was that I had fallen down and was probably lying unconscious at the bottom of the ladder, and in this belief he hastily roused some of the men, to whom he imparted his suspicions. It was they whom I heard moving about in quest of a rope with which to lower one of their number to my assistance, and it was Lacaille's exclamation on finding what he sought that unfortunately precipitated my fate.

As they were preparing to put their plan into speedy execution, they were suddenly arrested by a loud crash, followed by the muffled report of a pistol. For an instant they stood spell-bound, mutely staring into each other's frightened faces; but the next they were at the trap-door, and, looking down, beheld, brightly illumined by the still blazing oil, the uniform of the hated Prussians. They were a small band of four officers who had secreted themselves there early in the day during the retaking of the hostelry, probably with the view to surprising us later on; and it was an unfortunate stumble over a wine-cask that had roused me from my sleep and attracted my attention to their hiding-place. Taken in a snare from which there was no possible escape, their fate was swift and inevitable. With a howl of execration as they caught sight of my prostrate body, the Mobiles seized their *chassepots*, and eagerly thrusting them down the aperture, shot them like rats in a hole. Then swarming down the ladder, they carefully raised what they fully believed to be my corpse, and with great difficulty bore me to the room above.

I must certainly have presented a ghastly spectacle, with my livid face smeared with blood which flowed copiously from my shattered jaw; but although the men dolefully shook their heads, Lacaille insisted on carrying me to the nearest field-ambulance. Arrived there, the doctor, who was evidently of the men's persuasion, could with difficulty be prevailed upon to make any further examination, and very reluctantly, protesting that it was useless, set about attempts at resuscitation. However, to his great amazement and the intense relief of my lieutenant, his efforts were successful, and before Lacaille left he had received the comforting assurance that, although extremely grave, the case was not altogether hopeless. So there I lay throughout the completion of the campaigning disaster, until, at the urgent request of my friend—to whom I undoubtedly owe my life—I was, as soon as practicable, but with great difficulty, removed to Paris, where I received comfort and attention impossible to be obtained in the rough shelter of a field-ambulance.

Thus it happened that when I regained the possession of my faculties once more I found myself lying in the ward of a Paris hospital with my head swathed in bandages.

The interval which elapsed between the firing of the pistol and my return to consciousness had been passed in a kind of feverish nightmare, in which I was continually making frenzied but ineffectual attempts to scale the ladder, which were as invariably frustrated by my mother, who, in the uniform of a Prussian officer, brutally thrust me down again to the bottom. What grieved and puzzled me most in my delirious imaginings was the unaccountable behaviour of the person who should naturally have befriended me; and when I awoke that morning to life and

reason, and found her bending solicitously over me, I thought, in my relief, that I was in heaven. The burning pain in my mouth, however, soon dispelled that illusion, although the doctor has since assured me that it was within an ace of being fulfilled. My life was saved, but it was many days ere I was pronounced fairly out of danger; and the capitulation of Paris was a *fait accompli* before I was strong enough to learn the details of my wonderful escape. That it was indeed a marvellous one I have no hesitation in saying, for if the pistol, instead of being pressed closely against my chin, had been held even two inches away, my head would have been blown to atoms. Placed as it was, however, it missed its purchase, and the bullet, passing clean through the chin and roof of the mouth behind the nose, embedded itself firmly in the forehead beneath the frontal bone, and immediately between the eyes; and there it remained in spite of repeated attempts to dislodge it. No amount of probing availed to move it; and at last, after defying the efforts of the most renowned surgeons in Paris, it was abandoned as hopeless, and I was told I must resign myself to bearing this memento of the Prussians in my forehead to the end of my days.

It was too much. The discomfort I suffered was a mere bagatelle compared with the indignity of the thing; and as soon as I could travel and had obtained a permit I crossed the Channel, and, as a forlorn hope, placed myself in the hands of a celebrated English surgeon. Animated, doubtless, by a desire to outshine our French doctors, as well as by a laudable wish to succeed in the interests of science, he held several consultations with his learned compeers before proceeding to operate. The result of their united deliberations was that he finally drilled a hole or species of tunnel right through the upper part of my nose, and inserting his instrument beneath the bone, probed vigorously for the bullet, but without success. That bullet had evidently found its billet, and at last, after various ineffectual essays to move it, he too, like the Frenchmen, gave it up in despair; and, sick at heart, I quitted the hospital and took rooms at a neighbouring hotel.

I had no intention of returning immediately to Paris, for although my chief object in coming to England had been defeated, I still determined to do some sight-seeing before leaving London.

A few days later a singular thing occurred. As I sat reading the newspapers after breakfast, my nose, without any apparent reason, suddenly began to bleed violently. At the same time I felt the pressure in the region of the forehead released; something dropped into the upper part of my nose; and, putting up my hand, I found the bullet lying in the hole prepared for its reception by the surgeon. As the bleeding still continued in rather an alarming fashion, I hailed a cab and drove straight to the house of the great doctor. He was at home, fortunately, and having speedily stopped the hæmorrhage and extracted the bullet, insisted on bearing me off in triumph to the hospital, where I was exhibited to an admiring circle of students as a proof of his surgical skill. Some days later the aperture was permanently filled up with a sort of composition; and all that now remains of my night's adventure in Champigny is the two small gray patches which somewhat disfigure each side of my formerly handsome nose.

LIFE AND TIME.

Time sits in silence, patient, at his loom
And throws untired his shuttles of moon and sun,
And weaves with flying strands of dark and light,
And weaves again for ever, as it wanes,
His pageant of the living hours that die—
Night treading lonely through a land of sleep;
Dawn that has dreams of Night within her eyes;
Day with the bloom of Morning on her cheeks;
Day flushed from labours in the stress of Noon;
And Eve whose eyes are sad with dreams of Day.

And circling in the dazzle and the dark,
In all the ever-fading, growing gloom
And glory, swings the clamorous world of men:
Clamour of Peace, who sows her happy fields
Or feasts with all her sons at harvest-home;
Of War, that wields his lightnings like a god
And thunders god-like from his clouds, and swirls
His red rain on the fields that Peace has sown;
Of Joy, who brims his cup and shouts his songs
Exultant in a bubble-heaven that bursts;
Of Death, who snows his winter where he will,
And walks amid a wailing as of winds;
Of Hope, who, blinded by his first sunrise,
Waits for the slow to-morrow and dies to-day;
Of Love, whose earth and hell and heaven are one;
Of Loss, that whimpers at the heels of Love;
Of Pity and Hate, of Anguish and Despair—

Clamour of all the voices of the world
Moan to him like a murmur of his loom:
But heedless whether men may laugh or weep,
And careless ever though they live or die,
Time sits in silence at his spanless web
And throws untired his shuttles of moon and sun,
And weaves anew his pageant as it wanes—
Dawn that has dreams of Night within her eyes;
Day with the bloom of Morning on her cheeks;
Day flushed from labours in the stress of Noon;
And Eve whose eyes are dim with dreams of Day;
And Night who loiters saddening still for Dawn.

A. St John Adcock.

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A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

WILD creatures are every whit as liable as human beings to make mistakes and meet with fatal accidents, but naturally only a very small proportion of such 'deaths by misadventure' in the animal world are observed, and only a few of the observed cases are recorded. During the last few years I have noted any accidents which have been reported from trustworthy sources, and very singular some of the entries on this obituary list are. We might roughly divide these fatalities into two classes: (1) Those for which man and his works are indirectly responsible; and (2) Those incidental to purely natural conditions of life, man not intervening. No particular purpose would be served by attempting any classification, however; and, by the reader's leave, I will strain off the contents of my note-book as they come.

We need not glance at the long tale of casualties caused nightly by lighthouse lanterns and daily by telegraph-lines and wire-fences; only light-keepers and gamekeepers know how great is the loss of bird-life through these means. The light, of course, is a well-recognised source of disaster; but a new telegraph-line or new wire-fence stretched across a grouse moor is also a fruitful source of death amongst game.

Birds occasionally come to grief through over-estimating the capacity of the gullet. One such case was that of a heron which was found dead on the bank of the mill-stream at Swinton, in Berwickshire; the abnormally swelled neck invited examination, and the knife revealed a large water-vole firmly wedged half-way down to the crop. Water-voles form a standing dish in the dietary of the heron, and this bird must have gulped down its prey without that preliminary eye-measurement any ordinarily judicious bird would give a doubtful morsel; possibly the approach of a friend may have suggested the advisability of hasty disposal.

More curious are the cases of pheasants swallowing or trying to swallow mice—a feat the pheasant has no business to attempt in the first place. One such fatality was reported from a farm in Surrey a couple of years ago. The bird, a fine cock, was picked up dead, and from the corner of its beak protruded an inch of tail. A mouse had stuck in the pheasant's throat and choked it. Whether the bird would have survived the meal had the mouse reached its crop is another matter; it seems unlikely that it could eat the dinner of hawk or owl with impunity.

Youthful inexperience may perhaps explain the very curious mishap which cost a young merganser its life. This bird, one day in July 1895, was found floating on Lough Currane, county Kerry. It was plump and in healthy condition, but the left nostril was firmly plugged by a young eel, part of which hung outside, while the remainder, the head portion, was in the bird's throat. The only way of accounting for the elver's presence in a situation equally embarrassing to both parties is to assume that the fish was seized by the tail, and that, before it could be gulped down, it stuck its head into the orifice, which to its uninstructed intelligence promised safety, and 'got home.'

Mention of the eel recalls an odd fatality to a snake which I found very awkwardly situated. He was only a little snake, and had fallen into the mistake of supposing that he could swallow a frog at least six times his own girth; he had drawn himself over one hind-leg like a stocking up to the frog's thigh, and couldn't get any farther. The state of the encased leg showed that the two had been in this position for some days, and neither party had kick or wriggle left in him when I picked them up.

A sad warning to young gallinaceous birds to look where they are going is furnished by an incident which occurred on Dalnaspidal Moor, in Perthshire, three years ago. The keeper, going over the ground to see how the young birds were progressing, put up a hen grouse which was sheltering her brood from the rain; five chicks, after the manner of their kind when alarmed, scattered in all directions when their mother rose, and one

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in its blind haste impaled itself on a sharp spike of burnt heather. The thorn-like point passed between the branches of the lower mandible right through the head, killing the chick on the spot.

Parent birds sometimes display grave lack of discretion in their choice of nesting materials. I have note of two instances in which fledglings have been found hanged by a loop of thread or worsted which formed part of the nest lining; and it is common to find young birds (sparrows, starlings, swallows, and blackbirds occur to mind) detained in the nest long after their wings are fully furnished by threads entangling their feet. I once caught a sparrow in a curious way. In taking flight from a field of vetches, its leg was seized and firmly held by one of the corkscrew-like tendrils. The occurrence was impressed upon my memory because the owner of the field called me names (I was a small boy) for letting the bird go.

Birds of the wader kind not infrequently get into serious trouble with the bivalves they encounter on their walks abroad. These creatures feed with the tongue protruded from between the parted shells, and the slightest touch on this organ is accepted as signal of danger, when a rapid movement draws in the tongue and closes the shell. I have record of two cases of the common sandpiper being trapped by mussels on which they had lightly thought to dine: each was caught by the beak and held fast, to starve or drown. Mr Armitstead, in his work on fish-hatcheries, mentions a case in which a water-hen was thus made prisoner by a swan mussel; the bird was found dead, its beak firmly held in the vice-like grip of the shells. It is not, of course, to be supposed that the bivalve acts with retributive intent; the tongue's swift withdrawal sucks the foreign body with it, and the shells with their powerful closing muscle form a natural 'gin.' It is a mere chance which side comes off best. If the shell-fish traps the toe of, say, a large gull, so much the worse for the shell-fish, for the gull will have the shell open with his powerful beak, or know the reason why; if, on the other hand, some tiny fish is the intruder, so much the worse for him. Very young crabs are frequently the victims of shell-fish of various kinds. Not long ago I saw an oyster containing an infant crab which it had captured. The crab was alive when the oyster was opened; it must have been an exceedingly troublesome guest to a host of such restful habit!

Fishes make very odd mistakes sometimes; at least piscine folly seems the only explanation of an incident which was observed at Waterville, county Kerry, a couple of years since. Some gulls, frightened from the beach where they were feeding, flew seawards and settled on the water a hundred yards out. A minute or two later attention was attracted by vigorous screeching, and one of the flock was seen making desperate efforts to rise; it was obviously struggling against some foe which was trying to drag it down, and presently it did disappear. In a few seconds, however, it came up again, and, after resting, flew away, seeming none the worse. The observers came to the conclusion that the gull's foot had been taken in mistake for an edible of some sort by a fish, probably a pollack (or lythe), which species abounds on that coast. The fish only discovered its error when it tried to swallow the foot, and found a leg and protesting bird attached thereto. When we remember how easily many sea fish are imposed upon in the matter of bait, there is nothing improbable in the theory that the gently moving red foot was taken in good faith by a fish as something to eat. It may be added that similar encounters have been observed.

Under a different category comes the accident which befell a cormorant at Cumledge near Duns one day in January 1895. That month, it will be remembered, was the coldest of a very severe winter; and warmth may have influenced the cormorant in his choice of a chimney-stalk as a temporary perch. Whether or not he settled there with the idea of getting warm we need not inquire: he did so, and in a weak moment peered down the chimney shaft. All birds are extremely susceptible to the stupefying influence of smoke, and the cormorant fell down headlong. He reached the bottom in a very ruinous condition indeed.

The following story, dating from Waverley, Mississippi, has interest apart from the curiosity of misadventure with which it terminates. One evening an owl was seen hunting what the narrator describes as a 'rabbit,' but was doubtless one of the half-dozen species of hare found in the States, across an open field. The owl was gaining upon its quarry, when a barbed wire-fence stood in the path; the rabbit instantly turned and continued his flight beside it, the owl following. The bird now swooped upon the rabbit, which dodged under the fence, whose lowest strand was just high enough to let him pass. The balked owl rose and struck again, to be beaten by the same tactics; and this occurred half-a-dozen times. At length the owl made what appeared to be a feint; the rabbit bolted through the fence as usual—to meet the owl and discover his mistake too late. He darted back just as the bird struck its talons into his back and dragged his enemy against the barbed wire. The owl either would not or could not let go, and held fast until the rabbit's struggles fairly impaled him on the barbs. From this situation the pair were taken by the men who had been watching the chase.

In the *Field* of 19th September 1896 a very singular accident was recorded. A land-rail, in bolting across a meadow path, was run over by a

retriever which was racing with another dog. The bird was stunned by the retriever's paw, and was picked up by the dog's owner, who was following.

Golf has been responsible for several fatalities, the ball playing only too efficaciously the part of a bullet. On the North Berwick links, not long ago, a swallow was dropped dead in mid-air by a flying ball. On the Nairn links a player once brought down a gull in the same way; the bird came in collision with the ball about sixty yards from the tee, and was so badly injured that it had to be destroyed.

Cyclists have accounted for a few accidental deaths. The wheelman himself can hardly be held answerable for the death of a rabbit which bolted into his machine as it stood by the roadside, and broke its neck; and there was contributory negligence, as the lawyers say, on the part of the cat which tried to go through the wheel of a passing bicycle, and gave the rider a bad fall at the cost of its own life. Much more noteworthy than either of these was the achievement of a cyclist who, while scorching along the road (he must have been scorching), ran into a covey of partridges and killed one, his wheel passing over its neck. The only way in which this curious accident can be explained is to suppose that the birds were 'dusting' at a bend in the road, and that the cyclist's approach, concealed by the hedges, remained undetected till the enemy was literally among them.

Birds, when alarmed and travelling at a high rate of speed, appear to lose their heads sometimes. How otherwise can we account for apparently deliberate flight through the window of a dwelling, which has occurred more than once, and under circumstances that render it very unlikely that the bird was deceived by the reflection from the panes? At a big shoot in Hampshire, in the winter of 1895, one of the party saw a pheasant (which he had missed) flash over a stream, through a low covert, and straight through the glass of a cottage window. Thanks to the inferiority of the glass, the bird was uninjured, and was found playing havoc with the cottager's crockery.

There is a classic case of a wild duck which, travelling as a duck can when he chooses, came in collision with a galvanised iron pail which a girl was carrying, full of water. Such was the force of the impact that the bucket was deeply indented, and the duck crushed almost out of shape.

Predatory animals occasionally overreach themselves by following their quarry too far. Foxhounds sometimes fall into this mistake when the fox goes to ground in a drain; but hounds, being valuable, and under human control, may depend upon rescue by the spade. When an animal hunting on his own account allows zeal or appetite to outrun discretion, there is no hope for him. Witness the case of an otter which, no doubt in pursuit of frogs or eels, explored a drain of six-inch piping for a distance of one hundred and fifty yards under a meadow; he arrived at a point where the six-inch piping was replaced by tubes only four inches in diameter, and, unable to advance, found too late that he could not retreat. A flooded field obliged investigation, and the carcass of this too enterprising otter was discovered in a length of pipe which it plugged like a cork in a bottle.

A truly terrible fate was that which was seen to overtake a water-vole in a southern Scottish county in the winter of 1895. One bitterly cold day in February he was observed trying painfully to climb up the sluice-gate of a mill-pond. The boards were sheeted with ice, and the vole fell back again and again; but eventually he managed to gain foothold and began to scramble up, slipping back two inches for every three. He was wet, and the water on his coat and paws froze faster than he could climb. He stopped for a moment to rest, and his fate overtook him, his feet and the hair on his under parts freezing fast to the boards. He was out of reach from the bank, and had to be left to await the death which, let us hope, came quickly.

A simple and very deadly mouse-trap was discovered to a groom, some little time ago, by the short-sighted greed of mice themselves. The man happened to leave on the window-sill of the stable a bottle partly filled with oil, which he placed on its side with the mouth slightly raised. In the morning the bottle contained several mice drowned in the oil. *Facilis erat descensus;* but they could not climb the slippery slope of the bottle-neck with oily paws. This trap may be recommended for use in places overrun with mice.

A very strange capture was made in 1895 on the estate of Mr Savile Foljambe at Osberton. A rabbit-trap set in the mouth of a burrow, about three feet from the edge of a stream, was found one morning gripping in its jaws a two-pound pike. Two theories were advanced to account for the presence of the fish in the trap. One suggests that the voracious creature had struck at a young rabbit on the brink, and his impetus carried him on into the jaws of the trap. It is believed in some parts of the country that pike, like eels, can and do make journeys overland, and acceptance of a measure of this belief seems essential to acceptance of the theory stated, for a two-pound pike could hardly get up enough 'steam' to carry him three feet up the bank, however gentle the slope. More reasonable is the alternative idea, which assumes that the victim was caught by a heron, which dropped him at the mouth of the burrow, and that the fish simply wriggled into the trap, where his captor, of course, had to leave him.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VII.—STORM.

HETTIE was awakened one night by hearing the name 'Gabriel!' It was Ruth who had uttered it. The door between their rooms stood open. Hettie rose softly and crept to her sister's bedside.

'Dreaming?'

'I don't know—was I?' said Ruth dreamily, with wide-open eyes.

'Yes; about Gabriel, wasn't it?'

Ruth's look changed. 'Sit down, Hettie. He is coming home,' said she.

Hettie had always had a superstitious respect for her sister as a dreamer of dreams. Her 'visions' had frequently proved to contain a suspicion of truth; and she was never better prepared to put faith in dreams about Gabriel than at the present moment.

'Coming home?' said she, wonderingly.

'Yes. I dreamt,' said Ruth, 'that I was lying asleep. It was down in the parlour, as it seemed to me, and almost dark. I heard a step in the yard—Gabriel's step; and then the parlour door was opened, and Gabriel came in. I watched him without surprise—without any great curiosity as he seated himself in an arm-chair beside the fire. Then a curious thing happened.'

'What?'

'He was shabbily dressed,' Ruth went on. 'He looked like a tramp; for his clothes were torn and covered with mud, as though he had walked over a rough and miry road for many a mile. He stared about him with distrust. But I escaped his notice. Then he put his hand into the breast-pocket of his coat, and took out a bundle, which I saw by the light of the fire to be a bundle of bank-notes. One after the other he held them over the blaze and watched them flutter up into the chimney and disappear. Each time that a bank-note vanished like a winged thing he burst into a fit of laughter.'

Ruth spoke in an underbreath, and her look was far off, as if the dream were to her a visibly enacted drama. The noise of the shrill wind without increased the weirdness of the situation. Hettie sat at the edge of the bed, staring into her sister's face. The delicate flush upon Ruth's cheeks, the feverish brilliancy of her eyes, made her features appear almost supernaturally beautiful. It was as though she were dreaming her dream over again.

'I tried to speak—tried to tell him,' said she, 'how much we needed every bank-note we could lay hands upon in order to keep the business going, and to get ourselves out of debt to Lawyer Burtenshaw. But I couldn't move, much less find my voice; though I struggled to rise, with the intention of snatching the notes out of his hand. At last I sprang up crying, "Gabriel—Gabriel!"—and that woke me up.'

Hettie did all in her power to reassure her sister, and persuade her to dismiss this disquieting dream from her thoughts. She lay down at Ruth's side with her arms around her, saying, 'Go to sleep, dear, and don't worry about Gabriel,' and so fell asleep herself.

Ruth grew more wakeful. It was a wild night; and, as it seemed to her excited brain, the cries of shipwrecked sailors were borne in upon the wind. Among the cries she fancied that she heard the voice of Edward Tudway; and so intensely real did the voice become, so plaintive in its appeal for help with every shuddering rush of the storm, that she looked curiously into Hettie's face to discover if the same fancy had not taken a hold upon her. But Hettie's sleep was sound.

When morning broke there was no abatement of the gale. Ruth never stirred outside the house, but lay upon the sofa in the parlour throughout the day, weary from sleeplessness and the many disquieting thoughts that were crowding upon her. Towards evening, when the cloudy, tempestuous day was drawing to a close, Jarvis came into the room with a hurried step. There was a look on his face that set her heart beating fast.

'What's the matter?' said she, half-rising as he approached. 'Has Gabriel come?'

'Don't move, Ruth,' said he, bringing a chair to her side, 'and don't be alarmed. It's only a rumour.'

He spoke in a breathless manner, however; and Ruth noticed that his dark, handsome eyes were unusually bright.

'It's only a rumour,' he reiterated, brushing some melting snowflakes off his rough pea-coat. 'Still, there may be truth in a rumour; and I want you to break it to Hettie as gently as you know how. There's a schooner in distress two or three miles up the coast'——

'What does that matter to Hettie?'

Ruth hardly tried to conceal the sense of jealousy she felt at John's undisguised concern regarding her sister's peace of mind; for, though she was devoted to Hettie—would have done anything to save her a moment's pain—she could not bear to contemplate John as equally devoted.

'Ruth, I want you to tell me candidly. I don't ask out of idle curiosity,' said John. 'Hettie doesn't really care for young Tudway?—I mean,' he hastened to add, 'they are not bound to each other?'

'Engaged?' Ruth suggested.

Jarvis nodded. 'That's what I mean.'

'No. Hettie refused him. At least,' said Ruth, 'she refused to give any promise to marry him until the *Seagull* again put into port.'

Jarvis rose quickly. 'She'll never reach port! If the rumour should prove true—if it's the *Seagull* that's in distress'——

'Tudway's ship?'

'Yes.'

Ruth ran to the window. Looking out, as though the mere fact of her suddenly intensified interest in the storm could change the course of a single flake of snow, she regarded the blackness of the gathering night with consternation and despair. The force of the gale was increasing fast. Huge rags of foam flew from the sea with the flakes of snow, while great clouds of sand rose and scurried down the dunes in full chase. If the *Seagull* was lost, and Edward Tudway drowned, Jarvis would have reason to indulge the hope of marrying Hettie some day! This was the thought that now flashed across Ruth's mind; and as she turned and looked keenly into John's face, she firmly believed that the same thought possessed him.

'Where is Hettie?' she said.

'In the office. I'll send her to you.'

He moved towards the door.

'John!'

With his hand upon the latch John looked back.

'Yes, Ruth.'

'You're sure—quite sure,' said she, 'that it's only a rumour? It may not be the *Seagull* after all'——

'Only a rumour,' said John. 'But why?'

'I was thinking, John,' she replied, 'what Hettie's reason was for not engaging herself to Tudway, as he wished her to do before he set sail.'

'Her reason?'

'Yes; she cares for another'——

'Who?'

His eager manner took away her breath. 'Don't question me,' Ruth said. 'She cares for another, or thinks she does; and she cannot make up her mind which—which she loves. But she will make up her mind to-night.'

'You mean?'——

'I mean,' said Ruth, 'that the moment I tell her what we dread—the moment she has reason to fear that Tudway is in danger—she will decide. And I think—I sincerely hope'——

'What?'

'That she will decide to marry Tudway,' said Ruth. 'I hope so with all my heart.'

John stood looking down dejectedly. A rush of wind went by. 'What if Tudway should be drowned?' said he.

'Don't think of it,' said Ruth.

But when he was gone Ruth thought of it with a sense of growing despair. What if Tudway should be drowned?

As Jarvis crossed the timber-yard he caught sight of Hettie. He saw her through the office window. She was lighting the lamp upon her father's desk. The storm seemed to give her no concern. But the hour had come when the affairs of the house must for the moment be set aside. The storm was a despot. It was forcing itself upon every one's attention. There was no possibility for Hettie to escape the general excitement and alarm which it was beginning to awaken all along the coast.

She looked up from the desk as Jarvis entered. It was evident to him that the rumours about the *Seagull* had not reached Hettie's ears.

'Ruth wants you,' said he simply. 'Will you go to her at once?'

'It's nothing pressing, I suppose?'

'Yes; it's very pressing indeed.'

He did not wait. Jarvis feared that his look might betray him, and he hurried out. He was eager to learn if any fresh news had come in from Saltfleet.

It was now dark. He went across to the 'Jolly Bacchus.' The bar-parlour was crowded. Mumby, the old waiter, had never been so much in demand since he became 'boots' at this inn. Most of the Cablethorpe lifeboat crew were there. One of the coastguard, a black-bearded man, was relating to them his experience of the previous night, and of the stormy day that had just closed in.

'Last night. Ay. It was about ten-thirty. I was a-standin' outside the watch-box on the dunes at Douna Hook. Just then a signal was shown from the ship in distress on the Haile Sands. The light disappeared for all the world as if a big wave had put it out. There was nothing more seen. But at daybreak this morning, mates, there was a deal o' wreckage washed ashore—sternpost, hatches, gratings, combing, and what not. And now there's another, a schooner—the *Seagull*, as it's thought.'

At that moment a signal-gun boomed above the noise of the storm. It was the summons to the Cablethorpe lifeboatmen. The gun was fired three times from the watch-house on the dunes; and each time there could be seen, from the bar-parlour window, the red light of a rocket leaping fiercely into the black night.

Every one was soon making for the shore. Jarvis was one of the first among the crowd. The strong wind struck him in the face. The sand and keen sleet cut into his cheeks like knotted whipcord; and he was forced to fight his way towards the lifeboat station gropingly; for to look ahead, except with the utmost tact, was to be half-blinded before it was possible to get a glimpse of the sea. It was not until Jarvis had crept under the lee of the boathouse, in a cavity of the dunes, that he dared venture to

open his eyes and observe minutely what was going on around him.

A brasier or 'flare' had been lighted upon the sands. Its sparks were flying madly to leeward. The lifeboat was dimly outlined in a huge shadow, and the silhouettes of launchers and lifeboatmen in belts and oilskins moved about at its base. And now the great boat, fixed upon its clumsy carriage, began to descend slowly out of its house over the sloping planks towards the sea. Presently it came to a standstill on the sands; the horses that had been collected by torchlight from the neighbouring farms were securely yoked; and, after a delay that seemed to Jarvis almost interminable, the whips cracked, the men shouted, and a shadowy procession of lifeboat, horses, and crew moved steadily towards the sounding breakers. Suddenly the lifeboat captain came riding up on horseback out of the surge. He had been down to examine and report on the state of the flats.

'There's too much water to venture on the binks to-night,' cried he; ''sides, it's a flowing tide. We must steer for Saltfleet by the highway. For'ard!'

In order to reach Saltfleet by the highway it would be necessary to pass up the High Street of Cablethorpe, and then bear round on to the North Road. Jarvis hurried on in front. The wind carried him along with a swiftness that he made little effort to resist. He turned into the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn, more eager than ever to learn any news that might have come by telegraph. Yes; a message from Grimsby had confirmed the rumour. It was the *Seagull!* She had grounded amid the surge a mile and a half straight out to sea off Saltfleet.

Jarvis stood under the archway of the inn, revolving in his mind what course to pursue. No one was better acquainted than he was with the coast between Cablethorpe and Saltfleet. At low tide, when the sea had ebbed almost out of sight of the dunes, over the dead level of the sandy shore, he had often wandered there on Sundays, and on week-days, ever since he was a child. By walking along this coast, though in the teeth of the gale, it might be possible to reach the distressed vessel before the lifeboat. Even at high tide there was never any great depth of water upon the flats. It might be possible to wade through the surf and render assistance in time to the shipwrecked crew.

He resolved to make the attempt. He hastened into the High Street. But at this moment the lifeboat came lumbering through the town drawn by ten horses. It was an inspiring sight. The cavalcade drew up at the 'Bacchus.' More horses were yoked, making a team of sixteen in all; and while the final arrangement for this journey was in course of completion—the arrangement for the conveyance of a huge lifeboat over the highway—Jarvis caught sight of Hettie Beck among the spectators in the glare of torchlight. If he had been a man wanting in promptness or stability of purpose, the look upon her face would have decided him. He hastened to her side. She looked up, and seeing who it was, clasped his arm with both her hands.

'John! This is terrible.'

'Terrible indeed! But be brave, Hettie,' said Jarvis. 'I will save him, if it's possible.'

'*You?*'

'Yes;' and he told her in a few hurried words what he had resolved upon. Then he went to work, and invited half-a-dozen sturdy fellows of his acquaintance, who quickly agreed to join him in the expedition.

The plan of action was speedily matured. Jarvis obtained a flask of brandy from the 'Bacchus.' The showing of any needless light upon the shore, however, being interdicted by the coastguard, they settled to carry torches with them, to be lighted only in case of real emergency. And now, as the lifeboat-carriage moved ponderously down the High Street, with torch-bearers, launchers, and oil-skinned crews hurrying forward on either side towards the fenland road to Saltfleet, a cheer was raised. Jarvis and his companions joined in the cheer to the echo; and then they started on their independent course along the coast, with an unspoken sense of confidence that they would be the first to reach Saltfleet.

The gale was now blowing almost dead ashore. No such rush and power of wind had been known for many a year. The sand whirled madly about in the darkness, and the sleet and foam tore inland with the blast with unabated fury. The tide still flowed; the muttering of the breakers grew louder and louder; wave upon wave came leaping in, with all the fierceness of a preconcerted invasion. Jarvis, always keeping in front of his companions, waded through the surf, sometimes up to his knees in water; and by this means they escaped the clouds of blinding sand, and could venture occasionally to peer ahead into the night. As their eyes became more accustomed to the darkness they gained glimpses of each other—inky-looking figures plunging through inky waves that had the appearance of immense billows that would presently fall upon them and cast them high and dry upon the dunes.

They had proceeded nearly three miles. Scarcely a word had been spoken. But suddenly Jarvis, looking out to seaward, cried:

'There she is! Hand me a torch—quick!'

He struck a fusee as he spoke. A torch was speedily aflare. Holding it above his head, Jarvis began to wade through the opposing surf straight out to sea. Sometimes struck by a high wave—sometimes in a foot of water when an expended breaker rushed by—Jarvis sturdily faced the storm. Presently a cry for help reached his ear; it seemed to him so near that he stopped

and looked down at his feet, thinking to find some one drowning there. Then he plunged forward, following the voice; and presently he descried a man lying in the surf, clinging to a plank with both hands. Jarvis bent down; a loud shout escaped him; and then the torch dropped from his hand and fell with a spluttering hiss into the sea.

MODERN PIRATES.

IF proof were wanted that the so-called 'romance' of the sea is not dead, it might be found in the affairs which have been happening off the Riff coast of Morocco during the last twelve months or more. We are apt to assume, save when we receive such forcible and unmistakable reminders as the Riffians have been giving us, that piracy has been completely suppressed. As a simple fact, there are several parts of the world where the profession is held in all honour (among the blood-relations of those who practise it), and where it is pursued, as occasion serves, with considerable profit. To be sure, the pirate of to-day is devoid of many of those picturesque attributes which characterised Blackbeard, Roberts the Dandy, and the other great men of their class. But these were accidental qualities; the thing itself remains, and is likely to endure for many a long day. We may send a gunboat or two against the Riffians and compel them to restrict their operations; but they will assuredly break out again. Piracy is with them a respectable calling, on all-fours with the plundering habits of their brethren in the interior; and if Allah drives vessels on to their coast and gives them victory over unarmed crews, then praise be to Allah, the Merciful, the Good! It is not only during recent years that they have practised their avocation. Does not Hakluyt tell us of frequent encounters between these gentry and the ships of the Levant Company? We have before us as we write a parliamentary return, issued just forty years ago, showing the ravages committed by Riff pirates on English vessels during the preceding decade. We are told of the attack on the *Ruth* in 1846, and the escape of her crew in their boats; of the firing of the *Violet*, after plundering her, in order to prevent H.M.S. *Janus* from recovering her; of the looting of the *Cuthbert Young*, which sustained damage to the extent of £1700; of the wrecking of the *Hymen*, the plundering of her cargo, and the capture of her crew; and of several more instances equally typical. These were not mere coasting schooners, but brigs and barques ranging up to 400 tons—a very fair capacity half-a-century ago.

The Riffians have broken out on several occasions since their Sultan was forced to pay compensation to the amount of £3278 on their behalf in respect of the *Hymen;* and on each occasion when the attentions of warships have become pressing, they have returned to their fastnesses and defied creation. Their last year's exploits include the capture of the French barque *Prosper Corin*, the Portuguese barque *Rosita Faro*, the Italian barquentine *Fiducia*, and a coaster belonging to Gibraltar; and they kept men from most of these vessels in custody for months. Their position is so strong that, failing the adoption of very stringent measures against them, they can afford to dictate terms of ransom. Last year a Spanish steamer came to the rescue of a Spanish sailing-ship which was being attacked, and succeeded in making prisoners of three of the pirates. French, Portuguese, and Italian cruisers visited the Riff coast in order to negotiate for the release of captives of their several nationalities. The French man-of-war was successful; its commander paid down a lump sum, and carried back with him the skipper of the *Prosper Corin*. The others were less lucky. The pirates refused to give up their prisoners, no matter what their nationality, except in exchange for the Riffians in custody at Tangier and Alhucemas, together with a ransom, the amount of which they chose to fix themselves.

There is something very laughable in the notion of an ironclad making terms with a parcel of sea-marauders, as though the latter were a power deserving of all courteous treatment; but the fact is there all the same, and one is compelled almost to admiration for the impudence of the pirates. There is nothing in their method of attack to compel the same appreciation. A large vessel they will not approach. The sort they prefer is the sailing-ship of 200 or 300 tons, with an unarmed crew of ten men or thereabouts. Then, with a wind blowing on to the coast, they are safe. They go out in two or three feluccas, frighten the men by firing flintlocks at them, scramble aboard, and (the crew having run below in the meantime) plunder the cargo, provisions, charts, instruments, and personal effects; sometimes sailing away afterwards without molesting the crew, sometimes taking the whole lot prisoners, and sometimes, again, only enslaving the captain, mate, and boatswain, to be held to ransom. It has been a matter of some surprise to us that no wealthy Englishman—say the gentleman whose yacht was nearly captured last winter while returning home from the Riviera—with a taste for adventure, should have bethought him of fitting out a vessel to attack these pirates. A pirate is the enemy of mankind, and any one who chooses

—and is able—is at full liberty to sink him. Another simple device would be to send a few men-of-war's boats right into the nest of the hornets in order to burn it about their ears, and to break up their boats. But we are not quite sure whether this would be sanctioned by international law; and it is certain that the pirates would retire into the mountains behind, and in revenge murder all their European prisoners.

The Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf is another hotbed of pirates. El Katif is their place of rendezvous, and the kind of boat for which they entertain a particular preference is the pearl-fisher. Every annual report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency has to tell of attacks made by pirates from El Katif, or El Katr, or Wakrah, or Dhaayen upon vessels returning from the pearl-fishery, and of the consequent plunder and invariable loss of life. About the beginning of last year the pirates decided to extend operations towards the end that they might be provided with occupation during the months when pearl-fishing is not being carried on. There is a fairly large trade carried on between Kurrachee and Persian Gulf ports, and they began to attack the vessels engaged in this trade. The *Dawbat-pursad* was going to Bussorah for a cargo of dates, and when within a few hours of her destination she was approached by an Arab dhow manned by armed Bedouins, who fired at her. Most of the crew jumped overboard, but were pursued and seized, and two were wounded fatally. Four were taken on board and ordered to point out the place where the money was kept. They replied that they had no money, whereupon their throats were deliberately cut. One of the crew who hid himself in a water-tank was also discovered while the vessel was being searched for loot. He was invited pointedly to give the information required. 'Through fear' he consented, and took the pirates to where the sand-ballast was, and told them if they dug through they would find a bundle containing five thousand rupees. This they did, and, by way of reward to the informer, one of the Arabs slashed him across the shoulder with his knife. Barely a month before this, another Kurrachee coaster was attacked. She was named the *Towkully*, and was bound for El Katif with charcoal, kerosene oil, and rice. In the gulf an Arab *bujhara* was seen approaching, and, when she got to within ninety yards of the dingey, opened fire. The crew of the *Towkully* rushed below, and the Arabs came alongside, threw down their guns, and with their daggers, swords, and spears rushed 'like fiends' on to the decks and bawled for the *tindal*, or captain. The *serang*, a relation of the *tindal*, came forward, and said he was not on board. Then they laid hold of him, and demanded all the money that was in the vessel. He told a pardonable lie: he said there was none. On hearing this they attacked him savagely and dragged him to the cabin where the boxes were kept. Two of them, by way of prelude, stabbed him with a dagger in the neck and the back. He pleaded for mercy, and then made over all the money he had in his box—namely, fifty-two rupees; but, not satisfied that the *serang* was telling the truth, three of the pirates stabbed him again, and told him to look sharp and produce more money, as well as to open all the boxes in the cabin. By this time the unfortunate man was covered from head to foot with blood, which oozed from the wounds he received. The boxes were broken open; and while the pirates were helping themselves to the contents, the *serang* quietly crept forward and lay there weltering in blood. When the pirates had boarded the vessel, three of the crew jumped overboard and held on to ropes hanging over the side. The rest were hiding. They were dragged out one by one and ordered to turn up their money and possessions. If they said they had none, they were slashed with swords or daggers and kicked about. The *malum*, or pilot, was one of those who jumped overboard. He was brought on deck, and because he said he had no money, was cut at with a sword and wounded in the neck. He was also 'struck with a dagger on the shoulder and back, and was left on deck almost dead.' The cook was stabbed to the heart. The *tindal*, who was given away by the informer, was also asked to produce his money, but 'replying in the negative, he was seized by the leg and flung off the poop to the deck. The shock was so great that the poor man's ears started bleeding. He pleaded for mercy in consideration of his old age (he was over fifty), but in return received a dagger-thrust in his chest, from which he bled profusely, and was left for dead.' Finding that they had exhausted all means of extorting more money from the crew of the *Towkully*, the pirates set to and stripped the vessel of her sails and other gear, and took possession of the cooking utensils, clothing, and other sundries. They also removed a number of cases of kerosene oil, and helped themselves to a large quantity of rice, filling their little craft, which was of about twenty tons burden, with as much as they could stow away with safety. Then they sailed off.

Thanks to the energetic measures adopted some years ago, piracy is in a fair way to being exterminated in Atcheen (Sumatra) and in the Java Sea generally; but the case of the *Pegu*, which occurred in 1896, shows that the Atcheenese at least are quite capable, with a little license allowed, of becoming a serious nuisance again. In July this steamer, which is owned in Penang, left that port for Edie and Olehleh. Lloyd's agent, who may be regarded as a reliable witness, stated that at Edie she took on board as passengers a party of some ten Atcheenese and one woman. The men were searched for arms—a customary precaution—but none were found, and it is supposed these were all concealed on the woman's

person. At about 7 P.M. on the 9th, when the master, Captain Henry Ross, and the chief engineer, Cragie, were at dinner in the saloon, they were set upon, without warning, by these men. The engineer, though wounded by stabs about the body and arms, managed to escape, and barricaded himself in the engine-room. Captain Ross also escaped from the saloon, but in trying to gain the bridge was overtaken and stabbed fatally. The Atcheenese then turned their attention to the rest of the crew, killed the mate and steersman on the bridge and five of the native passengers, while five other passengers jumped overboard and were drowned. In addition to these, fourteen others of the crew and passengers were more or less severely wounded. Having gained possession of the ship in this way, the Atcheenese proceeded to plunder the strong-room, securing about 15,000 dollars in coin, with which they made good their escape in the ship's boats, landing on the Atcheen coast near Simpang Olim. After they had left, the engineer took charge of the ship again, steered her out to sea until daylight, and then made for Teluk Semawe, where the Dutch authorities took possession.

It has been asserted that China was a fond mother of pirates before the first pyramid was built; but, whether or no, it is certain that in no part of the world has this profession flourished during the present century as on the coast of China. The piratical centres, now as half-a-century ago, are Amoy and Macao. Methods have changed somewhat in the past few years, by reason of the vigilance of the armed cruisers that prowl around. The pirates no longer cruise boldly in the open seas; but, learning from their spies that a richly-laden junk will leave a given place on a given date, they plan to intercept the vessel in the shoal-water near the coast, or in some river or arm of the sea where meddlers are not likely to be found. They succeed in rifling the cargo, and if necessary in scuttling the ship, in perhaps two cases out of six. We hear of these occurrences only when the vessel attacked happens to be British. Not more than four years ago a steamer brought into Shanghai the crew of a small barque which had been rifled by pirates and set on fire. The story told by the captain was that he was in his cabin, when he heard a scuffle on deck, and went up to inquire the cause. The native boatswain told him that a junk was right upon them. He stooped down to look from underneath the mainsail, when he received a blow on the head with an iron bar from one of the native crew, who were in league with the pirates. Then he was stabbed in the back with a Java dagger. Turning round to confront his assailant, he saw the latter was making another blow at him. This he warded off with the loss of a finger, and then found himself stabbed a second time from behind. The captain was totally unprepared for a piratical onslaught, and was unarmed. By the time he managed to reach his cabin he had sixteen wounds, which bled very profusely, in various parts of the body. No one of them was individually severe, but the sum total was enough to make him faint. When he recovered consciousness he discovered that the ship was on fire, and he was driven out of his cabin by the fumes. The pirates had rifled the ship of everything worth stealing, and were making off in their junk with some members of the barque's crew. He crawled along the deck as far as the main hatch, and slipped over the dead body of the first mate. Other corpses were scattered about. The few men left endeavoured to put out the flames. The captain was too ill even to give orders. He lay on the quarter-deck for a whole day in a semi-comatose state. It was found necessary to take to the boats in the end; and, as luck would have it, the survivors of the tragedy were picked up in a few hours by a passing steamer.

A year ago a man sent to one of the London dailies an account of his experiences among Chinese pirates. He had shipped at Rangoon on board a steamer bound for Shanghai. 'When I signed,' he wrote, 'she was flying Jardine's flag at the main, but I believe she carried the ensign of every nation and half the house flags of the world in her signal locker. An opium-smuggler I was prepared to find her; but that her chief business on the waters was piracy of the vilest sort, and unredeemed by a glint of romance, came upon me certainly as a revelation. We attacked no ships, so far as I know; but, handled with marvellous skill and knowledge of the intricate coast navigation, she would run in after nightfall among rocks and banks where one would expect a sampan to take the bottom, while shrieks, flames, the report of firearms, and clash of steel would testify to the descent of my delectable shipmates upon one or other of the numerous fishing villages which fringe the shores of the China seas.' After about four months of this life, the narrator contrived to escape by drugging the drink of his companions.

The most remarkable of recent cases of piracy in the China seas is that of the *Namoa*, which occurred in 1890. The *Namoa* left Hong-kong for Chinese wayports with two hundred and fifty Chinese and five European passengers. Among the Chinese were a number who were returning from the Straits Settlements with the savings of years in their possession. This fact became known to the desperadoes of Hong-kong, who thereupon planned a very daring scheme. About fifty of them booked for the passage. The steamer had been at sea for only five hours, and the passengers were seated at tiffin, when, at a given signal, the pirates, who were all armed with revolvers and cutlasses, rushed on deck, and, dividing themselves into four parties, covered the officers' and engineers' quarters in the fore-part of the ship, the engine-room, the bridge, and the saloon respectively. Then they commenced firing and throwing stink-

pots into the saloon. The first officer was shot in the arm, and the second taken prisoner. Captain Pocock was then ordered to come up from below, and was killed just as he was reaching the deck. The passengers were ordered up and subjected to every variety of fiendish insult that the ingenuity of their captors could devise. They were searched, and every article of value taken from them; and then officers and passengers—eleven in all—were shut up in the cabin, not being allowed to open the window for ventilation. Having now charge of the ship, the pirates commenced the work of plunder, and steered for Pinghoi. Arrived at that place, two blasts were blown, and six junks came off, into which the plunder was transferred. Then the pirates sat down on deck and had a hearty meal, taking care before leaving to damage all the boats and the windlass, and to draw the fires. Then the Europeans burst open the cabin and returned as speedily as possible to Hong-kong. Thirty-four of the pirates were afterwards beheaded at Kowloon.

THE GOLDEN BARS.

CHAPTER IV.

HARVEY found the lantern, ignited it, and passed out into the night. He was strangely excited. There was a certain feasibility about Dame Druce's story which made his thoughts play round it in a mad game of hope such as he had rarely known. With firm, long strides he passed across the yard to the gate. Here a voice arrested him.

'Is that you, Godfrey?'

He looked upwards to one of the windows.

'Yes, dear. Why are you not asleep?'

'I have been reading. Then the storm came, and I have been sitting here, watching the lightning. What are you doing? It is so very late!'

'I'm just having a last look round, Gracie. I shall be with you shortly. Retire and go to sleep, dear; it is not good for you to be sitting up at this hour.'

'I'll stay just a little longer, Godfrey. The lightning has interested me, you see; and the play of it is so beautiful. I never saw the jagged outline of the Priory look to such advantage. But, do you know, Godfrey, I saw a figure just now mounting the bank. It looked like'——

The pleasant voice ceased abruptly.

'Yes; whom was he like?'

'Perhaps I ought not to have mentioned the matter. You do so hate poor Mark.'

'Oh Mark! Didn't some one tell me he was in London? Why should he have such a hankering after rabbits the minute he returns?'

Two or three moments' silence. A nasty suspicion had entered Harvey's quick brain. What was Ruthwood doing half a mile from a burrow? Had he caught something from old Jacob's garrulity? Had he too been theorising?

'Are you sure it was he?'

'I'm afraid so, dear. He is so very tall one could hardly mistake him.'

'Well, I can't bother about him to-night. Let him poach on, the rascal! Bye, bye, dear one; I shall be with you quite soon.'

Mrs Harvey made some inaudible reply and drew the casement to. But unawares to him she still sat on, watching the flash and flicker and tremble of the lightning; but wondering also why she should feel such restlessness and uneasiness upon her since the appearance and going of her husband. There was nothing untoward in the incident. He had been writing or reading in his room, and, farmer-like, was taking a last glance round in order to sleep on a satisfied pillow. Yet, why these pestilent fears? She threw open the casement and listened for some sound from the stillness. Her pulse hastened its beatings; she could hear, faintly but surely, the rhythmic footsteps of Godfrey. A moment more and she knew that his face was turned from Springfields. The next flare of light showed her the answer. She saw, for a second time that night, a human figure ascending the mount to the Priory. It was her husband. She owned the fact with a pinch of the heart which made her almost scream. What could Godfrey be thinking of to go forth alone in the centre of night to cross a man of Mark's size and strength? She knew the meeting could not be pacific; she knew Mark's fiendish temper once it was aroused; she knew of her husband's unreasoning hatred for him. With tense eyes she waited for further light from the heavens. The seconds seemed hours. At last came a blaze which lit up all the country-side. She started up, rubbing her dazzled eyes. She had seen the two men struggling on the crown of the mount. Turning swiftly, she slipped on some further clothing, and, with a glance at her child, hastened from the room, and then from the house, before she had had time to realise what she was doing.

The still vivid lightning left intervals of such darkness that at times she had almost to grope her way; but the lane was familiar to her, and in a very few minutes she came to the stone stile which led to the ruins. She hurried up the bank, pausing midway to listen. Beyond the thud, thud within her, she could hear two things

—the hard breathing of combatants striving, and the faint murmuring, as it seemed, of a distant weir. Reaching the ruins, she sent through the darkness a cry to her husband. He made no answer, and she could define no sound save that in the distance, which she knew now to be the roar of the night-mail to London.

'Godfrey! Godfrey!'

She stood a moment listening. All her ears caught was a crash of broken timber to the right of her. She turned and ran, bathed in quivering light. She came to a halt in inky darkness, but knowing all that had happened. The two men, in their struggling, had fallen against the old, weather-beaten fencing, and rolled down into the cutting below.

She leant on to the fencing and cried into the blackness. The roar of the train seemed to beat back all her words. The sky lit up once again, and her eyes widened with horror. The two men in the darkness had fallen across the line. Mark had somehow got Godfrey under, and was holding him at arm's-length with such a power of muscle that his victim, in such a position, was absolutely helpless. Mark's face was turned to the nearing train; yet he made no movement, and his profile was a devil's, smiling.

'Mark! Mark! Spare him! Think of me and my child! Mark!—oh, my God!'

She crushed her hands to her face, stumbling away from the cutting; then she fell forward and passed into sudden oblivion.

For minutes she lay so, unconscious of everything—of the thunder of the passing train; of the tremble of the ground beneath her; of the blessed return of silence; of the figure kneeling beside her, with his passionate words and caresses; of the coming again of stillness and solitude; till a second figure appeared, kneeling where the first had been, gently calling her name. She heard it, and her fingers tightened over the hand which was chafing hers. Another moment and she was in her husband's arms, knowing where she was, and sobbing with joy at being there.

'It was a near miss, my Gracie. He heard your voice through his madness—you have excellent lungs, by the way—and hurled me aside just as the train was upon us. The fall stunned me. When I revived he was by my side. He had fallen back between the rails, and allowed the train to pass over him. Seeing that no damage was done, he gruffly told me where you were, tacked up the bank, and disappeared. Now are you able to—— But what is this pinned on to your dress? Let me strike a match.'

The tiny light displayed a piece of paper fastened at her bosom; it was old and faded—a blank leaf, seemingly, from some book—a book which had once been Silas Harvey's, for there was his name in the corner. But what was all that beneath it? Godfrey started: could anything be more plain? It were patent to the intelligence of a ploughboy. There was the guide to the old yeoman's money! But how had Ruthwood come by it? Why had he left it thus? Was it an act of mockery, or was the treasure still there, hidden in the walls of the refectory? All this in the brief life of a lucifer. Harvey threw it away.

'What is it, Godfrey? What does the paper say?'

In the wild race of his thoughts the question was hardly heard. He turned to her.

'Grace, this Ruthwood loved you once, did he not?—loves you now? He lost his head to-night; but would he in cold blood do you a wrong?'

'Never, Godfrey!'

'It is there, then.'

'What is there?'

'The lantern—quite extinguished. It shall shine again, and lead us on to fortune.'

He lit the lantern with shaking hands, and without further word passed into the ruined refectory, Grace following him wonderingly. Going up to the south-east corner, where the remains of the massive wall rose not more than four feet from the ground, Harvey, after careful use of his bull's-eye, began to remove the loose stones and débris which happened there to fill up the space between the two faces of the wall. Holding the light, Grace waited, plying questions in vain. Godfrey worked on till he had made a hole more than a foot deep; then, one after another, he drew forth ten small roughly-moulded bars, which he carefully stacked on the sward at his feet. He stopped at last, breathing hard.

'Let the eye of the lantern see what is there, my Gracie; then tell me what *you* see.'

'But what are they, dear? They look like brass. How came they in such a place?'

'A crazy old man put them there before you and I were born. You see more than a thousand pounds in gold, with not a sovereign to show for it. One way, isn't it, of harbouring up riches on earth? Only a man in a melting mood could have done it. I thank you, Silas Harvey!'

Godfrey looked as if he could have cut a caper. Grace glanced from him to the gold and back again.

'Silas Harvey! But I thought he was robbed of all he possessed!'

'Of everything, save those golden bars, which might have been robbed from us all if you hadn't sent the devil fleeing this night from the soul of Mark Ruthwood. My Grace, you have saved both my life and my fortune. Two hours ago I was a ruined man. Now'——

'Oh Godfrey, and you never told me!'

'Dear, I could not; the courage wasn't in me. But don't look so hurt, for, after all, my cowardice has spared you much unhappiness at a time when you could least have borne it. Now give me a kiss, and slip down home at once. I want Hugh and one of my handbags without waste of a

single minute. Meanwhile I'll wait here, and bless my wife and Silas Harvey.'

Some three weeks afterwards Grace Harvey was sitting in the parlour of Springfields at work on a tiny garment, glancing over it at moments to the cradle on the near side of the lively fire. It was afternoon time, and all was very still. But presently there came a knock at the door. It was Sally. She announced a caller—a Mr Smithson. She was told to show him in. A little man entered, carrying a gold-headed cane and a black wideawake hat—a man seemingly of some substance, but with the air of a stranger upon him.

'Mrs Harvey, I believe?'

'Yes, Mr Smithson. I was asked to see you in case my husband should be out. Your telegram struck us both as rather curious. Sit down, pray.'

He sat down.

'Possibly it would; but reading in the paper this morning of the discovery in your house of a quantity of old gold, I wired you that I would call to-day respecting it. I am a dealer in old coins, jewels, curios, &c.—this is my card, ma'am: 61B High Holborn. The purpose of my visit is to ask you to kindly hold back the coins at your banker's for a day or two. I may be able to take them from you at a somewhat higher figure than their nominal value.'

Grace looked up surprised.

'May I ask how the treasure came to be discovered?' continued the dealer in coins.

'Yes; it was found behind some old wainscoting upstairs. We have been making a door from one room to another. In sovereigns and guineas there are more than a thousand pieces.'

Mr Smithson worked his hands.

'If I can only find him out! I speak, ma'am, of my—eh—client. His lawyer was not in when I called; the clerk was at the courts, and the office-boy knew nothing. But it is only a question of a few hours. The case is somewhat peculiar, ma'am,' continued Mr Smithson. 'A relative of my client had suddenly come into a large fortune; and, quitting the country shortly afterwards, left some twelve hundred pounds to my client in discharge of a debt due to his father, now deceased. My client, on hearing of the deposit, wished, rather than transfer the sum to the bank of his own district, to draw the money there and then, but in gold, and *old* gold. They could not do it. Asked—— Do I bore you, ma'am?'

'No, no; pray go on.'

'Asked if they could get it for him, they replied no: All called in years ago. They, however, referred him to me. He came to me. I could only offer him some ninety pieces—spade-aces, ma'am. Could I get them for him? He would give me two hundred pounds if I could get them for him. I could not promise. He began to fume, talking to himself about a proud fool who would fling money back at him if he offered it, and much else. Finally he left me, still fuming. Now, as I think he would hardly do the strange thing he said he would, I have run down to-day for the purpose I have mentioned.'

'And what was the strange thing?'

'That he would melt the money down into bars.'

The listener turned white as milk.

'What was his name?' she asked huskily.

'Ruthwood.'

Grace caught at her throat.

'Shall I ring the bell, ma'am? You look unwell.'

'No, no! I shall be better in a moment. I fear the fire is too hot for me.'

She moved away to the window; then, after a short silence, she turned to the dealer.

'Mr Smithson, your errand has been fruitless. Mr Ruthwood is dead. He was found drowned three weeks ago.'

'You knew him, then?' said the other, with dropped jaw.

'Yes; I knew him.'

He rose; she also, with swimming eyes. Oh Mark! why had he loved her so? Why that generous subterfuge to save their fallen fortunes? And old Silas's gold so near discovery!

'And his money?' asked the dealer. 'What became of that?'

With averted face she gave the trembling answer: 'He left it in *Golden Bars*.'

CLIFF AND SHORE IN THE INNER HEBRIDES.

I.

THE islands of the Inner and Outer Hebrides have attractions peculiarly their own. With a milder climate and a softer air than many other parts of the British Isles, they would be pleasant enough places to dwell in all the year round if there were not so many recurring storms of wind and rain nurtured in that broad and restless Atlantic which beats upon their shores. Yet these ocean-born storms add, withal, an invigorating quality to that western air, and they keep the hills and valleys of an emerald green which is rivalled nowhere else within these northern lands but on this Atlantic seaboard. And when the sun does shine, and the skies are clear and blue, and the seas roll in white-crested

to the yellow strands, the dark mist-clouds and the sweeping 'rack' are forgot. To these must be added another compensation for life in the Hebrides: they are under the influence, or supposed influence, of the Gulf Stream, and frost and snow, in their severer forms at least, do not come often or stay long.

My friend's man-servant, who was a Lowlander and an excellent and intelligent fellow, declined to believe this. He said to me one day:

'They tell me here, they Hielan' folk, Mr Smith, that they have a stream of hot water comes over frae America in the winter-time and keeps them warm! But I'm no gaun tae believe *that!* They need watchin', they folk, when they tell ye stories like that.'

Yet, despite all that is said about it, the weather *is* always one of the most important factors in the life of these British Isles.

If this be so generally, it is no less specially true of our Western Archipelago. The hills are to-day ablaze with the purple of the heather, now in its fullest bloom; the slopes and glens are clad in a verdure kept almost perennially green by the moisture of many days; while sky and sea are alike of the deepest blue, and the warmth of the unclouded sun is tempered by a fresh breeze from the ocean, which stretches and vanishes westward in a seemingly 'boundless contiguity of space.'

A drive of something like twelve miles in the early morning, under such pleasurable conditions, has brought us to the western front of one of these islands. We are going to spend a long day in exploring its cliffs and shores, and to take what we can get in the way of shooting there. Our gillie, who knows every foot of the ground, every cave which holds the fast and wary blue-rock pigeon—the *biset* of the French, the *columba* or rock-dove of Virgil—as well as the favourite rocks for seals on the small island lying seaward, is waiting for us at the little farm-place where we have to put up our dogcart and good-going bay. A walk of a mile over the moor and fringe of hill-land brings us to the low-lying bluffs overlooking the shore. Our first objective is the Seal Island, across the sound, and by-and-by we may get to the high cliffs and caves to the northward for blue-rocks, with perhaps the chance of some duck in the sheltered bays lying here and there along the coast.

We had hoped to have Archie Macdonald the crofter's boat for our expedition, but inquiries and a search for the boat itself reveal the disappointing facts that *he* is away to the hay-lifting, while 'she' is lying high and dry on the beach. Yet fickle fortune is not to desert us altogether this time, for we discover a handy little yawl or skiff lying snugly in a sheltered creek, and Duncan, our *fidus Achates*, is despatched on an embassy to find the owners. His errand is, ere long, accomplished. The owners are found, and prove to be two fishermen from the little village lying round the far-off point, come to look after their lobster-creels which are set off the shore. For a 'consideration' they are willing to take us anywhere and to do anything. They know the coast well, and are at least *quasi* sportsmen, and, perhaps, a little in the way of poachers too—dark-skinned, strong, rough, wild-looking men, who have gone down to the sea in ships and sailed, we discover, in their time, on far other seas than these.

The wind is blowing gently off the shore, and in the little bay beside us the sea is calm, but the Atlantic swell is heaving and the breakers, shining white in the sun, are booming over the rocks far out. The surf, indeed, seems inexplicably heavy for this calm summer weather and off-shore breezes, and it is doubtful if, after all, we shall manage to shoot pigeons from the sea to-day.

But the yawl has her mast stepped, her halyards rove, and her brown mainsail bent and ready to hoist, and so we get on board with our impedimenta of guns and luncheon-baskets, and the necessary but very moderate flask of 'Laga-Voulin' for ourselves and the men.

We must wait a bit, however, before we can cast off from our moorings, for Duncan has yet to reconnoitre the Seal Island with his glass from the cliff overhead. His search seems a prolonged one, but at last he signals that he has seen something, and very soon he rejoins us in the boat. On a low, flat rock near the water's edge there were, he thought, at least seven or eight seals lying basking in the sun. But it would be necessary to land on the far end of the island and to make a long stalk over the rocks to reach them. We sail quietly out of the bay; then the sail is lowered and the boat is pulled gently across to our landing-point, the guns and rifle are slipped out of their cases, and some wired cartridges with No. 1 shot are taken for the guns. We move as quietly as possible over the slippery rocks and tangle, but the footing is difficult and treacherous. By-and-by, however, we reach a small plateau of rock sparsely covered with sea-grass. It seems a favourable point from which to discover the exact whereabouts of the seals. Duncan therefore crawls forward and peers steadily, with his cap off, over the top of the rock. An almost imperceptible signal from him, and we also make our way thither. About 500 yards off, or perhaps more, we can make out distinctly three large seals lying on the flat rock—the rest are invisible. Two of those we see are gray seals, and the third a common brown one. We might make them out better with the glass, for the sun is shining on them; but we are afraid they might catch a reflection from it and become alarmed.

The question is now how we are to reach them? Ere long we discover that a ledge of

rocks rises to our left, and seems to lead straight up behind them, forming at low-tide on the other side, which we can gain by a slight detour, a small natural valley or protected way. Nothing could have been better. If they do not hear or 'wind' us, it seems practically certain that we can get within easy shot of them unseen. But it is a somewhat trying stalk. The rocks are sharp, broken, jagged, and in places slippery, and we have to get through some pools of sea-water, choked with seaweed, up to our knees. We had not, however, gone more than a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards when we were suddenly stopped by a hoarse screaming overhead, and we saw that three great black-backed gulls were much disturbed in spirit by our advent. A look of extreme vexation crept over Duncan's usually immobile face. 'These black sinners,' he whispered, 'will shpoil all. They will alarm them sure enough.' We waited patiently, hoping the birds would quieten down or go away; but it was of no use, so we must needs go on, somewhat despairingly I fear, and hoping against hope. Looking cautiously, ere we started again, over a ledge of rock, I saw in the distance the flash of a broad fin raised in the air, and a moment afterwards what seemed to be one of the large gray seals take the water; but he was much too far off, and the movement in any case altogether too sudden, to shoot. The gulls had done for us of a certainty, as, many a time before, a covey of grouse or blackgame, disturbed by the stalker and flying over the herd of deer feeding, without thought of danger, in the corrie below, has sent up every head and spoiled all chance of a successful stalk. Surely a vain quest for us now!

Nevertheless we crept on in the hope that some of the other seals farther down the slope had not taken fright and might still be found there. But, alas! when we reached the end of our stalk and came in sight of the flat rock, wet, hot, and tired with our labours, every one of them had gone! No; there is one big fellow swimming some two hundred yards off, or possibly less, and evidently not in any special alarm. The rifle is brought quickly forward and sighted for one hundred and fifty yards. We wait patiently till he swims towards us: then, as he raises his head out of the water and looks about him with the fatal curiosity of his race, we take a careful aim, leaning the left arm on a ledge of rock, and fire. There is a great commotion, the water is lashed into a foam, and we think we have got him and rush breathlessly across the rocks, while Duncan runs up to a higher peak and signals wildly for the boat. But all to no purpose. Where the seal was all is now still, and there is no sign of him on the top of the water. Unfortunately, as so often happens, he has gone down in the deep water. Better, much better to have left him alone, even though, as was the case, we saw no more seals that day.

II.

But it is now wearing towards noon, and we have still much to do. While we are waiting for the boat to come round for us I take a beat over the seaward side of the little island, and am lucky enough to get a mallard-drake, in fine plumage, and a rock-rabbit or two. The mallard, which rises from a rocky pool on the margin of the cliff, is got far out by a long shot with a No. 1 wired-cartridge, which happens to be in the left barrel, and he falls over the cliff on to a ledge of rock below; but by dint of some scrambling we manage to retrieve him.

We have no sooner got into our boat, however, hoisted our sail, and set her head for the cliffs on the mainland, than we sight a flight of duck, which come down to feed in a little bay on the west side of the island, and we make them out with the help of our glass to be the common brown eider (*Somateria Molissima*). It is too good a chance to be lost, and so we lower our sail again and row cautiously towards the bay. As they rise they give us excellent shots, and we bag three; while another comes down, but is only winged, and gets away with the rest over a reef of rocks, where, unhappily, we cannot follow them.

Once more the sail is hoisted, and with a freshening breeze we run for the land. As we speed along we have one or two flying shots at solitary male eider, but the heel of the boat now and then and the 'way' on her is too much for accurate shooting. Then my friend gets a 'scart' (cormorant) with a good shot, and a guillemot. The former only is deemed edible by our native friends, and by-and-by we pick up one or two more for them, but another of the latter species which comes across our bows we of course leave untouched.

Before we make for the pigeon-caves the lobster-creels lying off the shore have to be hauled. We find them by their cork floats and lines, set some distance apart, and, heaving to, we take up six of them in all. They contain three lobsters, one a very fine specimen, and several large red crabs; so we add two other species to our already fairly 'mixed' bag. In a small lagoon close by the cliff, what we make out to be a black scoter-duck, comparatively rare on these coasts at this time of year, and a male eider added to the list end our tale of the sea. All the rest of our time we must now devote to the rock-pigeons—those little blue-and-white birds the velocity of whose flight is so striking, whose feathers are so thick and shot-resisting for their size, and whose *habitat* embraces three continents, for they are found in Asia and Africa as well as in Europe.

It is, as yet, too early in the afternoon to make much of a bag, for the birds are mostly feeding on the distant corn-fields and stubble, and will not return to the caves until the

evening begins to fall and the sun is hasting towards its setting. But we are sure to find some at home if the surf will but allow us to reach the mouths of the caves, or at least to get within shooting distance.

The scenery of the coast is as bold and wild as any one could desire. The cliffs rise sheer from the sea, often in broken, rugged, and fantastic forms, while detached pinnacles and masses of rock stand out as sentinels in the foreground. Here there is an amphitheatre of rock, broken in places by vast clefts and crevices; there a promontory of serrated peaks stretching out from a background of cliff, while dashing ceaselessly against them all are the blue-and-white waves of that ever-turbulent sea. And yet not all blue and white; for, as the sunlight strikes the curl of a wave ere it breaks, there shines through it a pale, clear, iridescent green, cool and inviting.

But we have approached the first cave, and the boat is backed carefully into the little cove below, while a sharp lookout is kept at the bow for sunken rocks, and the boat-hook is ready to 'fend' her off the cliffs if we should be carried too near them by a wave. The rifle, a good old double-barrelled muzzle-loader, is carefully loaded and capped, and we stand ready as Duncan fires it high up towards the roof of the cave. A couple of pigeons come out like rockets—my friend gets one of them as he flies to the right, and we pick him up afterwards on a ledge of rock where he fell. I 'dust' some feathers from the other as he shoots high to the left; but he carries on over a lofty ridge of rocks and is lost to sight. Then, just as I have reloaded, another pigeon flies in, and I get him fairly as he circles round towards a shelf of rock high up at the mouth of the cave, and he comes down, bumping from ledge to ledge. One of our fisher boatmen jumps nimbly ashore on to a rocky, wave-washed promontory and clambers up the cliff a bit, from whence, with the aid of a long landing-net, he cleverly retrieves the bird.

From the next cave the pigeons come out high, and out of shot, and it was therefore a blank; but the third one gave us two more birds, although one fell on a high ledge, from which we could not recover it. As we are leaving the cove my friend has a beautiful high crossing shot, and as the bird falls in the water we row up quickly and pull him out with the landing-net. Now there is another high up, but he carries on into a cleft, and all that is left of him to us are some feathers floating lightly in the air.

But now the day is passing apace, and we must make haste to reach the two best caves round that point, upon which the breakers are booming and rolling heavily. The boat heels to the swell, and we seem to be drawing it fine in working round these outlying rocks, where there is an ugly, jumbling sea. But our fishermen-crew know their way well, and we are in safe enough hands. The point is weathered, but the surf will not allow us, alas! to get near enough to the big cave, and it has to be given up. The other seems also difficult of approach, for the swell is much heavier here; but we decide to risk it, for we see pigeons flying about the mouth of the cave, circling and balancing themselves in graceful flight. The boat is taken carefully in and steadied as far as possible; but the shooting promises to be anything but easy. The rifle is again brought into requisition, and out fly a small cloud of pigeons, like a flight of English arrows at Bannockburn or Flodden. One is got as he shoots across our bows, and another as he alights for a moment on a pinnacle of rock high above us; then two more from among some late-departing birds—two misses as a wave heaves us upward, and we are done.

Only one cave remains, and it must always be shot from the landward side and from the top of the cliff. The boat is therefore put about, the sail run up, and we bowl along quickly, round the point again, but farther out to sea this time; then one tack, and we are running up into a long, sandy bay, with deep water almost to the shore. The guns and game, the lobsters and crabs, are unshipped, the necessary *largesse* bestowed, and we bid farewell to our crew, and, heavily laden with our mixed bag, we clamber up the long, grassy defile which leads to the pass by which we are to gain the top of the cliff. As we go we add a couple of those tawny-coloured but excellent rock-rabbits to our game-list, and then struggle on, hot and breathless, up the steep pass—a stiff bit of climbing enough towards the end of a long day's shooting. But at last the top is gained, and we throw ourselves, and the game-bags, on the fresh green grass for a brief respite and a comforting cigarette. Near at hand now is our last cave, and we approach it cautiously. It is a case of hands and knees as we creep silently up to the edge of the cliff, then throw ourselves prostrate on the sward, and peer eagerly over. No pigeons are visible. We must wait a little and send Duncan round to the shore with the rifle.

It is a delightful and charming scene which spreads before us—a fitting close to a varied and interesting day by sea and land. The sun is sloping rapidly towards the west; the sea outside looks calm from this height, and is unbroken by a single sail. To our left rises a cliff-peak of wonderful outline, and clothed to the top, on the landward side, with the most vivid emerald green; while behind it, away to the far south-west, and at a seemingly vast distance, are the bold but misty shapes of the coasts of Antrim and Donegal. To the right, looking purple and white in the clear autumn light, are the Jura Mountains; and, farther to the north, the curved and serrated peaks of Mull—Ben More, Craig-Ben, and the rest. Our guns are resting on a natural battlement of turf, which hides us completely from the entrance to the cave

immediately below us. In front is a narrow gorge, with sides smooth as if cut with a knife, yet starred here and there with bright little clumps of lichen and moss and fresh green ferns, nestling in the crannies. It runs out seaward, contracting as it goes, until it seems a mere slit in the cliffs, through which we can catch a vision of the blue sea. There, down in its dark depths, at least a hundred and fifty feet below us, the waves are booming and churning themselves into white foam as they wash the foot of the cliff; while above us are the glories of a western sky at sunset, and the fresh, vitalising air of the Atlantic. As the accessories given by Nature to a comparatively innocent form of the pursuit of pleasure, I do not think they could have been beaten anywhere. But now Duncan's rifle is heard, and, sure enough, in come two pigeons flying for their lives. One goes down, falling on an easily accessible grassy slope to the left; the other, as he comes straight at us, is badly missed. 'No doubt the easiest way, anyhow,' as Duncan says afterwards. But here is a third, which turns as he scents or sees us. From him the white feathers thickly fly, and he towers and falls sheer down into the yawning gulf beneath and is never seen again, for to retrieve him from thence is practically an impossibility. Then there is a lull, again followed ere long by the renewed crack of the gillie's rifle, and again two or three pigeons fly in. We let them come nearer this time. The first two are hard hit, but we only get one of them—the other carrying on over the cliff seaward. Then two more in a final drive are added to the bag, and the tale is complete—twelve pigeons retrieved, besides at least three shot and lost, six duck, five rock-rabbits, and an assortment of scart, guillemot, lobsters, and crabs, certainly yield us a variety sufficient to please the most fastidious. It was not, perhaps, in numbers a great bag for two guns —far from it; but it must be remembered that it was got under distinctly difficult conditions, and that to shoot from a rocking boat, and retrieve one's game from such broken ground, beetling cliffs, and troubled waters, is easier to write about than to do.

The crescent moon is rising in the east as we start on our twelve miles' drive homeward through the dark brown moors; and we are not sorry to find a late dinner awaiting us on our arrival, tired and hungry, at the comfortable, old-fashioned, whitewashed inn. And so ended my first day amid the attractive cliffs, the seals, and the blue-rocks of the Inner Hebrides—a red-letter day, in many respects, in my little annals of sport. For, after all, it is not in a surfeit of the good things of life that true pleasure is to be found, but in a simple and moderate measure of success, fairly and, perchance, hardly won. And so with sport. A day's 'wild' shooting, with, perhaps, its very moderate yet varied results, got withal in the midst of magnificent surroundings, is often worth three of the ordinary and conventional type, with their set accompaniments and almost mathematical pre-calculations as to results. Rather for me at least, much rather, a day when

> The blackcock rises in the air,
> The grouse sweeps o'er the hill,
> The wild-duck haunts the sedgy pool,
> The morn breaks bright and still.

AN AUTUMN EVENING.

How lingers long the sunset light
This exquisite and tender night!

I see above the tree-tops swim
The little moon's light, slender rim,

A very thread—a trace of light—
The wheeling swallow hides in flight.

Withdrawn to westward, fair and far,
Shines one lit lamp—the evening star.

I hear the little children gay
Who shout across the fields in play,

And by the wayside well I hear
A girl's voice singing sweet and clear.

Oh! many mortals near and far
Look westward to yon sinking star,

With hearts o'erbrimmed with joy divine,
And hearts all desolate like mine.

Yon slight thread of the southern moon
Shall round to bright perfection soon.

Yon sunset star, so far withdrawn,
Be glorious leader of the dawn.

And long, long ages sound hereafter
Love's happy song and childhood's laughter

For me, how hard it is to think
That stars return not when they sink.

How far, how dwindled seems the day
When I was of the children's play!

That song how far, how lost, how dear,
That from a stranger's lips I hear!

Love set: what rises?—in the gray
Still twilight slides my life away.

But yet I hear in other voices
Echoes of life that still rejoices.

I do not grudge them any gladness
Before the silence and the sadness.

Soon all alike, laid very low,
Shall neither hear nor feel nor know;

Nor watch the hastening even star
Plunge in the west so fair, so far.

A. S. FALCONER.

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MODERN HOTELS.

A STORY is told of a brilliant idea struck out by an enterprising Frenchman named Baubier, who found himself the sole proprietor of a small shanty and a single blanket on the ground upon which the original Chicago had just struck its roots, and to which people were flocking in such numbers that shelter could not be got for love nor money. M. Baubier, with ready wit, determined to start an hotel. He charged three dollars a night for the privilege of camping down upon the floor of his shanty and the use of his blanket—money in advance. As soon as the first weary prospector gave evidence by his hearty snoring that he was safely asleep, the landlord gently drew off the blanket and took in another customer on the same terms. He afterwards boasted that the patrons of his hotel thus were able to get seven 'sleeps' out of that one blanket the first night.

That little incident would make an interesting and convenient starting-point for a history of the development of the modern hotel. One could hardly wish for anything more rudimentary; to trace the growth of that germinal idea up to its big houses of Saratoga or New York, or such establishments as the 'Hotel Cecil' in London and the 'Adelphi' in Liverpool, would be very striking. Somewhere probably about half-way up the scale would be the house of entertainment of which Dr Johnson was wont to speak so highly. 'There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness has been produced as by a good tavern or inn,' said the dogmatic Doctor. What the great man's opinion would have been about the modern representative of his tavern or inn it would be extremely interesting to hear if he could revisit the glimpses of the moon.

There is at least as much difference between the best of taverns of Dr Johnson's day and the best of modern hotels as there was between M. Baubier's shanty and the Doctor's favourite resort. The modern first-class hotel has very little in common with the homely snuggeries in which our grandfathers and great-grandfathers were wont to find 'good accommodation for man and beast.' It is not a house; it is a vast palace of the most sumptuous and splendid character, with resources and appliances, organisation and services, almost as varied if not so extensive as those of a modern city, and presenting almost as many social grades.

One of the earliest of the modern Brobdingnagian hotels was set up on the Broadway of New York. It was foredoomed to ignominious failure; it never could be half-filled; it was impossible it could pay; there were not, and there never could be, travellers enough to keep it going; the foolhardy speculators would lose all their money. So the critics said. But the Americans took to the thing at once—in a great measure because of the extreme difficulty of getting and keeping and managing domestic servants; and many of them liked it so well that they went and lived in the hotel altogether. They found that they were relieved of all the troubles of housekeeping, were absolutely free to dispose of themselves and their time as they thought proper, knew exactly what their expenses were, and above all had no worries about servants. A good many on this side the Atlantic have regularly adopted hotel life; but the idea has not 'caught on' with us to the same extent, and we have not, therefore, so many big hotels. New York and some of the American watering-places still take the lead in point of size; but the latest of the London hotels have been rapidly overtaking them. One of the most recently established of them—the Hotel Cecil—is just now completing its original design, and when this completion has been effected it will not be far behind the largest in existence. In point of internal splendour and completeness of equipment it is already quite equal to the finest in the world.

These modern palaces are marvels of artificial life; and if one can only adopt Iago's suggestion—liberally interpreted—and put money in his purse,

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he may live in one of them probably with less grit and friction in his wheels of life and fewer crumpled rose-leaves on his couch than under any other circumstances known to this troublesome world of ours. To know how wonderful an organisation a modern large hotel is, one needs, of course, to see much more than comes under his notice as a visitor. In some of the largest, indeed, to see the whole of it one would have to begin a good way off. The vast caravanserai just alluded to, for instance, situated in central London, has out in the suburbs its own model farm, where it raises its own poultry, runs its own dairy, and grows flowers and shrubs and other things for decorative purposes, to the value, it is said, of something like £8000 a year—flowers and greenery alone! These things come jogging in by wagon and cart into a sort of goods depôt down in the basement of the vast pile towering up no less than twelve stories overhead. It is a strange, bewildering region of utilitarian ugliness—this nether world stretching away right and left from that stony roadway by which the vehicles come in; and one who has dropped down into it from the light and glittering splendour above will hardly fail to have Dante's Inferno suggested to his thoughts as he moves about the gloomy corridors, scales the bare, bleak, stone staircases, and passes from one to the other of the departments in which the Sybarites up in the realms above are being provided for. As one moves about the intricate labyrinth of kitchens and pantries, stores and engine-rooms, workshops and bakeries, he catches glimpses of a sort of under-world counterpart of the Elysium above—plainly furnished but comfortable sitting-rooms and dining-rooms and smoking-rooms, in which—not all together, for social status in this under-world is quite as real, if not as varied, as in the realms above—the various ranks of the staff are resting and getting a little social intercourse, or taking their meals at large and seemingly well-spread tables. Luncheon is over with the hotel visitors, the great building is comparatively deserted, and for two or three brief hours the rush and hurry of business has died down and there is a breathing space for all—cooks and waiters and messengers, café attendants, interpreters, and so on. There seems to be quite a large secondary hotel down here, for in one capacity or another there are said to be between six and seven hundred people employed about the establishment, and, as large numbers of them have to get their meals on the premises, and a good many live here altogether, the catering for the staff and the management of the house arrangements for them constitute no inconsiderable part of the business of any large hotel.

The kitchen is, of course, the largest department of the service. The *chef* is a most important personage, and in the largest hotels he may have a hundred men under his command, and he will have such appliances as Dr Johnson and the worthy and witty people who dined with him at the 'Mitre' or the 'Cheshire Cheese' could never have dreamed of. Indeed, the whole of the lower regions of a large modern hotel—and the upper regions even more—would give the estimable Doctor many an uncomfortable twinge of a sense of the uncanny and perhaps some suspicion of witchcraft. A door is thrown open, and the touching of an electric switch sets in motion revolving refrigerators for making ice-cream. Another door, heavily barred, is thrown back, and one steps into a chamber hung round with joints of meat, and in which is a range of iron pipes all aglitter with hoar-frost and icicles at midsummer. There is a similar cold store for fish and another for poultry, and there is an ice-well in which the electric light brilliantly illuminates tons of artificially produced ice. A little farther on is some very fine machinery, flashing with miniature lightning and generating electricity for various machines and for the electric-lighting of the whole huge pile. Then comes a wet and steaming range of subterranean apartments in which the finest of modern machines are doing the washing for the whole establishment. Table-cloths and serviettes, bed-linen and personal clothing, anything and everything requiring washing may be dealt with here—washed, wrung, dried, starched, ironed, or mangled—at the rate of perhaps three or four thousand articles a day. Although all the main processes are performed by machinery, there may be five-and-twenty or thirty people employed in this laundry. Here is a fine bakery, with all the newest appliances for making all the bread required by the hotel; a pastry-cook's department in which all the cakes and tarts and other nick-nacks are made; and there is a separate confectioner's department seeming to be chiefly employed in making sugary embellishments of the most marvellous variety for the dinner-tables in the sumptuous halls above. One long room is all ablaze with the glitter of plate, and thirty men are regularly employed for fourteen hours a day in keeping it bright. Knife-cleaning is done by rotary machines, but boot-cleaning is still a matter of hand-labour, though boot-cleaning machines have been introduced, and probably in some hotels are used. Some of the most extensive, however, still do the work by hand-labour. There may be for a large hotel twenty of these men who go on duty at twelve o'clock at night, and polish away steadily all the night through. A big hotel also does its own printing, and it has its carpenters' and upholsterers' shop, and must necessarily always have on its premises a brigade of perhaps a dozen or fifteen firemen.

And now from the under-world of labour let us betake ourselves to the modern substitute for the magician's flying carpet—the hydraulic lift, that is to say. In the largest of the London

hotels there are sixteen of these flying boxes that go with their brilliant electric light flashing up and down from roof to cellar and from cellar to roof with a celerity that would fairly have astounded the company at the 'Cheshire Cheese.' When Johnson and his friends assembled there, no such hydraulic power was known, and, in the best of taverns, people—if they were sober—went up to bed by the good old-fashioned process of walking upstairs, and if they were not sober enough to walk they had to be carried. One hardly knows whether the stiff-necked Doctor would have taken kindly to the innovation, or whether on being invited to step into the lift he would have stubbornly gibbed. 'Sir,' we can imagine him blurting out, 'it's a mere pandering to laziness and a tempting of Providence. I'll go upstairs.'

Every luxury that money can buy or science invent or art produce may be found in a great modern hotel—marble staircases, handsomely furnished corridors, magnificent saloons and halls, smoking-rooms and billiard-rooms, bath and reading rooms, libraries and private studies and drawing-rooms, and great concert and entertainment halls. Nearly every room has its telephone; there is a telegraph office and a post office, and the leading agencies pour in their piping-hot news from all the ends of the earth, just as they do into the newspaper offices and the leading clubs all over the kingdom. A touch of a button will summon an attendant who will take orders for an opera-box or a carriage-and-pair, for the daintiest foods or the choicest wines. It is a fairy scene of luxury and wealth, of light and glitter and colour, of palms and flowers, of mirrors and pictures and statuary; and as one passes out from the splendid vestibule he finds a large gathering of men and women of various nationalities lounging in cushioned chairs around little tables in the open air, quietly chatting, watching arrivals and departures, smoking cigarettes and cigars and sipping tea and coffee, and listening to the delicious strains of the hotel band. Wealth and art and taste and science, and the highest powers of organisation, have all combined here to afford the most luxurious and indulgent conditions of existence; and yet, as one looks round upon the faces of the guests, one feels that four out of five of them would, if they were questioned, and answered quite frankly, agree that after all 'there is no place like home.' The writer of this article has at different times stayed in many of the best hotels of the kingdom; but he has always been delighted to get home, and he has never altogether overcome some feeling of compassion for the poor rich people who always live in hotels.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VIII.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY'S MONEY.

WHEN another morning dawned with a red flush upon the waves there was still no abatement of the gale. Appalling ravages, occasioned by this almost unprecedented storm, were already being reported. Everywhere wreckage could be seen upon the shores cast up by a mighty wind and tide. A fishing-smack had been lost off Scarborough; a steamship had gone down off Flamborough Head, with all hands; a sloop, while endeavouring to enter Grimsby harbour, had struck the pier with a terrific crash and had almost instantly sunk. Such was the disastrous news from every point. The catastrophes were innumerable and heart-rending. In more than one seaport town, and far inland, great damage had been done. Houses had been stripped, their gable-ends blown in, and the streets strewn with débris. The wreck of the *Seagull*, a schooner that had drifted on to the flats off Saltfleet, was talked about for miles round.

This red dawn, looking in at John's garret window, found him lying upon a chair-bed with a thick rug wrapped about him. He was fast asleep. But as the daylight increased, and the wind roared in the warehouse roof overhead, he began to stir. Suddenly he started and awoke. He stared about him with an air of bewilderment until his eyes rested upon his bed, which stood beside the chair-bed. He raised himself on his elbow and bent forward. Some one was lying there—some one with bruised limbs and lacerated face—who met his look with a look of gratitude.

'Jarvis—my good friend'——

'Keep quiet, Tudway,' John interposed. 'You mustn't talk, you know. Those were the doctor's orders, and'——

'One word. Were none of 'em rescued after all?'

'None. You're the only one saved.'

'And if it hadn't been for you, my friend'——

'Tut!'

'If it hadn't been for you,' Tudway persisted, 'I should have been drowned too.'

Yes; Jarvis had saved his life. He had saved the life of the man whom Hettie loved. More than that; for in the look that Hettie had given him when he had expressed his resolve to go to the assistance of the wrecked crew, Jarvis had

discovered her love for Tudway was deeper than she had herself realised until then. It had been fully awakened. And now words of gratitude had come from Tudway. It was hard enough to bear from Hettie. He did not need their gratitude. He had simply done his duty: he had saved a life, and by so doing he had given Hettie all the happiness in his power; and the mere thought of this, though he despaired for his own happiness, was in itself a reward.

Before night there came a lull in the storm; and on the following morning at daybreak, like a dying giant, it had given vent to a final groan and was dead.

That evening Tudway, though severely buffeted from head to foot while escaping from the wreck, was sufficiently recovered to hobble downstairs. With the aid of a thick stick and John's stout arm he contrived to join Hettie and Ruth at their fireside.

'Won't you tell us now,' said Ruth, turning to Tudway, 'how the *Seagull* got aground? We have been longing to hear your account of the storm; haven't we, Hettie?'

'Indeed we have,' was Hettie's reply.

'Well,' Tudway commenced, 'it's not a long yarn. We were within a short distance of Newcastle, not long after midnight, when the wind freshened. The gale struck us suddenly and took away all our sails except the mizzen. We began to drift—drifted back on to this coast, where we cast our anchor. Our other anchor had got entangled in the steering gear, and we couldn't get it to go. Then we started showing signals of distress. All through the night we kept a fire going on deck. We drifted for three or four hours before we struck in the sand. When we struck we all took to the rigging. We had no boats—they had both been smashed; the sea broke them up and washed them away. Then the mast went, and threw us all into the water. I started to swim ashore. The others swam towards the wreckage. Jarvis can tell you the rest.'

He held out his hand to John: so did Hettie; but Ruth kept shyly in the background. If Jarvis had glanced up at that moment, and had seen the look on Ruth's face, he would have learned her woman's secret. The girl's eyes brimmed over with tears. If she had ventured to express a word of gratitude by word or action, her love would have assuredly been betrayed.

Some days went by. One afternoon, finding himself alone with Hettie in the little parlour, Tudway broached the subject that had been uppermost in his mind since the night upon which he had been saved from the wreck.

'Hettie,' said he as he lay upon the sofa smoking a cigarette in a luxurious, invalided fashion, 'you've not forgotten our last talk in Uncle Tudway's cabin?'

'It was an eventful day,' said Hettie thoughtfully. 'It was a day of disasters. Ruth and I have been in trouble ever since.'

'I know it, Hettie. My good friend Jarvis,' said Tudway, 'has told me everything. We will speak of that presently. Tell me, Hettie, first of all, do you remember your promise?'

'My promise, Ted?'

'Yes, dear; the promise you gave as we sat together,' said he. 'I was to have the answer when I came back. Hettie, the night upon which I swam ashore, cut with ropes and numbed with the cold, your name was on my lips. The thought of you encouraged me to fight for dear life. I determined to come back to you in spite of the storm. Don't tell me you are still in doubt. You will be my wife now, dear; won't you?'

He had thrown away his cigarette, and as he spoke he held out his hand.

'I'm in doubt no longer,' said she. 'I love you.'

Tudway drew her eagerly towards him. Then she went on: 'But you don't know, Ted,' said she confidingly, with an earnest uplifted face, 'what serious doubts I have had about my love. But the moment that Ruth told me of the rumour that was spreading—the rumour that the *Seagull* was in distress off Saltfleet—I knew that I loved you. It's strange, isn't it? Ruth was quick to read my thoughts. She gave one look into my face. I feared you were in danger: I realised then, and only then, what your love was to me.'

They were silent for a while. Then Tudway lit another cigarette, and said: 'Hettie, I do believe Uncle Tudway's dream is coming true.'

'What dream?'

'The dream of his life,' said Tudway; 'the dream that he told me he has had a thousand times while aboard the *Nancy*. Do you remember my telling you, as we sat in his cabin, how I had often seen him smoking his pipe there when the *Nancy* came into port? That's when the dream mostly took a hold upon him—as he owned to me when I saw him last—the dream of seeing me a married man, and'——

'You'll marry a penniless girl, Ted,' Hettie interposed, 'if you marry me. But I warned you; didn't I?'

'Stop! Wait till you know all,' said Tudway.

He then related how the great desire of his uncle's life had always been, though he had spoken of it to no one, that Hettie should marry his nephew, and that this nephew should become a partner in Beek & Son's house; that he was, moreover, willing and wealthy enough to purchase a share in the timber business.

'Too late,' said Hettie.

'Too late? Now, Hettie,' said Tudway, 'listen to me. You're a woman of business, and you're not in the least likely to misunderstand. I've had a talk with Jarvis. He has told me all about Burtenshaw's threat.'

'What threat? He has told me nothing.'

'The threat to foreclose the day after to-morrow unless'——

'What?'

'Now, Hettie, the three thousand pounds must be found at once,' Tudway resumed. 'Captain Tudway is the man to apply to; and before Burtenshaw has had time to turn round, my dear, we shall have sailed out of his reach.'

Hettie looked brightened at the prospect.

'If it were possible,' said she. Then she added: 'But you won't be well enough to travel for days to come.'

'I've thought of that. The man to talk this matter over with my uncle—the man to put the whole business lucidly before him—is Jarvis. And what's more, Hettie, our friend John has agreed to go to London, if you've no objection, by the first train to-morrow morning.'

Jarvis had been left no choice. He had approved of Tudway's suggestion unhesitatingly. The chance of winning Hettie was gone; but the chance of befriending her and of saving the fortunes of Beek & Son was still held out. For her sake he was still willing to serve the firm. The impetus that had impelled him—the forlorn hope of capturing Hettie Beek—was no longer a computed force in his determined course of action. He had mounted to the highest rungs of the ladder, but the prize had slipped from his grasp. He valued his position only so far as it was useful to Hettie. If he had consulted his own inclination at this moment, as a weak and selfish nature would unquestionably have done, Jarvis never would have undertaken to go on this errand. He would have abandoned Hettie—abandoned her to others when she needed him most. John Jarvis had been almost prepared, in his desperate love for Hettie, to sell his very soul to Lawyer Burtenshaw. He was now eager to throw over the lawyer, and negotiate with Captain Tudway for a partnership in Beek & Son—a partnership for the man who had unwittingly supplanted him in the girl's affections.

Jarvis was hourly expected at Nelson Square. Captain Tudway's nephew had prepared the way with an eulogistic letter which instantly secured for Beek's manager the heartiest welcome. On the afternoon of John's visit Captain Tudway forgot all about his nap.

'Come in, John—come in,' sang out the old captain in a jovial voice when Jarvis knocked at the door of his snug cabin on the second floor. 'You're the lad for me! What cheer?' He had known John for years. He grasped his hand in both his own; and the muscular force with which he did it—as Jarvis afterwards remarked—completely upset the captain's favourite theory that he was 'breaking up.'

'Saved Ed'ard's life, did ye? Why, bless my eyes!' said Uncle Tudway as soon as Jarvis had taken a seat beside the hearth, 'let's drink his health. Saved Ed'ard's life. Ay, ay! Thank ye, my lad. Thank yer, kindly.'

There were glasses on the table all ready at hand; the brass kettle was singing cheerily on the hob; the grog was speedily mixed; and then the toast was drunk with great fervour—at least on the part of the captain. If Jarvis showed less enthusiasm than Uncle Tudway, that was surely excusable.

It would have been impossible to find a better delegate than Jarvis. By saving young Tudway's life he had done most to help the captain to realise his dream. Uncle Tudway fully conceived the situation—knew, indeed, that Jarvis loved Hettie, and appreciated his heroism all the more.

'Now for the yarn,' the captain insisted, putting down his empty glass. 'We'll go into t'other business presently. First and foremost, John, let's hear how you came to save my nevvy's life.'

Captain Tudway had received every detail about the wreck in a letter from his nephew. He had read an account of the inquest upon those of the poor fellows belonging to the *Seagull* who had been washed ashore at Saltfleet; but he listened to all that Jarvis recounted concerning the catastrophe with as much interest as if it were new to him from first to last. 'Now, John,' said he when Jarvis had brought his 'yarn' to a conclusion, 'I'll tell you what I'm prepared to do. Is that your bag?'

The captain pointed to a brown leathern bag with J. J. upon it, on the floor at John's side.

'Yes, that's mine.'

Captain Tudway rose from his chair and limped across to his sea-chest. This chest he unlocked and brought out three packets. 'One thousand—two thousand—three thousand,' said he, as he cast them one after the other upon the table, and rang out of them a loud musical clink of gold; 'three thousand pounds. Isn't that the sum you need?'

'Yes. But'——

'Stop a bit,' Captain Tudway interposed, with one of his knowing winks. 'Pay the old pirate in hard cash to-morrow morning and be quit of him. Do you understand?'

Jarvis nodded and dropped the packets into his bag.

'Now mark my words,' the captain went on. 'I refuse to enter into any further negotiations with a view to buying a share in this ship-breaking business while Gabriel Beek is connected with the concern. He has nearly sunk the craft as it is; he's a danger to every one aboard; and we must be rid of him straightway.'

Jarvis readily acquiesced.

'We must buy him out,' said Captain Tudway, 'if needs be; and then we'll launch the house of Tudway & Jarvis, ship-breakers at Cablethorpe,

as soon as you please. Does that sound like business?'

John declared that it sounded very like business; and presently, having drunk one glass more, he took his leave.

Uncle Tudway was in a jovial mood to-night. All his doubts were gone. He had hoarded up his money wisely after all. The captain plunged his hands into the capacious pockets of his pea-coat, and drew forth his pipe, his negrohead tobacco, and his box of matches; and then he brewed himself a stiff glass of hot grog. He smilingly contemplated the insinuating mixture through a cloud of smoke. The thought that he had already parted with some of his gold in an appropriate manner pleased him mightily; any dread that he had had of becoming a miser was dismissed from his mind, and he began to regard the 'dream of his life' as something as good as realised.

When Jarvis reached Willoughby Junction on his way home it was ten o'clock. The local train to Cablethorpe was due at the Junction at ten-thirty. Fatigued with his long journey—he had risen before daybreak that morning—he pondered drowsily over the situation. It never occurred to him, nor would it have occurred to him in his most wakeful moments, that he was anything of a hero. And yet he had not only saved young Tudway's life, he had sacrificed his own happiness without a murmur; he had given up all thoughts of Hettie Beek; and he had now taken the first step towards the reconstruction of the house at a time when—had he followed his own inclination—to have turned his back upon Cablethorpe would have pleased him best.

Still, while brooding over the irony of his own fate, one reflection brought an exultant smile to John's face. Gabriel Beek, the man who had opposed him since boyhood, would no longer stand in his way. The thought that he might return, and assert his legitimate right to take the helm, had filled Jarvis with dread. Captain Tudway's ultimatum had removed that dread at last.

At this moment, however, Jarvis happened to look up. By the light of a bright lamp in the station he saw a threatening face at the waiting-room window. It was the face of Gabriel Beek.

(To be continued.)

THE OXFORD OF SCOTLAND.

THE 'Gray City by the Northern Sea' has no doubt changed somewhat since Henry Cockburn, with his almost unrivalled power of graphically describing what came under his own eye, photographed it more than half-a-century ago in his *Journal:* 'It is the asylum of repose—a city of refuge for those who can't live in the country, but wish for as little town as possible. All is in unison with the ruins, the still surviving edifices, the academical institutions, and the past history of the place. On the whole it is the best Pompeii in Scotland. If the professors and the youths be not learned and studious it is their own fault. They have everything to excite ambition—books, tranquillity, and old inspiration. If anything more were needed, they have it in their extensive links, their singular rocks, their miles of the most admirable dry sand. There cannot be better sea-walks. The prospects are not very good, except, perhaps, on such a day as I had—a day of absolute calmness and brightness; when every distant object glitters, and the horizon of the ocean in its landless quarter trembles in light, and white sea-birds stand on one leg on the warm rocks, and the water drags itself out in long unbroken waves as if it was playing with the beautiful bays. But, though tranquillity is deeply impressed on the whole place, the inhabitants are not solitary. On the contrary, among themselves they are very social. Except those who choose to study, they are all idle; and having all a competency, they are exactly the sort of people who can be gregarious without remorse, and are allured into parties by the necessity of keeping awake. They have a local pleasure of their own which is as much the staple of St Andrews as old colleges and churches. This is golfing, which is there not a mere pastime, but a business and a passion, and has for ages been so. This pursuit draws many a middle-aged gentleman, whose stomach requires exercise and his purse cheap pleasure, to reside there with his family. It is the established recreation of all the learning and all the dignity of the town.'

No doubt St Andrews has in certain social and other respects been considerably altered since Cockburn wrote. It has, in particular, become an important watering-place, frequented during the months of July, August, and September by visitors from all parts of England as well as of Scotland. It may still be 'an asylum of repose' during the winter and early spring; but the monster hotels that have sprung up have taken away its character as a Pompeii, while, as for the staple industry, it was well said by a humorous writer in the *Cornhill Magazine* more than twenty years ago: 'Of the visitors who frequent it, some come with the avowed intention of doing nothing but play golf, while others basely represent to their wives and families that they come for the sake of bracing air and sea-bathing.'

Golf, being played steadily all the year round

by the St Andrews residents—who are never quite happy except when the visitors are away—is still in a sense the staple industry of the place. But its supremacy as such has been threatened during late years by education. Of course 'the college of the scarlet gown' has always had its attraction for a limited number of students. Even in its darkest hour, when, owing to such agricultural depression as has now rendered imperative an appeal to the English public on behalf of Cambridge, the incomes of certain of its professors fell below that of a second-class teacher in a Board school, the number of students never was less than one hundred and fifty. Then a local benefactor of the name of Bell gave St Andrews, as he gave other towns in Fifeshire, a secondary school styled, from his connection with India, the Madras College, and which has always been well attended. Finally, the salubrity of the St Andrews climate, along with its other charms, has led to the establishment of an unprecedentedly large number of private schools for both boys and girls. The institutions for boys have secured a high reputation in the very different fields of scholarship and athletics, while it will never be forgotten of one of the schools for girls, St Leonard's College, that a pupil, Miss Ramsay, now Mrs Butler and wife of the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, carried off the blue ribbon of classical scholarship in that university.

There can be no question that all St Andrews requires to become an almost ideal educational city or capital is the completion or perfection of its university, the rendering of it the central and supporting arch of the whole.

That a very great deal has been done in this direction, whoever takes the trouble to compare the present condition of the university—which, as the chance-visitor sees, combines modern comfort with mediæval charm—with the descriptions given of it three-quarters of a century or even fifty years ago will at once allow. One of Scotland's almost innumerable University Commissions investigated St Andrews in 1827. It found St Mary's College—which now suggests Oxford more readily than anything else in Scotland, 'wretched and dilapidated.' Even the newer buildings were in such a state that one of the professors 'was ashamed when people came to see the colleges.' And that charming essayist, the late Sir John Skelton, so much better known as Shirley, has testified that when Dr Robert Lee, the well-known minister of Greyfriars in Edinburgh, professor and ecclesiastical 'innovator,' studied in St Andrews, about 1821, he found it a dark, sombre, ruinous, ill-lighted, badly-paved, old-fashioned, old-mannered, secluded place in which 'old-fashioned professors and old-fashioned ladies looked after keen-eyed, threadbare students, who, in red and ragged gowns, like the early Edinburgh Reviewers, cultivated the Muses on a little oatmeal!' One has but to look upon that picture and on this, to contrast—as even the casual visitor can easily do—the St Andrews of Dr Lee's day with the St Andrews of the present time, to see what a change has come over the old university, in spite of great difficulties, the complete story of which has yet to be told.

Writing four years ago, with a full knowledge not only of his first college but of Oxford, Mr Andrew Lang thus describes the changes that have taken place in what he loves, not less than Mr Matthew Arnold loved, as 'mine own St Andrews:' 'The old college buildings have been removed, except that tall block which contains Dr Chalmers's classroom and the little museum with Kennedy's maces and the silver arrows, with the medals of Argyle and Montrose. The new buildings are adequate and airy; they contain no rooms for students, who live in the town. The old house next the college, with the saint in a niche of the tower, is the Union; it answers the purposes of the Union at Oxford and Cambridge. There is dinner in hall daily, a thing not usual in Scotch universities. The numbers of the students are as high as they ever have been, except perhaps in the years of Dr Chalmers's attractions. The university has received a considerable bequest from an Australian benefactor; additional chairs have been founded, and there is a kind of unholy alliance or amalgamation with Dundee College.' In these last words Mr Lang makes a playful allusion to a dispute—in many respects unfortunate—which has led to much heart-burning and even to a good deal of litigation, and which has been occasioned by attempts to unite a college which was founded about a quarter of a century ago in Dundee by an enlightened and wealthy lady—Miss Baxter—with the old university. It does not fall within the scope of the present article to make any comment upon the merits or demerits of this quarrel, which threatened at one time to destroy the usefulness of St Andrews. Happily, however, there is now a prospect of its being brought to an amicable close, and of the two colleges being united after a fashion which will make the reorganised university one of the best-equipped institutions of the kind in the country.

As things are, and in spite of disputes, St Andrews has, owing partly to the generosity of parliament and partly to the gratitude of wealthy sons like Mr Berry, the Australian benefactor alluded to by Mr Lang, who left his *alma mater* no less a sum than £100,000, recently taken a new lease of life. The incomes of the professors have been so very greatly increased during the past twenty years, partly by such benefactions as that of Mr Berry, and partly by parliamentary grant and other direct or indirect State subvention, that the occupant of a St Andrews chair has now almost no inducement to leave it. In none of the other universities are students so well off for special endowment as are the undergraduates of St Andrews; each of them enjoys—or can enjoy if he chooses—a bursary that is never lower than £10, and may even rise to £30, a year. St Andrews

also promises to become the favourite university for girls in Scotland. Even if it should not become in all respects the Scottish Oxford, it is already recognised as the Scottish Girton. The salubrity of the town, its natural beauty, and its quaint historical charm have attracted to it female students from all parts of the country ever since the Scottish Universities Act of 1889 threw open the national colleges to women, and still more since a hall of residence was built for their accommodation. Such, indeed, has been the rush of girls to St Andrews during the past nine years that it alone of the Scottish universities shows an increase of matriculations, the institution of a 'stiff' preliminary examination having very considerably reduced the number of the entrants at Aberdeen, Glasgow, and above all Edinburgh. Leaving Dundee College out of consideration, the students' roll for last winter session was 236—a larger attendance than has ever been attained within living memory. One of the leading academic tendencies of the time—a tendency of which not a little is certain to be heard in the future—is towards the encouragement of what is known as 'post-graduate research,' or studies pursued by men who have completed their university careers and taken the degree of Master of Arts, but desire to greatly amplify their knowledge of subjects that have a special fascination for them. No doubt an 'endowment of research' in this sense is required by all the Scottish universities—an endowment which will take the form of Scholarships and Fellowships of much greater value than the few prizes of the kind at present in existence. The Scholars or Fellows of the future, however, will probably find St Andrews, with its quietude, its historical memories, and its links, still presided over by the veteran Tom Morris, and still inviting to healthy but not too violent exercise, more congenial to them than busy cities like Edinburgh and Glasgow. In a quarter of a century St Andrews will celebrate the quincentenary of its existence. If by that time it can boast of 350 or 400 students in all, male and female, engaged in undergraduate study or post-graduate research, it will have fulfilled its mission, and realised the dream of its founders, by becoming in truth, and not merely in name, the Oxford of Scotland.

ARCADES AMBO.

By Henry Martley.

MY elder sister Monica possesses a mission in life. What its exact nature may be I do not know, nor, I think, does she; but it has always been an axiom in the family that the mission exists. At present it has taken no more extended form than desultory visiting in the village and teaching in the Sunday school. At times she has hankered either for work among the heathen or for hospital nursing; but the visions are both so attractive that she has been unable to decide between them, apart from such minor difficulties as an inevitable parental veto and the practical discomforts of either pursuit. The result is that her village ministrations are inadequate, and she is compelled to fill up her time with domestic well-doing. Personally I did not suffer much from her improving influence. While I was still in the schoolroom, I fancy that I did regard her with awe, and mother on grave occasions used to send her to talk seriously to me, much as I had been dosed for physical ailments in earlier days. For quite ten minutes afterwards I would be seized with exalted ambitions to be worthy of the place in life which Monica explained a woman ought to fill.

Lately, however, I had been emancipated, and Monica in despair had ceased even to upbraid me with that unutterably wistful gaze of hers. Good advice had become a thing of the past some time before the gaze. I am sure I was to blame for neglecting such excellent opportunities, but a face like a Madonna's and an aureole of golden hair are thrown away on a younger sister. Besides, she had found plenty of raw material without requisitioning me. I had almost lost count of the number of young men whose nobler feelings she had roused. Why she chose them almost exclusively as her proselytes was a question which uncharitable people might debate. Of course young men may need improvement more than women or elderly men; but at the same time I think they should have been made to understand the nature of the proceedings more clearly than they did. In the course of becoming high-souled they had a habit of proposing to Monica, and she was compelled to dismiss them with an air of benediction. For a day or two she would go about with the martyred air of the misunderstood. They departed with an awe-stricken expression, as though they had laughed in church.

Most of the young men were comparatively strangers, including a large percentage of curates. I do not say this by way of innuendo, but simply to explain why I was annoyed when Monica applied herself to the task of improving George Ingram. We had known Mr Ingram as a boy; and, though we had not seen much of him for some years, he was still, when after his father's death he settled down near us, a nice boy who needed no improvement. Monica, however, took him in hand. What was the precise form of spiritual malady which she discovered in him I

did not know, but the regeneration went its usual course. For a month or so he was much interested in the discussion of the higher idealities in their application to himself. Then the violet eyes and wavy hair took effect, and he began to display the accustomed symptoms of misunderstanding Monica. The time seemed ripe for the parting benediction. What puzzled me was that it was so long in coming. Perhaps he was an unusually interesting patient; but—I admit it ought not to have occurred to me—the other young men had not been exactly eligible, and Mr Ingram was a young man whom more worldly people than Monica might have regarded as materially acceptable.

Matters were in this condition when George passed the lawn one afternoon after a protracted interview with Monica. He was looking unutterably dejected when he appeared, and it was not until he had nearly reached the gate that he sighted me. Then, after a moment's hesitation, he turned back.

'Miss Kitty,' he began dismally, 'do you mind my talking to you?'

'I have no very violent objection,' I said.

'Well,' he went on, 'you understand what it's about, of course?'

'You look,' I said, 'as if it was cholera—very bad cholera. Is it?'

'Please don't laugh at me. It's—well, you must have noticed—it's Monica—Miss Ellis, I mean,' he explained with a gulp.

'You're—er——?' I said.

'Yes,' he answered; 'and of course it's quite hopeless, quite useless. It is quite hopeless, isn't it, Miss Kitty?'

'I haven't any idea,' I replied. 'Was that what you came to ask me about?'

'I thought you might know,' he said. 'You can't tell me at all?'

'Not in the least.'

'She's—she's an angel,' he remarked.

'Several people have said that,' I agreed.

'Of course they have,' he said enthusiastically, 'and I'm—what do you think of me candidly, Miss Kitty?'

'Well, candidly,' I replied, 'I think you're a fool.'

'A fool? Why do you say that?' he asked, with some indignation. It is annoying to be called a fool when you want to be considered an irredeemable castaway.

'Mooncalf perhaps expresses it better,' I said.

'Mooncalf?' he exclaimed.

'Yes,' I observed; 'a young creature who moons about.'

'I thought perhaps you'd be nice about it,' he murmured, preparing to go.

'So I am,' I said. 'I'm telling you some useful home-truths. Doesn't even Monica do that too?'

'Yes,' he admitted; 'but then, you see, she sympathises with one. She's wonderfully sympathetic.'

'She is,' I agreed again; 'she's susceptible to almost any emotion.'

'What do you mean?' he inquired.

'Will you listen to my advice—as it's meant?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said doubtfully.

'Well,' I went on, 'do you know the strongest emotion in an angel—like Monica?'

'Religion?' he suggested reverentially.

'No—jealousy,' I said.

'Jealousy?' he answered in a puzzled way. 'Do you really mean if I—er—er——?'

'Exactly,' I said. 'There have been several mooncalves before you, and mooning doesn't pay.'

'Several others?' he exclaimed with some warmth.

'A whole drove of them,' I said, 'and they've come and gone.'

'Several, have there? But it sounds so preposterous. Do you really think that she'd mind if I and some other girl——? She wouldn't mind, I expect, would she? I don't see how she could. If she didn't care at all for me it wouldn't matter to her.'

'No,' I said; 'but it might make her care for you. I also am a woman—though a little lower than the angels. It's good advice, but you can take it or leave it.'

'If it really was any good,' he faltered; 'but I couldn't—after all she's done for me. It would be dishonourable.'

'Very well,' I said.

'But, Miss Kitty,' he began again, 'do you really think it might make some difference?'

'Oh, young man, young man,' I exclaimed with impatience, 'does a girl care most for a man when he's making little of himself to her, or when another girl's making much of him?'

'Thank you very much,' he said, 'but I couldn't. Thank you all the same. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye,' I answered.

'And where's the other girl?' he went on, still waiting irresolutely.

'Oh, you must find her yourself,' I said.

'There are so few girls about here,' he suggested.

'There are several nice girls.'

'But the other girl—what would she think?' he asked.

'Of course she'd have to know,' I explained.

'But I couldn't possibly tell another girl,' he said, aghast.

'All right,' I replied. 'It was merely a suggestion thrown out, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.'

He took his leave once more, and was almost out of sight when he stopped, and then walked slowly back again.

'Miss Kitty,' he faltered, 'I'm afraid I may make you angry'——

'You certainly will if you go on digging up the tennis ground with your stick,' I said.

'I'm sorry. I wasn't thinking,' he went on. 'It seems such a strange request; but would a sister do for the other girl?'

'If you can't find any one better, perhaps she might,' I replied.

'You see,' he explained, 'it would be so convenient. You know all about it, and understand everything, and all that.'

'Yes, I should be very convenient,' I agreed.

'I should be awfully obliged to you,' he explained; 'and would you—mind very much?'

'It's not a very pleasant position,' I suggested. 'However, under the circumstances, perhaps I might do it.'

'Of course,' he agreed, 'it will be very painful for both of us; but you really do think it's a good plan, do you?'

'Oh, do it or don't,' I snapped in disgust.

'I think I will try it,' he said slowly. 'When shall we begin?'

'Really,' I protested, 'you are the most irritating man I ever had the misfortune to come across. Have you never—let us say—talked pleasantly to a girl before?'

'Oh, of course,' he said sadly; 'but it came naturally then. That was before I knew Monica so well. You won't mind my calling her Monica, will you?'

'Not in the least,' I said. 'Have you decided when and how you intend to start?'

'What would you suggest?' he inquired funereally.

'Mr Ingram,' I said indignantly, getting up from my chair, 'look at me carefully. You see me. Very well. Now let me tell you that there are several other people who would be only too glad to be in your position; and if you go on vapouring much longer I shall say good-bye, and leave you to the misery of your own company.'

'It's very difficult,' he murmured.

'Rubbish,' I said shortly, moving away. 'Good-bye. Find some other girl.'

'I'm so sorry, Miss Kitty,' he pleaded, coming after me. 'May I take you out in the punt?'

'You might have ten minutes ago,' I said, 'but you can't now. The river and a glorious evening—and me—and you tell me it's difficult. Go and write a sonnet.'

'Do be merciful, Miss Kitty,' he urged, with quite a respectable show of feeling. 'I'm not generally such a bear. Please come.'

After some demur I went. For some time he persisted in babbling of Monica, and I listened, wishing to find out what crime he had committed to merit regeneration. Apparently it consisted in nothing more heinous than neglected opportunities and a wasted life. 'Life is real, life is earnest,' had been the text of the sermon, and poor Mr Ingram's ideas of existence had been knocked to pieces. To a healthy-minded man, who had been a 'Blue' not so long before, it came as a shock to be informed by his adored oracle that his life had been wasted, and his intention of living at present as a peaceful country gentleman had been denounced as iniquitous idleness. Even his ambition to cultivate politics was worse than useless in Monica's eyes, for Mr Ingram was an average Conservative, and she affected a nebulous but perfervid Radicalism. A touching unpractical sympathy with humanity in general, and at a distance, goes well with violet eyes and a soft, tremulous mouth. Apparently, also, their discussions had been complicated by religious questions; but the chief count in the indictment was, as I have said, Mr Ingram's utter uselessness.

When I had heard enough I cut his babblings short, and we talked of other things. After his sojourn in Monica's rarefied atmosphere, he displayed an appetite for those other things. At times he relapsed into melancholy; but after a victorious exchange of repartee with a man in a steam-launch, he became quite cheerful. It was not until we neared home again that the moon-calf expression reappeared. Then it loomed out large as Monica passed into the house in the distance.

'I feel an awful beast,' he said.

'Oh, never mind,' I answered. 'It's all for the best, and you haven't been very much bored, have you?'

'Of course I haven't,' he said; 'but it does seem a little mean, doesn't it?'

'If a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing well,' I explained. 'Good-bye, Mr Ingram.'

'Good-bye, Miss Kitty,' he said. 'Would to-morrow be too soon for further operations?'

'Oh no,' I replied. 'We must keep it up.'

Next morning he appeared again on some excuse or other, and we wandered out on the river. He inquired eagerly whether the plan was succeeding at all, and I could truthfully assure him it was. Monica had confronted me with a subacid saintliness, as I explained to Mr Ingram in more graceful terms. Mr Ingram positively chuckled. A lucid interval of irrational society had done him good, and he already entertained a better opinion of himself. Then he asked me how long I thought the treatment ought to last, and I recommended a week at least. He said I was a jolly good little sort, and we relapsed into other things and spent the morning in a backwater.

During the next few days we repeated the process with slight variations. We went for one or two bicycle rides, and played cricket in the orchard with my young brother Toby. Monica does not bicycle, and refused frigidly to play cricket. I was a little afraid at first that Mr Ingram would make premature overtures for peace in spite of my strong advice, and the first day he showed symptoms of doing so. Monica's righteous severity repressed them, however, and after that

he entered fully into the spirit of the plan. Altogether I was pleased with him. His success in discovering excuses for visiting the house and his manœuvres for getting away with me were creditable. It was too shameful to reduce him to a mooncalf. He also appeared to enjoy himself. He was much more in his element while explaining to me the mysteries of a late cut and basking in the adulation of Toby than when grappling with the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Monica meanwhile grew more and more stony. Her lips assumed an expression of the sternest piety when she spoke to me, and she betook herself again to district visiting, which is usually a sign with her of despair with things in general. I wondered whether she would be foolish enough to remonstrate with me. Of course, if she had been wise she would have held her tongue; but it is difficult for a practised preacher to remain silent when irritated. Finally she was provoked to speech by a climax. The climax came after she had made some slight attempts at reclaiming Mr Ingram near the end of the week which we had arranged for the campaign. The attempts were a little too like a command, and the moment was unfortunate, for Mr Ingram had just defined a punt as the tribute which athleticism pays to philosophy, and was regarding himself with satisfaction. Monica said she failed to see anything funny in the remark, and the attempts failed.

'Kitty,' she remarked to me after breakfast next day, 'I wish to have a few minutes' serious conversation with you.'

'Isn't it a little too hot for that kind of thing?' I suggested.

'I fear,' she answered severely, 'that you regard serious conversation as out of place at any time, Kitty.'

'For once,' I said, 'I am inclined to agree with you.'

'I never attempt now,' she went on, 'to speak seriously to you unless I feel compelled to'——

'What a life of self-sacrifice!' I murmured.

'Kitty,' she replied majestically, 'you are merely prolonging a painful interview.'

'Well, if you put it in that way'—— I observed. 'What's the matter now?'

'I have noticed,' she remarked slowly, 'that Mr Ingram has been here constantly during the last few days.'

'I have noticed the same thing,' I agreed, 'for the last month or more.'

'It is some considerable time,' she continued unabashed. 'Several times I have suspected that he came here on some unreal pretence.'

'I have suspected it myself,' I said; 'he's an awful liar.'

'Mr Ingram,' she replied acidly, 'has the makings of a very fine character in him if he is not spoilt. It was with reference to that that I wished to speak to you.'

'As far as I can discover from Mr Ingram,' I said, 'his chief fault is that he will not leave off-balls alone enough. Is that information any use to you?'

'Kitty,' Monica said, with a rising flush, 'you will compel me to speak plainly in a minute.'

'Hurrah!' I interjected rudely.

'Impertinence will not debar me from my duty,' she went on. 'You and he have been pursuing a course of conduct which I should characterise in any one but my sister as a flirtation.'

'What should you call it in a sister, then?' I inquired.

'I am content to call it thoughtless,' she said.

'That must be an effort,' I suggested. 'I thought you would have called it a disgraceful flirtation.'

'I have even—I am sorry to say,' she added—'suspected clandestine meetings.'

'Clandestine? That's a difficult question,' I answered, which was true, for I had taken care that the concealment should not extend to Monica. 'If you tell a person you're going bicycling somewhere and he suddenly turns up there, is it clandestine?'

'I never would have believed you would have gone so far,' she said, with another flush.

'It was only about twenty miles,' I urged.

'Of course this cannot continue,' she said; 'people are beginning to talk already.'

'Oh Monica, Monica!' I murmured, 'gossip is a thing to be avoided.'

'I must protect my sister even from herself at all costs,' she said firmly.

'As you observe, it's much safer to sit in a summer-house,' I replied. The summer-house is Monica's favourite haunt.

'Very well,' she concluded, 'you leave only one course open to me. I must speak to mother about this. The matter must be placed on a proper footing.'

'Monica, if I promise'—— I pleaded with apparent contrition.

'Well, Kitty?'

'Not to see him more than four times a week, would that do?'

'I hoped,' she remarked sadly, 'that you would have seen your conduct in its proper light.'

'You mean its improper light, Monica?'

'I shall speak to mother this morning,' she repeated.

She had not departed for more than ten minutes when Mr Ingram arrived, to ask Toby to play in a cricket match. At least he was ready to tell any one else so. However, we agreed that the invitation could wait, and adjourned to the punt.

'The week will be up to-morrow,' I observed after a time.

'It's only Thursday to-day,' he replied absently. He had been a little preoccupied since we started.

'I mean *the* week,' I said. 'I really think it

has been a success. I had a conversation with Monica this morning.'

'Oh yes,' he answered. 'What did she say?'

'The last thing she said,' I observed, 'was that she was going to tell mother.'

'Tell your mother?'

'Yes, about us,' I explained. 'It's rather fortunate the week's up, isn't it?'

'About us!' he exclaimed. 'Why, I used to do very much the same when—how beastly mean!'

'Don't you see the difference?' I inquired.

'No,' he said decidedly, 'I don't.'

'Is your mother sure to drop on it?' he began again after a long pause.

'She generally adopts Monica's suggestions—in matters of this kind,' I said; 'and really, Mr Ingram, a week's quite long enough.'

'You wouldn't think of going on with it a little longer?' he asked.

'It's quite unnecessary,' I said; 'the week has served its purpose.'

'It hasn't been bad fun, has it?' he answered slowly. 'We've had rather a good time, haven't we?'

'On the whole,' I agreed, 'I think we have.'

'I suppose I shan't see much of you after to-day?' he inquired.

'I dare say I shall be about sometimes,' I said cheerfully; 'but you're really getting the moon-calf expression on you again, and it isn't becoming. Remember, when you've made your peace with Monica, you mustn't take that tone any more, or this week will have been thrown away.'

'I haven't the least intention of taking that tone any more,' he said, and there was another long pause.

'Miss Kitty,' he observed irrelevantly, 'was Miss Ellis like you when she was your age? I can't remember.'

'Monica was always an angel, Mr Ingram,' I said.

'And you were always yourself,' he answered sadly.

'That is scarcely a compliment,' I suggested.

'Oh yes, it is,' he said, 'from my point of view.'

'It's a jolly day,' he began again after another interval of silence. 'It makes you feel—rather healthy.'

'You generally look pretty robust,' I said.

'I didn't mean exactly that,' he went on. 'I meant that it makes you feel it's rather a good thing to be alive in an every-day way.'

'You could scarcely be alive once a week,' I interjected.

'No, Miss Kitty,' he said a little testily, 'but don't you sometimes feel as if ordinary things and ordinary people were best?'

'As an ordinary person, I appreciate the compliment, Mr Ingram,' I answered.

'I didn't mean that; you know I didn't,' he said; 'but there's a lot of humbug about, and on a day like this you see rather straight—it's like reading one of those philosophy books that prove you don't really exist, and then'——

'Having a good dinner afterwards,' I suggested.

'Well, that does rather express it,' he said.

'The philosophy of here-we-are-again,' I observed.

'Yes, but we shan't be here again,' he said; 'that's just it. After all, it's as useless as any other philosophy.'

'Aren't you getting a little complicated, Mr Ingram?' I asked.

'I've been getting complicated,' he said sadly, 'for the last week. If there ever was an ass, it's I.'

'Cheer up, Mr Ingram,' I replied; 'Monica will put your mind to rights.'

'Bother Monica,' he said sharply.

'What?' I exclaimed, with an expression of astonishment.

'The fact of the matter is, Miss Kitty,' he said, 'I don't want any more of that. It was all utter rot, and I hope you won't mention it again.'

'And so we've wasted the whole week,' I replied, 'and'——

'We haven't wasted it,' he protested; 'but it's no good now.'

'To put it mildly, aren't you just a little unstable?' I said severely.

'Of course it might seem like that to most people,' he said.

'It might,' I agreed. 'And poor Monica!'

'I'm not such a puppy as to think she'll mind,' he replied. Humility is occasionally a convenient virtue. 'Do you think me an utterly shallow fool?' he inquired.

'I would scarcely go so far as that,' I said.

'I'm not so shallow as I seem; I'm not, really,' he said earnestly. 'It's no good of course, but I'd like to tell you. I don't want you to think me quite worthless.'

'Well?' I said.

'It sounds so bald,' he murmured, 'and yet I can see it quite plainly myself.'

'Would you mind driving this swan away, Mr Ingram?' I interrupted. The bird was under the impression that we were lunching, and had approached me with that suave, blackmailing expression peculiar to Thames swans and bank loafers.

'Certainly, certainly,' he said, and, having done so, again relapsed into silence. I could see that he was thinking hard, and he absently lit his lighted pipe four times.

'Miss Kitty,' he said at last, 'I can't explain it any other way. Would you mind my telling you a story—a kind of parable, you know?'

'I should like it,' I said.

'Once,' he began, 'there was a young goose'——

'That,' I interjected, 'is not uncommon'——

'Please, don't interrupt,' he said. 'At least he was a young gander. And he got rather good at swimming and flying and diving, and all that kind of thing.'

'Ganders, even in parables, don't dive,' I suggested.

'What does it matter?' he went on. 'After he'd been swimming and flying for a long time, he got rather tired of it, and one day he swam up a backwater. It was a nice, shady backwater, and he found a swan there. She was a very stately swan, and she looked rather cool and restful. She didn't swim or fly around much, but she knew everything about the bottom of the river, and the clouds, and currents, and all that. The young gander talked to her for a long time, and came back pretty often; and because he'd swum and flown such a lot he thought he was tired of being a gander and wanted to be a swan. He was rather an ass of a gander.'

'What a weird animal!' I remarked as he paused.

'Then one day,' he pursued—'one day when it was sunshiny outside the backwater, he saw another bird swimming about outside in the sun.'

'What kind of bird was it?' I asked.

'It was a pretty, lively little bird,' he said.

'Call it a duck,' I said gravely.

'It was, I think, a bird of Paradise,' he said, with a noble disregard of natural history, 'and he couldn't help going out and swimming about in the sun too. In a day or two he found out that swimming and flying were what he could do best, and that it was what a gander is intended to do. And he didn't care a snap about clouds and currents, and he didn't want to be a swan any more. And he found the other little bird was the jolliest and prettiest little bird he'd ever met, and he was happier than he'd ever been before. But one day the other little bird told him that she was going away, and wouldn't fly about in the sun any more. And then he knew—well, hang it! he knew that he'd give the whole river if he could always swim about with the little bird. He couldn't help telling her so.'

'Well, how did it end?' I asked.

'Of course,' he said sadly, 'she didn't want to swim about with him. I don't suppose she would in any case, and then she knew about the backwater and what an ass the gander had been, and didn't believe he could really care about anybody. Oh Kitty, Kitty, don't you understand now?'

'There's a small mistake in the story,' I said.

'What is it?' he said despairingly.

'Only,' I said, 'that the other little bird was a little goose.'

'A little goose?' he exclaimed.

'And the story needn't end in that way,' I added, 'unless you wish it.'

'Then, Kitty——?' he cried in astonishment.

I think I nodded. The rest of the conversation was commonplace.

Monica congratulated me with a chastened sorrow which her fears for poor George's future aroused. She has also hinted several times that I intended the culmination from the first. Did I? I wonder.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A NEW TERRESTRIAL ELEMENT.

THE spectroscope, that wonderful analyser of distant orbs, has long ago shown that a number of the substances known to science as elementary bodies are present in the sun. Their presence is revealed by certain lines which, to the educated eye, are unmistakable. Amid these multitudes of lines was a certain green one derived from the sun's corona, which could not be identified with the lines peculiar to any substance known on this earth. It was therefore concluded that it represented an unknown element; and to this mysterious thing the name Coronium was given. In a note communicated to the French Academy, Professor Nasini, of Padua, makes the announcement that he, in conjunction with two other workers, has discovered terrestrial coronium. In the spectroscopic examination of the gases emanating from volcanic sources in different parts of Italy, with a view to detect the presence of argon and helium, they have found the green line peculiar to coronium. From certain observations, these experimenters are able to predict that there are probably other hitherto unrecognised elements among the gases given out from the ground in the neighbourhood of Vesuvius.

THE IRON-MINES OF GELLIVARE.

In *Chambers's Journal* for January 16, 1897, appeared an article entitled 'To Lulea in Norbotten,' by Mr J. Logie Robertson, Edinburgh, describing a visit to the iron-mines of Gellivare, which lie within the Arctic Circle, near Lulea, Sweden. A party of the Iron and Steel Institute left Stockholm in August, to visit the mines, make a tour in the district, and report on their commercial prospects. There are three main deposits available for export, the only one being worked at the present time being that of Gellivare, by the Gellivare Mining Company. The ores are of wonderful richness, exceeding sixty-five per cent. of iron, the deposits lying largely on the surface, and are of such thickness that they can be quarried at small cost—more cheaply, says a writer in the *Scotsman*, than any ore-deposits in the world, unless it be

those in the Lake Superior region. They are also declared to be practically inexhaustible, and may in time furnish a cheaper source of supply than those mines we have been so largely dependent on in Spain.

MALARIAL FEVER.

A very important address was recently given by Professor Koch before the German Colonial Society. The Professor has lately returned from German East Africa, and he dealt with the various observations which he had there made. He stated that he had found a study of Texas fever in cattle of great assistance in giving a key to the origin of tropical malaria. Cattle disease was transferred from one animal to another by the sole agency of that animal parasite, the tick. He had been able to infect sound cattle with ticks taken from diseased ones; moreover, he had been able to render cattle immune against Texas fever by inoculating them with the ova of ticks taken from diseased animals. Malarial fever was in many respects like Texas fever, and he had arrived at the conclusion that in the human subjects mosquitoes played the part which ticks played in cattle disease. Mosquitoes were present where malaria raged; and where there were no mosquitoes, as in a certain small island on the German East African coast, there was no malaria. By microscopical examination of the blood it was possible to ascertain the exact stage of the disease, a thing of great importance, for much depended upon the administration of quinine before the attack or in its early stage. He called attention to the circumstance that the natives were proof against infection, and where natural immunity existed there was reasonable hope of affording artificial protection. Trained doctors should be sent to East Africa; and if science can only successfully cope with malarial fever, the conquest will facilitate the prosperous development of some of the most fruitful districts in the world.

SPURIOUS WORKS OF ART.

A recent law case, which turned upon the genuineness of certain so-called Dresden china, has revived the subject of imitation antiques. It is asserted that factories exist in certain capitals of Europe for the production of all such things as collectors love to accumulate. Old china is imitated with the marks so cleverly reproduced that it taxes the knowledge of an expert to detect the fraud. Brand-new armour is treated with acid, so that its surface bears the corrosion which is attributed to centuries of exposure to the air. Carved ivories are soaked in oil, and exposed to heat until they discolour and crack as from the assaults of time; and pieces of furniture of modern make are drilled with imitation worm-holes. Ancient coins are imitated in such perfect manner that it is most difficult to see that they are creations of yesterday. An old clock of the 'grandfather' pattern is a valuable possession to one of these fraudulent manufacturers, for he will very soon turn it into three or four distinct timepieces. The dial will go to one, the works into another, and the case will form the attractive feature of a third. The top of a table may be the only part of it which is old, the legs having gone to confer age upon another piece of furniture. Such are some of the tricks of trade for which the collector of curiosities must be prepared.

DESTRUCTIVE MISSILES.

A notable feature of modern warfare is the employment of what are known as high explosives. In the American campaign in Cuba the dynamite-gun has been used with awful effect, the Spaniards saying that earthquakes were being thrown at them. This gun is not fired with a charge of gunpowder, the shock of which would be likely to explode the dynamite-shell, but by compressed air, which urges the shot forward in a more gradual manner. The dynamite-gun is, in fact, a pea-shooter on a very large scale. Experiments have been lately made by our own military authorities with the explosive known as lyddite, which is said to be a preparation of picrate of potash. Six-inch shells containing this explosive were directed against a stone wall ten feet thick at the base, and tapering to six feet at the top. At a range of five hundred yards this wall was shattered so that troops could easily enter at the breaches made. It is also reported that these missiles exploded with such terrific force, and cast such clouds of débris around them, that any enemy within a radius of two hundred and fifty yards must infallibly be killed or disabled.

TO CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF WINDOWS FROM THE INSIDE.

The Aberdeen Parish Council lately adopted an improvement in their new offices, in so far as they have carried out the principle of making their windows open towards the inside when they require to be cleaned. This is a decided improvement, and there is no use in recalling here the danger and the very numerous fatal accidents that have taken place through cleaning windows from the outside. These accidents happen to professed window-cleaners as well as to housewives and domestic servants. The invention has been patented by a working joiner named Charles Reid, of 48 Esslemont Avenue, Aberdeen; and Messrs M'Robbie & Milne, of Albert Place, Aberdeen, are his agents. The mechanism is simple and inexpensive, and can be adapted to existing windows. By its means the inner end of the sashes can be rested on any suitable support, such as a table or a chair, the cleaner standing on the floor of the room. Both sashes can be drawn up and down like an ordinary window. The sash-sills are of full strength, the fitting inexpensive, and the

invention on the whole deserves the attention of architects and those engaged in the building trades.

REMEDIES FOR BEE-STINGS.

A paragraph on this subject which recently appeared in these columns has brought us many letters from bee-keepers, from which we gather that the stings of bees are often more serious than most persons imagine. Probably, as in the case of other poisonous attacks by insects, they affect certain persons more than others; but it would seem that the stings are sometimes followed by severe pain, and in extreme cases by collapse. One lady, who has had much experience with bees, asserts that the ammonia remedy, although valuable, is often rendered still more effective if brandy diluted with half its bulk of water be taken internally. Another pins her faith on immediately rubbing the wounds with honey—which, she tells us, gives almost instant relief.

DESTRUCTION OF WEEDS.

At a recent meeting of the French Society of Agriculture, M. Girard, a well-known agricultural chemist, described a method of freeing fields from the common charlock, a weed which, when it once gains a footing, is most difficult to eradicate. This method consists in watering the field with a five per cent. solution of blue-stone (sulphate of copper), which kills the weed without having any deleterious effect upon the grain crop. The explanation is, that the salt is readily absorbed by the permeable tissues of the charlock, while the hard cuticle of the wheat or oats rejects its intrusion. In the discussion which followed the reading of this note, M. Bernard said that the cheaper sulphate of iron, mixed in the proportion of two and a half pounds to one gallon of water, was still more effective as a weed-eradicator.

ARTIFICIAL EYES.

The *Lancet* publishes some curious facts with regard to the number of false eyes which are turned out annually by different factories in Germany and France. The total of these ornamental appendages made in the German Empire is said to amount to the enormous total of two millions yearly; and, at the same time, one French factory, out of many, makes three hundred thousand in the same period. But we must not jump to the conclusion that these figures indicate in any way the number of human beings who have been deprived of the sight of one eye, for the artificial eyes include those used by wax-figure makers, by taxidermists, and even by the doll manufacturers. It is noteworthy that the totally blind never wear false eyes. The person who has been deprived of the sight of one eye sees his disfigurement whenever he looks into a glass, and his æsthetic sense—or perhaps his vanity—leads him to make good the deficiency in the best way he can. In the case of the wholly blind such feelings die out, or are submerged in the immensity of their loss.

THE PRESERVATION OF MEAT.

A Danish zoologist, August Fjelstrup, is said to have discovered a new and efficient way of preserving meat, which has been adopted with success in the Danish slaughterhouses during the past year. The method is founded on the theory that decomposition of the blood is almost entirely responsible for the rapid putrefaction of the animal body. Means are therefore taken to remove the blood from the carcass immediately after death, and to inject the vessels with a solution of brine, the entire process occupying only a few minutes. It is not stated to what extent this treatment alters the character of the meat from a gastronomic point of view, but we assume that it would, in the case of imported meats, be far preferable to some of the methods of meat preservation now in vogue. Foreign hams, and more especially hares, are preserved with some resinous compound, which not only takes away the original flavour of the meat, but makes it absolutely nauseous.

TREASURE-SEEKERS.

Buried or sunken treasure has always had a great fascination about it, as story-book writers and readers well know; and when we hear of actual efforts being made to find and recover such riches from the depth of the sea, we are sure to take much interest in the proceedings, although we have no chance of sharing in the proceeds. Such a search is now in progress in Dunworley Bay on the coast of Cork, divers being busy in examining a wreck which has lain there for many years. Some say that it is one of the ill-fated Armada galleons; others, with apparently better authority, that it is a pirate schooner which foundered during the reign of William and Mary. And this latter story is to some extent corroborated by the coins of that reign which have already been recovered from the wrecked ship. It is not the first time that attempts have been made to recover treasure from this spot, for half a century ago a diver was busy here, and succeeded in recovering various articles. But the diver's gear had not then been brought to the perfection which it has now reached; nor was dynamite, that potent aid to separating a wrecked ship's timbers, discovered. With the help of modern apparatus and appliances, it is hoped that the old wreck on the Irish coast will now yield a more valuable harvest.

BLOODHOUNDS ON THE TRACK.

The Association of Bloodhound Breeders has made arrangements, which will possibly be carried out before these words appear in print, to carry out a series of trials across a tract of country in

the Yorkshire wolds, with a view to test the powers of the bloodhound in man-hunting. There will be prizes awarded to the owners of the dogs which acquit themselves best in this novel competition. It may be remembered that some years ago, when the East End of London became notorious through a series of brutal murders, it was proposed to put dogs on the scent of the murderer; but difficulties occurred, and the scheme was abandoned. It is somewhat repugnant to the feelings that a man should be hunted down by dogs; but as long as we have in our midst those whom it would be sheer flattery to call brutes, it is well to be prepared with every appliance for their capture that ingenuity can devise. So we may fairly hope that the experiments on the Yorkshire wolds will be successful.

GAS ENRICHMENT.

Much discussion has taken place during the past year with regard to the question of enriching coal-gas in a manner which may possibly render it more poisonous than it now is. The method now adopted is to add to the gas a certain amount of water-gas, made luminous by means of petroleum; and an article on the subject appeared on November 20, 1897, in our columns. The Public Control Committee of the London County Council have been considering this important matter, and they now report that, in their opinion, considerable danger is attached to the method adopted; that water-gas by itself, being devoid of smell, and therefore giving no warning of its dangerous presence, should not be allowed to be used under any conditions whatever; and that if the enriched water-gas be allowed to be introduced into coal-gas, twenty-five per cent. should be the maximum amount. They also recommend that in all cases where the addition is made, a proper inspection of the service-pipes of buildings should be made by efficient officers, to see that there is no leakage—such inspection to be at the expense of the gas company.

'THE LADS IN RED.'

It has long been a moot point whether the scarlet uniform worn in the British army is the best colour that can be adopted. It is certainly a warm colour for cold climates, but a hot one for the tropics; and for an empire upon which the sun never sets, this question of heat-conduction must be considered. But more attention is generally paid to the matter of conspicuousness in the field, and some recent experiments in Germany are for this reason interesting to us. A squad of ten men, each couple of which were dressed in a differently coloured tunic, was ordered to march across an open country, their movements being closely followed by a company of quick-sighted observers. The first couple to disappear were the men in light-gray; then the two in scarlet went out of sight; then a couple in dark-gray; and finally the men dressed in blue and green. In experiments at our own rifle-butts, it has been found that for some reason or other scarlet is protection to the soldier in that it is the most difficult colour to hit. After all, such experiments are not of the value which they would have been before the days of machine and dynamite guns. A hail of lead, such as is now possible by the aid of modern appliances, does not discriminate between men whatever be the colour of their uniforms, but will be as impartial in spotting them as is a shower of rain.

ERE THE DAY.

We wakened at the dawning, but we never saw the day;
And we spoke our little prologue, but we never reached the play.
Oh! our love was sweet and certain till gray Sorrow dropt the curtain.
Ay, we wakened at the dawning, but we never saw the day.

There were buds within our garden, but they never came to flower;
There were birds among our bushes, but they only sang an hour.
And we laughed to see the swallow, but the summer did not follow;
There were buds within our garden, but they never came to flower.

'Tis a garment white and silken, 'tis a white and misty veil,
'Tis a pair of little slippers—O dear love!—so white and frail.
Is the manhood in me dying that I'm sitting here and crying
O'er a garment and a slipper and a never-opened veil?

Dear, the world is empty—empty as the gemless golden band,
The token I had fingered and that never found your hand.
They've been telling me the story of an everlasting glory;
But you were the only preacher I could ever understand.

Ah, we wakened at the dawning, but we never saw the day;
And we spoke our little prologue, but we never reached the play.
But our love was sweet and certain till gray Sorrow dropt the curtain.
Hark! a single bell is calling . . . and this should have been the day.

J. J. Bell.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligiblity, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE CANDIDATE'S WEDDING.

By JAMES WORKMAN.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

DOUGLAS GRANT, barrister-at-law and parliamentary candidate for Southpool, was shaving in his dressing-room at the Royal Hotel on the morning of the polling-day. He was a tall, broad-shouldered, well-built young man, with clear-cut features, crisp fair hair, quiet gray eyes, well-shaped mouth and chin, and a large yellow moustache. He was rather exceptionally good-looking; though an impartial observer might have doubted it as Grant stood glaring into the mirror with his mouth and nose on one side and his right cheek plastered with shaving-soap. A pronounced prejudice against being shaved by any one but himself was one of his small peculiarities.

'Come in,' he exclaimed, hearing a knock at the door.

A waiter thrust his head into the room.

'If you please, sir, Mr Barker wishes to see you immediately.'

Barker was Grant's election agent.

'Show him up,' said Douglas.

The waiter looked slightly scandalised.

'Show him up 'ere, sir?' he asked.

'Certainly.'

A minute afterwards Barker entered. He was tall and slight, wore spectacles, and had a thin, prim face and self-poised manner. Having raised himself in the social scale, he attached an exaggerated importance to propriety of speech and deportment. In his sedate black clothes, and with a shiny silk hat in his hand, he formed a curious contrast to the athletic young candidate who stood before the glass in his pyjamas, scraping industriously at his soapy cheek.

Barker stood hesitatingly near the door.

'Come in, come in,' said Douglas. 'Chuck those things off the chair and sit down.'

Barker carefully removed a waistcoat and a pair of inexpressibles from the only chair, placed them on a towel-rail, and sat gingerly down.

'Well, what is it?' asked Douglas.

'I extremely regret to inform you that I have some very unpleasant news for you, Mr Grant.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Douglas, with a grimace; 'what's up now? Anything wrong in my speech last night? Whose corns have I trodden on now?'

'Will you pardon me asking if you have heard from Miss Meredith this morning?'

Douglas looked at him with a queer smile.

'No,' he rejoined. 'I could hardly expect to. I suppose she's engaged in the sacred mysteries of the toilet, and all that kind of thing. She has no time to think of anything masculine until she has made herself a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.'

Douglas was to be married that morning to Elsie Meredith, the daughter of the most popular and influential man in the district. It had been considered a happy idea that his marriage should take place on the polling-day, and that, as his enthusiastic supporters put it, the constituency should be presented to him as a wedding gift.

'Besides,' continued Douglas, 'I understand it's not quite the thing for me to see her until we meet at the church.'

'Ah!' said Barker meaningly. 'I'm afraid there's not much prospect of you doing that to-day, Mr Grant.'

'What the dickens do you mean?' asked the astonished Douglas. 'Oh, hang it all, man! out with it,' he continued, as Barker still hesitated. 'Don't beat about the bush, or try to break the news to me. I shan't go into hysterics. Out with it.'

'Then I am very sorry to inform you, Mr Grant, that Mr Meredith is in custody on a charge of—of embezzlement.'

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'Meredith in custody on a charge of embezzlement!' exclaimed Douglas. 'Are you drunk, Barker, or have you taken leave of your senses?'

Barker got up with a very sour expression in his small eyes.

'I am not in the habit, Mr Grant'—— he began.

'Very well, very well,' interrupted Douglas impetuously. 'I don't want to hurt your feelings, or anything of that kind; but for heaven's sake, man, don't waste any more time. Let me hear the particulars at once.'

'Mr Meredith, as you are perhaps aware,' said Barker, 'is the chairman of the Southpool Building Society, in which almost every man in the neighbourhood who has a few pounds to spare is more or less interested. Some of the poorer people have invested all their savings in it, solely on the strength of Mr Meredith's connection with it. A new auditor was recently appointed, and he went through the books yesterday. He discovered that the accounts had been systematically cooked for some time, and that many thousands of pounds—twenty, forty, fifty—I don't know the exact amount—had been made away with. The secretary was at once arrested. He confessed that he was guilty, but stated that he was merely a tool in the hands of the chairman, Mr Meredith; and Meredith was arrested this morning. He is now in custody at the police station.'

'Do you know all this as an absolute fact?' asked Douglas.

'I should not have ventured to repeat it if I had not done so,' replied Barker stiffly.

Douglas swiftly concluded his shaving, and began to wash and dress with the utmost rapidity.

'It was well the truth came out before the ceremony,' said Barker reassuringly. 'I think you'll be quite safe as it is. People will think you've been taken in as well.'

Douglas paused, hair-brush in hand, and eyed Barker with a peculiar expression.

'Will you have the goodness to explain what you mean?' he asked.

'When Meredith was taken to the police station,' said Barker, 'he was surrounded by a howling mob of half-frantic men and women, ruined shareholders of the Southpool Building Society, who wanted to lynch him. It took a dozen constables to keep them back. If you had'——

The expression in Douglas's eyes puzzled Barker, and he hesitated.

'Go on,' said Douglas.

'Well, if you had married Miss Meredith you simply wouldn't have the very slightest chance of becoming the member for Southpool.'

'Ah!' rejoined Douglas. 'Then I am afraid, Barker, that my chance of attaining that distinguished position is, to say the least of it, remote; for you may quite definitely make up your mind to one thing, and that is, that, whether I become the member for Southpool or not, I shall most certainly marry Miss Meredith.'

Barker turned pale.

'You will—will marry Miss Meredith?' he stammered.

'Certainly.'

'But not to-day—surely not to-day.'

'Not to-day?' repeated Douglas. 'Why, of course I shall marry her to-day. In the first place, I don't for one single moment believe Mr Meredith to be guilty. It's simply preposterous to bring such a charge against him. I've known him for years, and I never knew a more truthful, upright, honourable man. It's grotesquely absurd to accuse him of dishonesty. But even if I believed him to be guilty, do you suppose that anything her father might have done would induce me to shame and disgrace an innocent girl by turning my back upon her almost at the very door of the church?'

'But don't you see—don't you see,' stuttered Barker, 'that you will simply be committing suicide — social and political suicide? Hardly a man in Southpool will vote for Meredith's son-in-law. You won't have the ghost of a chance of being elected.'

'We'll see about that,' replied Douglas. 'I don't altogether agree with you. If there's one quality the average Englishman admires it's pluck. If there's one person the average Englishman despises it's a sneak. If I didn't marry Miss Meredith I should be a sneak, Barker; and there's not a man whose opinion is worth taking into account who wouldn't cut me dead, let alone voting against me, when he'd had time to think over it. In any case, you may take it for granted that the wedding will take place just as if nothing had happened.'

Pale with anger, Barker moved towards the door. He had regarded the election as a stepping-stone in his own career. If Grant were defeated, he would share in the disgrace of the defeat. He had strained every nerve to win the election, and success had appeared certain up to the moment of Meredith's arrest. Defeat was now a foregone conclusion, and his face grew livid with rage and disappointment.

'Look here, Barker,' said Douglas; 'I should like you to understand that I think this is very hard lines on you. You've worked like a brick—upon my word you have—and I hate to see a man lose the game by a fluke when he has played it as cleverly as you have. Still, I don't think the outlook is quite so black as you suppose; and, in any case, I shall expect you to stand by me to the end. You must give me your hand on that.'

He held out his hand with such a frank, good-humoured smile that Barker was compelled to take it, and even to thaw a little in spite of himself.

'Of course I shall do all I can, Mr Grant,' he said, with a shake of the head; 'but I know beforehand that nothing I can do will prevent you being at the bottom of the poll.'

'Well, we'll see—we'll see,' said Douglas cheerily. 'And, oh, by the way, look here. I've just had a telegram from my friend Wilson, who was going to act as my best-man. He's down with the influenza, and can't come. If you'll kindly excuse me asking you at such extremely short notice, I should be awfully obliged if you'd take his place.'

'But, my — my dear sir,' stammered Barker helplessly, 'I don't see how I can possibly do that when I—I so entirely disapprove of'——

'Pooh, pooh, my dear fellow! not another word,' exclaimed Grant. 'Of course you disapprove. Quite right, too, from your point of view. I should do the same thing myself. But I know you're far too good a fellow not to help me out of a fix like this. Come, it's a bargain—isn't it? Thanks, awfully. You're a brick. I knew I could depend on you.'

He fumbled in his waistcoat pocket, while Barker stood gazing at him too bewildered to expostulate.

'Here's the ring. You'll take charge of it—won't you? And, look here, you might just toddle over to the vicarage and tell the vicar he may expect us at eleven o'clock as arranged. We fixed an early hour so that I might have the rest of the day free. You will? Thanks awfully. See you again soon. Good-morning.'

As soon as Barker had disappeared, Douglas hurriedly finished dressing, snatched a hasty breakfast, and, escaping with difficulty from the clutches of the excited politicians who flocked round him to discuss the unexpected situation, drove at full speed to Oak Lodge, Mr Meredith's residence.

The man who opened the door wore an aspect of funereal gloom.

'Yes, sir,' he said, 'Miss Meredith 's in, sir; and though she's not at 'ome to any one else, I suppose she'll see you, sir. I 'ope, sir, if you'll excuse me sayin' so, sir, as you'll be able to cheer her up a bit. It's heart-breakin' to see her, poor young lady. Even if the weddin' is hoff, sir, the sight of you'll do her a heap of good, sir.'

'What in the world do you mean by talking like that?' exclaimed Douglas irritably.

'I—I'm sure I beg pardon, sir,' stammered the poor man. 'I meant no offence, sir.'

'Perhaps not. But what the dickens do you mean by the wedding being off?'

Brown gazed at him with a look of stupefaction.

'Why, 'aven't you heard what's 'appened, sir?' he gasped.

'Of course I've heard everything, my good man; but you may take my word for it that the wedding is not off. Do you understand? The wedding is *not* off. Now, where is Miss Meredith?'

'She's in the library, sir.'

'Very well; I'll go there. You needn't come.'

Douglas strode across the hall, opened the door of the library, and went in.

A pretty young housemaid, plump and rosy-cheeked, whose eyes were red with sympathetic woe, popped out of an adjoining room.

'Did you hear him, Mary?' exclaimed Brown excitedly. 'He's a *man*—he is.'

'A man, indeed!' exclaimed Mary contemptuously. 'I call him a real gentleman.'

'It's the same thing, my dear,' said Brown. 'And now, look here, my girl; I don't agree with his views on the Heddication Question, and I don't consider him sound, as you may say, on matters relatin' to hagriculture; but I 'ave a vote for the cottage my old mother lives in, and that vote he shall have, and as many more as I can get him.'

'If you don't vote for him,' exclaimed Mary, 'I'll never, never speak to you again. Oh, I should like to hug him!'

'Would a hindividual of the name of Brown do instead, Mary?' asked the admiring footman.

In the meantime Douglas had discovered Elsie in a state of collapse on the library sofa, dishevelled, woe-begone, quivering with sobs, the most forlorn, pathetic-looking little object his eyes had ever rested upon. Fortunately for the success of his plans, discouragement had usually an exhilarating rather than a depressing effect on Douglas. Opposition quite cheered him up, and with the appearance of an apparently insurmountable obstacle he really began to enjoy himself. Otherwise he might have shrunk back aghast at the indignation which Elsie displayed at being married while 'her poor, dear papa' was locked up in the police station.

'I would never dream of doing it,' she exclaimed. 'I wonder you can suggest such a thing, Douglas. It is most cruel and heartless of you.'

'That's sheer nonsense, my dear girl,' said Douglas cheerfully. 'Why, if you go on in this way, shutting yourself up, crying your eyes out, breaking off your marriage, and all that sort of thing, do you know what people will begin to say?'

'I don't know, and I don't care,' said the girl wearily. 'What does it matter what they say?'

'Well, they will begin to say that you believe your father to be guilty.'

Elsie raised herself on her elbows and glared at Douglas with eyes that glittered fiercely through her tears.

'Douglas!'

'That's what people will say,' rejoined Douglas placidly.

'I tell you I know he is not guilty,' cried the girl passionately. 'He couldn't be guilty of such a thing.'

'Then act as if you believed in his innocence,' replied Douglas. 'Dry your eyes, and fix up your hair, and take it smiling, my dear. Then, if you'll sort of straighten yourself out and put your things on, we'll drive to St Jude's right away, and show the public of Southpool that there are at least two people who believe in the innocence of the best man I ever knew—Thomas Meredith, my future father-in-law.'

His words brought the colour to her cheeks. She sat up and began mechanically to arrange her ruffled locks.

'Where are your bridesmaids?' he asked.

'Their father sent a note,' faltered Elsie, 'saying that under the circumstances he—he hoped I'd excuse them.'

'The cad!' exclaimed Douglas. 'Well, we'll do without them. We'll introduce a new fashion. We'll drive to the church together. Jump into your things, my dear, and we'll start at once.'

'Jump into my things,' she repeated, with a tearful smile. 'Who ever heard of any one jumping into a wedding-dress. Oh, it's all so different from what I expected! I wish I had a mother or sister to advise me. Do you really think I'm doing right, Douglas? Do you think papa won't be hurt?'

'My dear child, he'll take it as the most convincing proof that we don't attach the slightest importance to this preposterous charge. Now do run away and get ready, like a good little girl.'

Elsie had hardly left the room when the footman appeared.

'Oh,' he said, 'I thought Miss Elsie was here, sir.'

'What is it?'

'Miss Ethel West would like to see her, if you please, sir.'

'Miss West! Good! Ask her to come in at once.'

Brown ushered in a bright, brisk-looking girl in a bicycling costume.

'Miss Ethel!' exclaimed Douglas, shaking her cordially by the hand. 'How fortunate! You're just the very person I wanted to see.'

'Indeed. Where's Elsie?'

'She's struggling into her things.'

'Struggling into her things!'

'Yes, yes; arraying herself in robes of dazzling white, and all that sort of thing. And, look here, I've got an immense favour to ask of you. I know it sounds awfully cheeky; but for Elsie's sake I'm sure you won't refuse. You've heard what has taken place? I thought so. Well, her bridesmaids have backed out. Their father won't let them come. Now, what I want to ask you is this—Don't you think that under the circumstances you could see your way to waive ceremony and act as her bridesmaid—eh? It would be awfully kind of you.'

'But you don't mean to say that you are really going on with the wedding?' exclaimed the astonished girl.

'Most certainly I am, and you'll act as Elsie's bridesmaid—won't you?'

'In this costume?' cried Ethel.

'My dear Miss Ethel,' rejoined Douglas, with his sweetest smile, 'nothing could possibly look more becoming.'

'I couldn't do it, Mr Grant,' exclaimed Ethel, with a horrified glance at her short tweed skirt. 'The thing's impossible. I really couldn't.'

'My dear young lady,' said Douglas, 'think of poor Elsie. Suppose you were in her place. Suppose that those you had loved and trusted gave you the cold shoulder and turned their backs on you, wouldn't you appreciate the loyalty and affection of the true friend who stood by you in your hour of need; who cared nothing for the sneers and smiles and shrugs of any man or woman if she could prove her faith in you and love for you, by helping you when you most needed her assistance? That's the kind of friend you'll prove, Miss Ethel, I know. I was sure of it the moment I heard your name announced. You will—won't you? Thanks awfully. Now, do go and help poor Elsie to struggle into her things.'

'But, Mr Grant,' expostulated Ethel as, taking her gently by the arm, he led her towards the door, 'I—I—really I—oh! it's all so dreadfully unconventional.'

'Yes, yes,' admitted Douglas, 'it is. But it's just by doing unconventional things at a moment like this that we best prove our loyalty and affection.'

The girl stood hesitating for a moment at the door he had opened for her. Then she impulsively held out her hand.

'I didn't think that any power on earth would induce me to act as a bridesmaid in a bicycling costume,' she said; 'but I'd do that and more for any one who has shown such loyalty to the girl he loves as you, Mr Grant. I think Elsie ought to be the happiest girl in the world.'

'She ought indeed,' said Douglas cordially, 'when she has such a sincere and affectionate friend as you, Miss Ethel. Do make her hurry up. We'll only just have time to get to the church.'

In a phenomenally short space of time Elsie appeared in a dainty travelling dress, the most bewitching little bride, so he assured her, that ever stepped into a church. His enthusiasm was not wholly the outcome of an imagination inspired by love. The pale, refined, clear-cut little face, with its deep, luminous gray eyes, and halo of rippling gold, seemed to glimmer like a star in the dusky library. His pride and delight in her flushed her pale cheeks with a delicate rose, and with a lighter heart than she had felt since her father's arrest she took his arm and stepped almost cheerfully to the carriage.

In a few moments they were driving rapidly towards Southpool. Douglas had almost, and

Elsie perhaps altogether, forgotten about the election; but as the carriage rolled through the crowd collected before Douglas's committee-room, a sudden storm of hoots and hisses, and the sight of angry faces and brandished sticks, caused Elsie to start violently like one awakened out of a dream.

'Oh Douglas!' she cried, 'I had forgotten. Oh, how selfish I have been, thinking of myself and papa, and forgetting all about you and the election! You must not marry me, Douglas; you shall not—not to-day, not before papa is proved innocent. If you do you will not be elected, and I should be the most miserable girl in the world. I could not endure it; I could never forgive myself. You must get out at once. You must leave me at once, and tell the coachman to drive back.'

THEN AND NOW: 1798-1898.

THE difference between our homes and surroundings and the houses and environments of a hundred years ago is sufficiently wide to satisfy the most exacting lover of startling contrasts. The state of things—social, religious, educational, commercial, political, and international—is so much in our favour that it seems scarcely worth while seriously comparing it with the condition of life that prevailed in the thirty-eighth year of the reign of King George the Third, the 'Farmer Monarch,' who lost us America, who was filled with honest wonder as to how the apple got into the dumpling, and who used to dip himself in the sea at Weymouth whilst a military band, stationed at a becoming distance, played 'God save the King' as he took his first plunge! Weighed fairly in the balances, the present year of grace makes 1798 'kick the beam.'

Yet there is a Debtor and Creditor side to the account. The past was not altogether without its advantages and compensations. Life was less complex, competition less keen, human wants were more simple, and rival interests not so exacting and arbitrary as they are to-day, when our population is more numerous and more closely packed, when the scale of everything is rising, and social requirements change every day their conditions and proportions. Our great-grandfathers took more solid views of life than their descendants. Semblance was not accepted for substance. Adulteration, false marking, and the coating and loading of textile fabrics to make textures of shadowy thinness heavy and seemingly stout and serviceable were unknown. Plausibility had not come into fashion. There was more respect paid to the aged; more real affection existed amongst relations and friends. Truthfulness and honour were not considered out of date. Sincerity had not sought refuge from the shams of Society. The phrase *fin-de-siècle* had not been invented for the eighteenth century. The affected, Talleyrand gospel of *surtout point de zèle* was not adopted by an invertebrate *jeunesse dorée*.

Let us turn back the fingers of the clock of time till they point to the figures 1798. There was a rebellion in Ireland. England was at war with France. To furnish food for powder the recruiting sergeant was assisted by the press-gang. We were fighting both by land and sea. In 1798 Nelson won the battle of the Nile and broke the ocean-power of Napoleon. The land campaigns of Wellington had freed the Peninsula. But the slave-trade in our colonies flourished. The printing-machine was a mere hand-press. There were no cabs or omnibuses. Steam locomotion belonged to thirty years after date. Cycling was an uncoined word. The Tests and Corporation Acts were unrepealed. The Roman Catholic Relief Bill had not passed. There was no voting by ballot. Pocket-boroughs flourished; political debauchery was rampant. There was no police-force. Superstition reigned supreme; every village had its 'wise woman' and fortune-teller. Duels were common; so were diabolical outrages at sea. Men were executed for high treason, forgery, and horse-stealing. Hanging, drawing, and quartering were the cherished punishments of the criminal code. The hemp crop was the most flourishing and fruitful of harvests. The gibbet-post cast its baneful shadow over the land. Public executions were a popular outdoor entertainment provided by the State for the edification of the people. Suicides were buried without the offices of religion at the meeting of four cross-roads, with a stake through their hearts. Women were openly flogged. There was a public brand for scolds. Whipping-posts and stocks were prominent in every town and village. Women were placed in the pillory and pelted by the populace with rotten eggs, putrid vegetables, and the like. Flogging was of frequent occurrence in the army; deserters were incontinently shot; seamen were summarily hanged at the yard-arm for mutiny. Even penny news-rooms had their persecutions and martyrs. On the 6th of September 1798, six informations were heard before the magistrates at Bow Street, and laid by the Stamp Office, against a Mr Williams for suffering in his room in Old Round Court sundry persons to read the *Daily Advertiser* and other newspapers for the consideration of one penny each. The offence being held to be clearly made out, the infamous Williams was convicted in the penalty of five pounds on each information!

The jails were noisome dens, in which some thousands of French prisoners of war were incarcerated. Our present prisons are, in comparison, so many cleanly and commodious hydropathic establishments, with a gymnasium in the shape of the treadwheel. There was then no waste in workhouses. Bumbledom held despotic sway. The 'unions' were full of squalid, sordid, repulsive misery. Mrs Gamp was the type of many of the coarse, ignorant, thieving, drunken beldames who did duty as 'nurses.' Lunacy one hundred years ago was treated as a crime. The poor insane were systematically exhibited to the public, chained to the wall like wild beasts, and excited to rage to make the spectacle more enjoyable, at a charge of twopence per visit.

Working-men literally worked in those days. They never kept St Monday. They even put work into their play. Some of their nineteenth-century successors reverse the process. The old operatives earned their bread by the sweat of their brow. If a factory-hand was seen to perspire to-day he would be instantly disowned by his trades union. The modern labourer, too, is an adept in the art of letting his pick drop listlessly on the ground with its own weight, and of stopping to contemplate things in general after every half-dozen strokes. If he hears the dinner-bell or the dismissal whistle sound when his hammer has ascended, he will bring it down without touching the nail or metal beneath, for fear of giving his employer one more movement of muscle than is his due. The writer has reliable record of a bricklayer's labourer who, with a hod of mortar on his head, being three-parts up a lofty ladder, and, hearing the clock strike the dinner-hour, carried the load down again, sooner than deliver it at the top in his own time.

A hundred years ago the hours were long, the occupations laborious, the wages low, the holidays few. Yet there were no 'strikes;' no conflicts between capital and labour; no professional agitators clamouring for nine hours' pay for eight hours' work; no philanthropic gentleman expert in the pretty art of putting public trust money to private purposes; few financiers whose speculations should be spelled without the letter 's.' Company promoting had not been developed into one of the exact sciences; and unknown were those subtle Stock Exchange operations whereby men grow enormously rich by buying with nothing and selling for a great sum, or by buying what there is none of, and selling what does not exist.

It was a time of conscientious shopkeeping. The season of 'Alarming Sacrifices' had not set in. The tradesman relied on his well-filled shelves and the quality of his wares, and not upon sensational advertisements, monthly clearance sales, winter remnant sales below cost price, showy windows, plate-glass, gas, and glitter. His goods were not ticketed in the window; the three-farthings device he would have regarded with repugnance. He would certainly have resented a plea of abatement as a personal insult, and the sight of the 'slop-shop' goods of to-day would have caused his sudden death. There were no Socialists with 'yearnings for equal division of unequal earnings,' men 'who are willing to fork out their penny and pocket your shilling.' The legal axiom of *caveat emptor* did not then apply to our mercantile morality.

A hundred years ago green fields smiled under a blue sky and a buoyant atmosphere where are now grimy factories and an air that is dense and dark enough to be dynamited; wharves and warehouses cover ground that was once dotted with great trees that made islands of grateful shade in a sea of grass. Streams that were once ribbons of liquid light, with dimpling pools and chattering runs, and with water-ouzels' nests in cool crevices, and rivers that erst reflected ferns and wild-flowers and foliage, or had foamy weirs and leisurely water-wheels tossing and splashing prismatic sunlight, are now channels of ink and stink so malodorous that if you were to fall into them you would escape death by drowning only to die from the effects of the poisoned water which you had swallowed during your immersion. In 1798, if our houses were not altogether sanitary, they were, for the most part, substantial and comfortable, and like the 'brave kirk' described by Andrew Fairservice, the shrewd Scottish gardener in *Rob Roy*—'nane o' yer whig-maleeries, and curlie-wurlies, and open-steek hems about it—a' solid, weel-jointed mason-work, that will stand as lang as the warld—keep hands an' gunpowther aff it.' They did not resemble those 'desirable residences' that Mr Jerry, the builder, is speculatively erecting to-day; the frail tenements through whose diaphanous walls one can hear all the domestic transactions that are taking place next door, from the coughing of an invalid to the crying of an infant, the ticking of a clock, the poking of a fire, and the strumming of a piano; 'the very eligible semi-detached villas'—with a strong flavour of putty and Building Society about them—where you may participate (without being present) in family dissensions and family devotions, hear Mrs Caudle's 'curtain lectures,' and the snoring of poor Caudle himself, unsuccessfully simulating sleep, meanwhile his irate spouse, whose very glance is so acutely acidulated that she could pickle cucumbers by merely looking at them, proceeds with her nocturnal admonitions.

The working-man's *menu* in 1798 seldom included butcher's meat. The toilers and moilers did not often have placed before them their rasher of bacon. The rich kept all the feasts; the poor observed all the fasts. Wheat was fifty shillings per quarter. In times of bad harvest agricultural labourers could not get meal to make porridge with, and in some of the worse-off rural districts they ate nothing

but boiled nettles and garden stuff, and even in winter had scarcely anything but stolen turnips. Farmers put steel traps in the mouths of their corn-sacks, and not a few famished men left their fingers 'in chancery.' Very applicable to that penurious period are the words of Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer:'

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' täkes their regular meäls.
Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.
Täke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

But, bad as the times were, there was in aristocratic circles much squandering of money at high play. My lady was as reckless as my lord, and rattled the dice-box and shuffled the cards from dusk till morning, going home with ruined fortunes, in her sedan-chair, when workmen were going home from lathe and loom to breakfast. Family diamonds and jewels and plate were staked when the guineas were exhausted, and when these possessions had gone farms and estates were sacrificed. The amusements, too, of wealthy people were of a coarse and cruel description. Rat-worrying, cock-fighting, and badger-baiting were favourite diversions. Prize-fighting was regarded as essential to keep up the courage of Englishmen. Even the clergy joined in these low and brutal pastimes and neglected their spiritual duties, or cut short a Sunday afternoon service sooner than miss being present at a main of cocks or seeing two men entering the ring for the express purpose of pummelling one another, breaking ribs, damaging noses, knocking out teeth, and cracking jaws. The devotional life of the Church was distinguished by all the dull apathy that prevailed during the Georgian period; the sacred edifices were dormitories for the living as well as of the dead; but the work of Whitefield and the two brothers Wesley had helped to breathe new life into the dry bones of the Establishment. There were sects upon sects, orthodox and unorthodox —Muggletonians and Southcottians, Behmenists and Swedenborgians, Sandemanians and Bereans, Buchanites and believers in Richard Brothers, Moravians, Maxfieldians, and followers of the Countess of Huntingdon.

There was no flaunting, flag-waving jingoism a hundred years ago, but healthy, hearty, patriotic songs of the Charles Dibdin character, which aided the manning of the British navy to a remarkable extent. Short service was unknown in the army, whose stamina was much superior to that of our home army of to-day, with its slight, short lads of deficient physique. The recruits of 1898 are no longer drawn from the rural districts. The healthy yeomen, sinewy and strong, full of bone and firm of flesh, who once filled the ranks of English regular regiments, have been driven off the land by agricultural depression, and gone into overcrowded and unhealthy towns to make more strenuous the battle for bread.

A hundred years ago there were no temperance societies or Bands of Hope, no Rechabites and Blue Ribbon Army. To be as 'drunk as a lord' was the height of human felicity. It was the age of 'three-bottle men,' of convivial toasts, of drinking-songs. Even the Church indirectly encouraged intemperance. There were certain districts where at Whitsuntide the churchwardens were accustomed to levy contributions of malt from the parishioners. This was brewed into strong ale and sold in the church. The Whitsuntide topers had, however, a pious method in their madness. The money spent on the beer was expended by the churchwardens in church maintenance, and the muddled roisterers no doubt believed themselves to be pillars of the Church even when, under the influence of its alcohol, they rolled upon its pavement. They thought themselves supporters of the Church when they wanted 'supporting' themselves, and deemed themselves most saintly when they were most soddened. Until as recently as 1827 (when the license was withdrawn) a church and public-house were covered by one roof at Deepdale, midway between Derby and Nottingham. A door that could be opened at will served to separate the consecrated interior of the church from the common taproom of the tavern! Tea-drinking was regarded as one of the feminine vices of a hundred years ago. *The Female Spectator* of that period observes: 'The tea-table costs more to support than would maintain two children at nurse. It is the utter destruction of all economy, the bane of good housewif'ry, and the source of idleness.'

A hundred years ago there were no institutions for the blind, the deaf and dumb, the paralytic and idiotic. There were few lying-in hospitals, no orphanages, no homes for fallen women, no nurses' institutes, no convalescent homes, no infirmaries for children, no special hospitals for women, for consumption and chest diseases, for fever, for nervous disorders, for epilepsy, paralysis, ophthalmic cases, and eruptions of the skin. The benefits conferred by almshouses went by favour, and charity trusts were most shamefully 'jobbed.' There were no trained nurses, no corps to render 'first aid.' No chloroform or other anæsthetics softened the pain of the operative knife and saw. Lord Lister had not introduced antiseptics into surgery. There were no Röntgen X-rays, with their marvellous surgical, anatomical, and pathological appliances that enable the surgeon to study bone-disease and the detection of foreign bodies in various parts of the human frame. We can now send our hearts as easily as our watches to be cleaned and repaired, and savants can examine by the new photography our inner works, scrutinise our mainsprings, adjust our mechanism, and regulate our movements!

In 1798 there were no Young Men's or Young Women's Christian Associations; no organisation of

charitable work; no emigration schemes. Feeble oil-lamps made the darkness visible, for it was not until 1819 that Rudolph Ackermann's house in London was lighted with gas, and people were wont to walk on the other side of the street so as not to be too near the dangerous combustible. Experimental researches had yet to be made in magnetism. Vaccination had been successfully tried by Jenner, but was as yet little known. Every other person one met was disfigured with the smallpox. Indecent prints abounded. Among the lower classes a low grade of morality prevailed. It was very common for the baptismal service to follow closely the wedding ceremony; while the number of 'chance children'—as illegitimate offspring were called—revealed a shocking state of society.

There were no womanly occupations for women. To-day the avenues of paying employment for females are abundant, and the businesses and professions in which the 'fair sex' may earn money are so prolific as to make the selection of a pursuit quite an embarrassing one. Eve has entered the industrial field in competition with Adam, and he can no longer make fun of the woman's movement. He is confronted with lady doctors, lady journalists, lady typewriters, lady clerks, lady lecturers, lady editors and authors. Very much accentuated nowadays is Tom Moore's couplet:

> Disguise our bondage as we will,
> 'Tis woman, woman rules us still.

Many things that are now accessible to the poorest were a century ago only within reach of the rich. Articles that were regarded as luxuries are now looked upon as every-day necessaries. Only too often the stomachs of 'hands' in towns and hinds in villages, like Oliver Twist, asked 'for more.' The New World did not redress the food-balance of the Old. The frozen flesh and fruit of Australia, and the grain and other produce of Canada and the United States, belonged to the future.

'*Sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*' was a maxim that had not been recognised by the legislature. The common people had no inkling of the great Palmerstonian truth that 'dirt *is* matter in its wrong place.' There were no boards of health, no inspectors of nuisances, no sanitary appliances. Disinfectants and chloride of lime would have been regarded with apprehension. It might have been said:

> The cottage homes of England,
> How fearfully they smell!
> There's fever in the cesspool
> And sewage in the well.

There was no scientific farming; no Minister of Agriculture; old-world methods of tilling the soil, almost as primitive as those of Triptolemus, with his wooden plough and yoke of bullocks, prevailed. The crops were treated very differently to the manner in which they are treated to-day, when there are patented machines for winnowing and tedding, and reaping, and mowing, and threshing; when we do not even allow our horses to take rough hay into their mouths, but chop it up and refine it for them until it can be comfortably masticated in delicate morsels.

A list as long as Leporello's catalogue, or an Irish law-suit, or a Corsican feud, and as varied as a bill of lading, or an auctioneer's inventory, or a railway company's lost luggage advertisement, might be made of 'Things that have Come In' during the last hundred years; while an enumeration of 'Things that have Gone Out' would make a very comprehensive schedule.

The Present has distanced the Past both in science and art, mechanical appliances, and material advances in such a marked manner that it is not worth while to place them. Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere. The rate of mortality tells its own tale. It shows—as Lord Macaulay points out—that people live longer now, because they are better fed, better lodged, better clothed, and better attended in sickness. Capital has found its most lucrative course; commodities command their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, and idleness and folly their proper punishment.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By Thomas St E. Hake.

CHAPTER IX.—SUSPECTED.

JARVIS grasped his hand-bag and started up from his seat. All sense of fatigue was gone. He stepped briskly across the waiting-room; but before he could reach the door it was opened from the outside, and Lawyer Burtenshaw came in.

'John? The very man I'm looking for. Why, what's the matter?'

'Didn't you see him?' was John's counter-question.

Mr Burtenshaw nodded. '*I* saw him,' said he in an underbreath. 'Let him be. He's going home.'

'Going home? But'——

'Let him be,' Mr Burtenshaw reiterated, laying his hand on John's arm; 'let him go home.'

If Lawyer Burtenshaw had said, 'I've weaved

the web; let him entangle himself in the meshes,' his meaning could not have been made clearer to Jarvis. He had hardly spoken when the train for Cablethorpe came into the station.

'My gig's outside,' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'I'll drive you to the cross-roads. You'll be home before the fellow, or, at any rate, nearly as soon. Come.'

There was no time for vacillation. Jarvis promptly decided.

'I'll go with you,' said he.

Jarvis took his seat in the gig beside Mr Burtenshaw, and they went flying along the highway. The railway-station was about midway between this spot and the town of Cablethorpe. Night hung over the fenland like a pall.

'You know why Gabriel Beek is going home?' said Mr Burtenshaw.

'No. And yet,' said Jarvis suddenly, 'I suspect—— Did you see the look he gave me?'

'What was it like?' said the lawyer evasively.

'Fiendish!'

Mr Burtenshaw burst into a fit of laughter. With a startled turn of the head Jarvis glanced round; but he could see nothing of the lawyer's features, merely the dimmest outline of his figure in the gloom.

'Not bad, John,' Mr Burtenshaw answered, recovering himself. 'Not bad. I suspect you're right.'

The shriek of a railway-engine struck upon their ears, and the distant rumble of a train echoed across the fens.

'Mr Burtenshaw,' said Jarvis, 'this may be the last chance I have of talking to you, except'——

'What! You don't seriously think you're threatened, do you?'

'Threatened? Why, no. I was thinking at the moment,' said John, 'about that mortgage. Give yourself no further trouble'——

Mr Burtenshaw touched John's shoulder. 'Excuse me. But was it wise to bring the sum with you in that bag?'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, my friend,' said the lawyer, 'do you think I'm blind? I guessed when I saw you alight from the London train at the junction what you'd been to town about; and the way you caught up your bag when that fellow Gabriel appeared at the waiting-room window confirmed my surmise. So you're going to throw me over, John, are you?'

'I am going to try,' said John.

Again the shriek of the engine was heard. Next moment the glare as of a huge incandescent fire came creeping through the night, keeping, as it appeared, in a parallel line with the light from Mr Burtenshaw's gig lamps. The space between the lights may have been a mile or more, and they had the appearance of carrying on a race, the goal being Cablethorpe. The lights of the town were visible two miles or more ahead. No further words were exchanged between the men until Mr Burtenshaw drew up at the 'Cross' inn, at a corner of the cross-roads. Almost at the same time the train came to a stop at the station before Cablethorpe.

'You'll reach home first after all,' the lawyer predicted.

Jarvis stepped down into the road.

'You're not afraid of him?' said the lawyer.

'Gabriel Beek? Not I.'

'Well, good-night.'

Jarvis struck into the road for Cablethorpe. The gig lights flew along the road at right angles; and presently the engine lights moved out of the station. As Jarvis hastened on his way in the darkness, the lights on either side of him kept in sight.

There was some one at Cablethorpe at this moment of the night who watched anxiously for John's coming. It was Ruth. She was lying upon the sofa in the little parlour, as she was wont to do more frequently of late, by no light but the light of the fire. Since the night upon which Jarvis had saved Tudway's life, her hope that John might realise how futile it was to think of Hettie had begun to revive. Would he ever think of her—ever gain the faintest conception how deep was her love for him?

She listened for his footsteps. The hour had surely gone by when the last train from London is due at Cablethorpe. John had sent Hettie a telegram that afternoon: 'All goes well; shall return to-night.' He was a man upon whom one might rely implicitly.

Still no footstep in the timber-yard reached her ear. Ruth began to grow restless. Yet, stay! what was that? The sound of a footstep at last—a footstep in the yard that she instantly recognised. But not John's quick, energetic tread. It was a slow, heavy tread; it was the step of her truant brother Gabriel.

Ruth sank back like one who loses all volition. His shadow was at this moment thrown across the windows by the light from the office opposite. He was entering by the back way—coming home as it had always been his habit to come—without sign or warning. His step was in the passage now; and in another moment the parlour door opened, and Gabriel Beek came slouching in. He flung himself into an arm-chair beside the fire with an air of weariness, without looking round him. Had he looked about the room, as any stranger would have done, he would possibly have seen Ruth crouching on the sofa in the uncertain light. She lay there hardly breathing, with her large bright eyes fixed wonderingly upon him.

It was her dream. Ruth recalled every detail of it, just as she had related it to Hettie when awakened upon the first night of the terrible storm. His face and figure were fitfully lit up

by the wreck-wood fire. It gave an expression to his face of grim, silent laughter. Whether he was dressed like a tramp, or whether his clothes were begrimed with mud, she could not determine; but she almost expected, as the moments went by, to see him take a bundle of bank-notes from his pocket, as she had seen him in her dream, and send them fluttering over the blaze like so many bits of useless flimsy.

But nothing of the sort happened. Gabriel settled himself comfortably in the chair, as Ruth had often seen him do after a day from home, and fell fast asleep. She recovered volition. The painful sense of being without power of speech or motion left her. She rose and went softly from the room, and hurried out to look for Hettie. As she crossed the yard she caught sight of Tudway through the window of the timber warehouse. He was seated upon some planks near a stove, smoking his pipe. He came to her at the door, leaning on his stick. There was a lantern in his hand. He noticed that she was breathless and unusally pale.

'Gabriel has come home,' she whispered. 'Where is Hettie?'

'Isn't she in the office?'

'No'—and Ruth peered over her shoulder—'the lights in the office are out.'

Tudway consulted his watch. 'Why, it's half-past eleven.'

'Half-past eleven?' cried Ruth. 'John should have been back long ago.'

They regarded each other with anxious looks.

'Come,' said Tudway, 'let's go and speak to Gabriel.'

Ruth took the lantern, and led the way into the house. Tudway followed. When they entered the parlour they were surprised to find Hettie standing over the fire in a thoughtful attitude, and alone.

'Have you seen him?' said Ruth, still in a whisper.

'Yes. Gabriel is tired,' said Hettie, who showed no sign of uneasiness; 'he has gone to his room. I have not questioned him about himself,' she added, noticing Ruth's uneasy look, however; 'he's not in the mood to-night. You know how taciturn and stubborn he is at the best of times.'

'Did he come by train?' said Tudway.

Hettie had not inquired.

'But, Hettie, you might at least have asked him,' said Ruth, 'whether he had seen anything of John.'

While she spoke the gate-bell clanged loudly. Ruth, who still held the lantern in her hand, went out. Her heart beat fast, for she was seized with a sudden dread that something had happened to Jarvis, and that some one had come in haste to break the news. She opened the little doorway in the gate and looked out.

A tall man, in a heavy driving-coat, and muffled up to his eyes in a woollen scarf, stood before her. A gig was being led under the archway into the stable-yard of the 'Jolly Bacchus.' Ruth raised the lantern and peered into his face.

It was Lawyer Burtenshaw.

'How d'ye do, Miss Ruth?' said he in his most plausible manner. 'Is our friend at home?'

'Who?'

'John Jarvis. I want particularly to see him.'

'We are expecting him. He went to London,' said Ruth, 'this morning. We are expecting him every minute.'

'Not back yet? Why, I met him at Willoughby Junction a couple of hours ago, and—and'——

'Met him at Willoughby Junction?'

'Yes. Let me in,' said the lawyer; 'let me in.'

He brushed by her, and hastened across the timber-yard towards the house. Ruth went quickly after him. As they came in Hettie stepped forward. 'What is the matter?' she asked.

Mr Burtenshaw stood up in front of the fire with his usual air of proprietorship, and said: 'I've no wish to alarm you, but I'm afraid John has been rather foolhardy to-night.'

Ruth had seated herself in such a position that she could study Mr Burtenshaw's face without being observed by him. She rested her elbows on the table, and shaded her face with her hand, for she feared to betray the intense anxiety his words were causing her.

'It has never been a secret that I know of,' the lawyer went on, 'that John Jarvis and your brother Gabriel are at daggers drawn. While your father was alive, Miss Beek, there was no open quarrel between them. Since his death they've kept apart. But they met again to-night.'

'Where?'

'At Willoughby Junction. No word was spoken between them,' said Mr Burtenshaw, 'but I saw them looking at each other through the waiting-room window—John within, Gabriel outside. I instantly perceived the danger. Gabriel's look was angry. I was warned, and I hastened to carry John off in my gig. Then'—he glanced searchingly round the room—'I left him at the cross-roads.'

Hettie betrayed signs of growing restless.

'Miss Beek,' the lawyer resumed, 'when you tell me that Jarvis has not come home, and I think of the ill-feeling that has existed for years between the two men, I fully realise the mistake I have made. I can't think what possessed me when I let John go one step alone. It was thoughtless in the extreme. When I had driven a mile or two I got fidgety. I turned back, but I saw nothing of him along the road. What can have become of him?'

For a moment no word was spoken. Mr Burtenshaw buttoned his coat tightly about him.

'John had a big sum of money with him, as I've no doubt you know,' said he, 'and in my opinion he has been robbed and—— Well, we shall see. When I recall the look on your brother Gabriel's face as he watched John through the window at Willoughby Junction, my suspicions seem almost confirmed.'

Ruth's head dropped upon her arm. The lawyer's words had roused terror at her heart. Mr Burtenshaw went out; and Tudway and Hettie, after speaking together in a whisper, followed him to the 'Bacchus' inn. The awful thought had crossed Ruth's mind that Gabriel, in the hatred he had fostered for Jarvis for years past, had now waylaid him along the lonely fenland road, and had struck him down. It was the thing he had threatened to do. She recalled his look, his angry words, at Nelson Square.

She sat drooping there, faint from a sense of sickening horror at the very thought of what might have happened. But when her strength returned she rose quickly; and, to her surprise, she saw her brother Gabriel standing upon the hearth-rug, where Lawyer Burtenshaw had stood a few minutes ago, with his look bent curiously upon her. The moment she fixed her startled eyes upon him, he turned away his head and looked down.

The lantern which Ruth had brought in with her still remained on the table at her side. She took it up, and hurried towards the door.

'Stop!' said Gabriel, suddenly looking up. 'What's that crowd about outside the "Bacchus"? The noise they're making woke me up. I saw that scoundrel Burtenshaw among them. What does it all mean?'

Ruth had opened the door while he still spoke, and the sound of many voices, echoing in the timber-yard, struck upon her ear.

'Ask yourself what it means,' said she.

Gabriel stepped quickly towards her and caught her by the wrist.

'I *will* be answered!'

Ruth trembled with horror at her brother's touch.

'John has been robbed—murdered, for all we can tell—by some one, between Cablethorpe and the "Cross" inn.'

'When?'

'An hour ago.'

'Who did it?'

'You know best.'

'*I?*'

'Was it not you?' said Ruth.

Gabriel loosened his hold upon her wrist, and staggered back as though he had received a stab. The moment she was released Ruth ran out. He saw the flash of her lantern at the window as she crossed the yard, and then the voices of the crowd outside the 'Jolly Bacchus'—angry voices, as they seemed to him—again smote upon his ear.

He was being pursued. This was Lawyer Burtenshaw's doing. That was Gabriel's thought, and the look of a demon crossed his face. Then he raised the window-sash and climbed out; and in a moment he had dropped noiselessly into the yard beneath. He went over a foot-bridge into a field; and here he struck into a narrow pathway beside a broad dike, and was soon lost in the darkness.

STEAM LINE-FISHING.

THE comparatively new industry of steam line-fishing is, as far as its methods of working are concerned, probably little understood by the majority of consumers of fish-food; most people's idea of line-fishing being the operation as carried on by the small yawls, the crews of which put out to sea for a few hours only, returning from their short voyage with a glittering freight of fresh and caller fish. The steam line-boats, on the contrary, are handsomely equipped vessels, the latest specimens being of some 120 tons gross register, and built of steel, to class 100 A1 at Lloyd's. The engines are compound surface condensing, of 300 indicated horse-power, with a steel multitubular boiler, having a working pressure of 140 lb. steam. These boats are fitted with fish-rooms, shelved for about eighty score of cod, ling, and halibut; ponds on deck for skate and saith, &c.; ice-rooms to hold from four to five tons; and bunkers capable of holding some forty tons of coal, sufficient for a three weeks' cruise. The cabin accommodation is of the most comfortable description, and the vessels are ketch-rigged, and furnished with a strong seaworthy boat and all necessary appliances for use in cases of emergency. Each vessel carries from 4000 to 5000 hooks attached to many miles of lines. The cost of each of these steam-liners would be from £2500 to £3000. Although the work of baiting so many hooks and casting out and hauling in so many miles of lines is a very arduous one, requiring hours of constant labour in the twenty-four, not to speak of the storing of the fish in layers of ice, the vessels are kept in perfect order by the fishermen, more especially the beautiful machinery of the engine-rooms. The bill of fare is of the best, and a good cook is kept on every boat. The crew consists generally of seven or eight men, including the skipper.

A word as to the financing of these boats may not be unacceptable. The early system of financing the improved vessels which succeeded the small and crude steam-liners of eight or ten years ago was in some ways unsatisfactory to the fishermen who engaged in it. As the new method caught on, however, and the fishermen began to get interested in it, those of them who had spare capital by them, as fishermen generally have, joined in the purchase of a boat, sharing the profits among themselves after defraying all expenses of coals, oil, bait, &c., as well as the wages of engineer and fireman, from the proceeds of the sale of fish. The results have in many instances been eminently satisfactory, some of the boats having been estimated to have cleared in a year an average profit of from £500 to £700 on the original outlay of, say, £3000, after all expenses were paid—not a bad income as incomes go in these days for each of the five or six fishermen. Even when their capital was insufficient for the purchase of a boat, as was not unusual in the case of the younger men, service on a steam-liner they found to be more remunerative, safer, and more comfortable than was their former experience on board the yawls. As to the popularity of steam line-fishing among the fishermen themselves, frequent interviews with line-fishermen, not only in several of the villages of Kincardineshire, such as Findon, Portlethen, Muchals, Newtonhill, and Cove, as well as the skippers and men of boats at Aberdeen Fish Market, leave no shadow of doubt. Both men and women too have spoken with enthusiasm of the benefits of service on board steam line-boats, and the speedy extinction as fishing centres of the east-coast villages.

When asked the reason of such depopulation, the line-fishers give the harbour, the market, the auction sales, the fine steam line-boats ('line' boats, be it noted, *not* trawlers), as powerful enough attractions to draw all the young men and the middle-aged to Aberdeen to 'better themselves' with the rest, and share the luck that is going. The women too participate in the advantages of steam line-fishing. The weary and toilsome drudgery which erstwhile had to be undertaken by the womenfolks of the hardy toilers of the deep, such as curing the fish and carrying them about the country or into town in creels, which ordinary men, not to say women, could hardly lift; and the wading into the sea up to the neck for bait, &c. (all of which required a lifelong training—that being, in fact, the reason why fishermen as a rule marry only within their own class), are not required of the wives of steam line-fishermen. Now the fish are at once given into the hands of the salesmen, the bait is supplied wholesale by the owners, or, in the case of herring-bait, caught by the fishermen far out at sea, and the fish are cured and converted into 'Finnan' and other 'haddies' in the curers' yards with all up-to-date aids to labour. The picturesque fisherwife, with her many-tucked petticoat, high-peaked mutch, and creel, will soon be a thing of the past. The tendency towards centralisation has been noted in the *Fishery Board Reports* for a year or two past. In the report for 1895 the reasons given are the 'proximity of the large ports to the fishing-grounds, the facilities for landing fish in good condition, and the rapid means of communication with the great industrial centres.' The report goes on to say that the 'larger boats are necessary owing to the increased demand for the better kinds of fish, which usually frequent only the off-shore grounds.' It will be seen from this remark that the yawls could never satisfy the increasing demand for fish-food, the exportation of which from Aberdeen has been promoted by the combined agencies of steam and electricity. In fact, without these modern miracle-workers the fish-trade could never have assumed its present magnificent proportions.

The 1,000,000 cwt. of fish, representing a money value of £400,000, which was the net result of last year's fishing at Aberdeen, would, had yawls been the only boats in use, for the most part have lived their lives unmolested at the bottom of the cold North Sea. In the report of the Board for 1896 are evidences of the same falling off, especially in the Aberdeen and Kincardineshire districts. 'Boats land their catches at Aberdeen,' is the usual report from east-coast villages; and under 'Findon' we find the sadly suggestive remark: 'The last of the Findon fishermen removed to Stonehaven' during the year. The proposal which has been made that the Fishery Board should erect harbours at small fishing villages does not commend itself to the judgment of those who have made fishery matters a subject of thoughtful consideration in view of the fact that, as last report truly says, 'fishermen of all classes will be certain to locate themselves at those ports where they can have the greatest facilities for landing their catches and disposing of them to the best advantage.'

It is only at large ports, such as Aberdeen, that daily supplies can be depended on to keep up the trade; and it is only large centres that can meet the demands for providing coals, stores, and ice, not to speak of the necessary repairs which are always wanted in connection with fishing-vessels, and which keep the builders busy. The depopulation of small villages and the over-crowding of large towns is regrettable; but in the fish trade it is inevitable.

One great difficulty in the way of the success of steam line-fishing is the supply of bait. It may not be generally known outside the industry that from the New Year on to September herring-bait is used on board the steam line-boats, the crews being supplied during the first three months with herring from some of the southern ports. From April till about September they take nets along with them, and fish for herring-bait for

themselves; during the remaining three months they have to use squid-bait. It has been abundantly demonstrated that there is no bait in its season equal to squid or ink-fish. These fish, or rather sea monstrosities, are brought up by the trawl in abundance, but are seldom, if ever, caught on the lines, which may be one reason for their scarcity. Another reason which is noted in the report is the migratory habits of the ink-fish. In this connection a singular fact was observed by the herring fishermen last season, which, it will be remembered, was a very disastrous one on the east coast. One of our most experienced curers, who resides for the most part in one of the towns on the Morayshire coast, remarked to the writer that last season squid were more plentiful than he had ever seen them all his time of curing, so that he thought it without precedent. He further said that when squid appear, herrings disappear; in fact, it was his experience on the west coast that it is certain death to the herring if squid appear. So much for the 'glorious uncertainty' of the fish trade. In the winter of 1896–7 the ink-fish were scarcely to be had for love or money. Last winter (1897-8) they were plentiful, and bait was within the reach of all.

It is a fact worthy of notice that a few years ago ink-fish were thrown overboard as rubbish; now they are, when scarce, almost priceless; and even last winter the cost of bait was the heaviest part of the expenditure in connection with line-fishing. The previous winter the cost frequently exceeded the profits of the trip—a state of matters which could not go on. Various attempts have been made to find a substitute for squid-bait, but hitherto without success.

The failure of the Newfoundland imported squid last year will be fresh in the memory of those interested in fishery matters. There is no doubt that a fortune awaits the man who discovers a satisfactory substitute for squid-bait. Each hundredweight box of squid costs at least £2.

In conclusion it may be said that the line-fishermen, if they are to succeed in steam-vessels, must add enterprise and energy to their recognised industry, and, throwing aside class and traditional fads and superstition, endeavour to march with the times.

THE BIRTHDAY PEARL

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY.

'IT'S my birthday,' said Bob Panton, master and owner of the pearl-shell lugger *Daisy*, then lying at anchor off Somerset on her return from a trip about Torres Straits. 'It's my birthday,' repeated he, bringing out a 'square-face' of Hollands. 'We'll have a nip all round, and then we'll open a shell each, just for fun, and to see what sort of luck I'm to have this next year.'

The five blacks and the one other white man that constituted the *Daisy's* crew duly drank the skipper's health in half-pints; and then, laughing, each man chose the biggest oyster he could find—all about the size of soup-plates.

Four were blanks, and they all watched Abdallah, the new hand, as he slowly opened the great bivalve. Then came a shout as he presently held up a pearl, pear-shaped and almost as big as a hazel-nut, the finest gem on record yet found in those seas.

'Good luck indeed!' quoth Bob Panton as the chorus of admiration subsided, and, pulling out a bundle of ten dirty one-pound notes, he handed them over to Abdallah, saying, 'Take these for yourself, lad. I'll double it if this turns out as A1 as it looks.'

'And now I'll get up another square-face, and we'll wet the little stranger properly, and christen it the "Birthday Pearl." And they did so to such purpose that, bar Abdallah, there was no sober man on the *Daisy* by eight bells that night.

In the morning, when Captain Bob Panton came on deck, Abdallah was missing. So, as presently discovered, was the big pearl that Panton had left in a small wooden box in his berth. So was the *Daisy's* dingy that had been towing astern.

Bob Panton sold his shell, and offered a reward of £50 for the thief. But, though all the southern police were put on the *qui vive*, nothing could be heard of the Birthday Pearl nor of Abdallah. And at last there were people found who did not scruple to hint at birthday hallucinations, born of 'square gin,' on the part of Captain Bob and his crew.

But Panton took the matter to heart, and got on the spree; spent his shell-money, and more; sold his boat, pulled himself together, and started off in pursuit of Abdallah, with ever before his vision the virgin sheen of the great pearl, his for a few hours only, convinced that until he recovered it luck for him, either in this world or the next, was out of the question.

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When old widower Wilhelm Itzig, the watchmaker and jeweller at Port Leichardt, died, his native-born son, Hermann, came home from a wandering life of droving and working upon stations, and, returning to the trade he had been taught, mended the Leichardt clocks and watches with an indifferent measure of success, being at best but a botch.

The little shanty, dignified with the title of

shop, stood apart from the rest of the township, and quite close to the beach. And but for an old tin sign, with upon it 'Hermann Itzig, working jeweller,' and an old clock and three empty watch-cases in the window, there was nothing to distinguish it from any of the other straggling 'humpies' that went to make up the nearly deserted Queensland seaport.

'How much, John?' Hermann was asking of a half-starved, unkempt-looking black man, a fortnight after the finding and losing of the Birthday Pearl, shining mildly now in the gloom of the stuffy little inner room of the shop by the beach.

'Won 'undreed, two 'undreed-feefeetee, sar,' replied Abdallah, eyeing the gem as Hermann rolled it to and fro in the palm of his hand.

'Don't you wish you may get it, my boy,' replied Hermann, laughing. 'Ask a thousand whilst you're about it, John. Why don't you?'

'Ver' fine pul, sar,' replied Abdallah, cringing. 'Some day get mooch more dan t'ousan' for 'im.'

And young Hermann, although knowing little of such matters, thought, as he noted its soft lustre and flawless shape, that possibly his customer might be right.

His hand closed on the pearl. Said he, 'I'll give you twenty. Haven't got another cent anyhow'—which was the truth.

But Abdallah raised his eyes and hands to heaven in mute appeal at such an offer.

'You'll either take that or nothing,' said Hermann, suddenly producing a revolver and pointing it straight at the other's head. 'You stole it, you beggar; you know you did, up the coast somewhere—Thursday Island or Somerset, likely. Here, think yourself lucky to get so much.' And Hermann handed over four five-pound notes.

'Take them,' said he, seeing that the other made no motion, 'or I'll have you up to the police barracks in a quarter less than no time!'

There was murder in Abdallah's eye. But he put out his hand.

'Now clear straight out,' said Hermann. 'There's the *Barcoo* alongside the wharf. If you take my advice you'll get away in her. So long, old man!'

As he turned away, putting down the pistol, Abdallah sprang on him like a tiger, drawing his sheath-knife as he did so—for he was clad like any coasting sailor, in a suit of belted dungaree. Hermann reeled and fell, the knife descended again and again as Abdallah struck in his blind rage, and presently the body underneath him grew limp and motionless.

Rising and striking a match—for night was coming on, and the small room was nearly in darkness—Abdallah searched until he saw the Birthday Pearl lying near the bed, gleaming up at him out of a little pool of blood.

Wiping it on the blankets, also his knife, he turned and fled towards the long jetty where lay the s.s. *Barcoo*, already clanging her second bell, a better man by twenty pounds than when he entered Leichardt that night, with a useless fortune in his pocket.

Next morning, somebody coming into the shop with a Waterbury to mend found Hermann lying senseless and nearly dead from loss of blood. None of the wounds, however, had touched any vital part; and a month in the local hospital restored him to health again. For reasons of his own, he had professed himself unable to give any description of the assassin. Illicit pearl-buyers on that coast were looked upon with great disfavour, for the reason that every inhabitant who could afford it had shares in some venture connected with the fishery—that is, the pearl-shell fleet. The pearls themselves were but a by-blow of the industry—conspicuous more by their rarity, except in the shape of almost worthless 'seed,' than anything else.

But the glamour of the big gem had entered into Hermann's soul, as it had into Panton's and into Abdallah's; and presently, selling out his stock for a few pounds, he too moved on in pursuit, impelled, to boot, by a sharp feeling of revenge for loss of blood and money.

Meanwhile Abdallah, journeying southward, made no more attempts to dispose of his treasure. But, sewing it in a little bag of black calico, he hid it away artistically in the meshes of his thick hair, where with a touch he could assure himself of its safety. He was a man who had travelled far, and knew many things—knew more than Panton or Itzig; but travel had not shut out inherent superstition. And he began to look upon the big pearl as a charm, an amulet, that, worn always, would protect him and bring him much good fortune. At various times, in the absence of any distinguishing marks of caste or dress, he had been taken for a Malay, a Hindu, and a Kanaka.

But Abdallah was none of these. He was an Arab from Muscat, who had in his time worked amongst the rotting oyster-heaps of El Bouruk on the shores of the Persian Gulf, had seen big pearls, and possessed a fair notion of their value. Hence he was well aware that he had a prize that would make a sensation in the world, and one whose owner would be unable to hide his light under a bushel—so far as the police, at least, were concerned.

Nor did he imagine for a moment that Panton would sit down quietly under his loss. Of Hermann he thought no more—dead men tell no tales.

So he travelled round to Adelaide, thence by sea up Spencer's Gulf to Port Augusta, where he joined the camel-trains of Hafiz Khan, the rich Afghan who brought the wool down from the arid interior to the tall ships lying in the river.

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Into Sydney shortly came Hermann Itzig, with

the desire for vengeance still hot, but purse low. His guarded inquiries soon let him into the knowledge that the police were on the watch, and had at least twenty men shadowed on suspicion, and waiting the arrival of Panton.

Seeing that so far as his own claim was concerned the case was hopeless, he gave it up. But not until he had satisfied himself that Abdallah was not in the city did he for a time relinquish the hope of getting even with him for that little matter of the knifing in the hut by the Leichardt beach.

Later, falling in with two of his countrymen bound for the West Australian goldfields, he joined them. The trio were lucky, and made each a fair pile. After a hurried visit to the Fatherland, which he left also hurriedly, convinced that for the Australian-born a military despotism was a most unsuitable form of government, Hermann Itzig, returning, bought a station 'up north' in South Australia, and after a while began to prosper considerably. But often to him came dreams of the big pearl, shining with its mild and tender light as he had last seen it—an episode in his life that, but for certain pains of frosty mornings, he might have almost come to regard as apocryphal. A stern, resolute man, he was incapable of forgetting an injury; and ever and anon, principally in the winter, he sent agents to work to hunt up Abdallah, meaning, when found, to deal with him after his own fashion.

But when a black man, or a yellow, chooses to hide himself amongst others of his colour, the search is apt to linger and become monotonous.

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And so Bob Panton found it.

Received by the police with open arms and a whole tribe of dusky nomads—Manila-men, Kanakas, Javanese, men from the spurs of the Hindu Kush, others from the palm-groves of Kandy and the plains of Central India—he could identify none of them. The police had done their best, stimulated by the reward. But the vagueness of the description baffled them. There were so many black men with sharp aquiline features and good teeth, who spoke very little English, and usually wore European clothes. And at last they gave it up as a bad job. So also did the authorities in Melbourne and Adelaide, whither Bob Panton journeyed on his quest, with hopes growing weaker and weaker.

Superstitious in his way as Abdallah, he had quite made up his mind that unless he recovered his Birthday Pearl, no luck would ever again cross his path in this world nor, possibly, in the next; and, strong in his belief, he spent every penny he possessed in the fruitless search, finding himself at last 'on the wallaby' with a swag upon his back—he, Bob Panton, once master and owner of the smartest little lugger around Torres Straits.

Fain would he have returned once more to his old haunts on the Queensland coast; but he well knew how useless that would be, penniless as he was. And he had seen enough of beach-combing in his day, so had no stomach for that game.

And he worked about from station to station under an assumed name, with the splendid memory of his loss abiding ever upon him, until what preachers call the 'finger of Providence,' and lesser men 'luck,' brought him to Weetah, which was the name of Itzig's station, far to northward of the Burra.

Here there was a drought prevailing, and men were sinking wells. Panton knew little about the business; but, falling in with a mate who did, he took a contract to put a well down on an out-of-the-way part of the run known as the Sandalwood Ridge.

They struck water at a shallow depth, much to Itzig's delight. Then they built a hut for a shepherd and yards for the sheep, laid troughing, and made everything ready. And, just as they finished, there came a rainfall measurable in feet.

But Panton, in place of leaving, took other work on the run; whilst at Sandalwood the water stood undisturbed, and tall grass grew about hut and troughs, and the yards fell to decay, for nobody ever went that way now feed and water were so plentiful elsewhere.

. . . . . .

Meanwhile Abdallah, earning good wages as a first-class driver, made money on the camel-train; and presently, leaving Hafiz Khan, he bought a tilted cart and two horses, and took out a hawker's license, and began life on his own account, secure in the strength and continuance of his luck.

He wore the pearl, now in a little leather bag, hung round his neck by a silver chain. And he worshipped it as his god. Nothing but good fortune had been his since the night he had sneaked into the *Daisy's* cabin whilst the drunken snores of her crew broke the still air, and taken the gem—his own: had he not found it?—from off the cabin table.

And ever since then had he not thriven—thriven until his outlandish signature was beginning to be known at the big bank in King William Street almost as well as that of Hafiz Khan?

And when at rare intervals he allowed his eyes to feast on the soft, lucent iridescence of the wonderful talisman, his belief grew stronger than ever that his *Kismet* was bound up therein; and that, compared to the power and magic of his treasure, Allah and all his works were as naught. And, indeed, Abdallah had long ago abjured the teachings of his Prophet, conforming to the demands of Australian inland civilisation in the matters of drinking rum, smoking, swearing, and

eating flesh, both clean and unclean, with the utmost indifference — exactly the same as any Christian.

So utter was his faith in the efficacy of the gem that if any slight mishap befell, such as the losing of his horses or the breaking of a spoke, he ascribed it to his inconsiderate attempt at Leichardt to get rid of it to the young man whose body had made a sheath for his knife. It was a punishment meted out to him by his divinity.

Many months passed away; he made money, and travelled far and wide. Then, in an evil hour for himself, he travelled still farther, and fell into a trap set, all unwittingly, for him by two men whom he had injured, and from which all the power of the Birthday Pearl was unable to save him. One hot summer day, making for Weetah head-station, he lost his bearings, and at sundown, he and his horses being parched with thirst, was very pleased to strike the Sandalwood Ridge, with its covered well of still water, sheltering hut, and abundance of feed.

. . . . . .

'I think,' remarked Hermann Itzig to his overseer a month or two afterwards, 'that we may as well, perhaps, put a flock at the Sandalwood.'

'Very well, sir,' replied the overseer. 'I'll send Bray here out to do up the hut and yards.'

'I'll drive him out,' said Hermann. 'He's one of the men who worked there, isn't he? I want to have a look round. See that the big water-bag's on the buggy. I don't suppose the stuff in the well's any too good by this time.'

'What's that?' asked Itzig of Bray, *alias* Panton, as, at the end of their twenty-mile drive, they caught sight of something white and round close to the well.

'Tilted cart, I should say,' replied the other, peering under the flat of his hand.

As they drove up, two big eagle-hawks and some crows flew off the carcasses of a couple of dead horses.

Close to the door lay another corpse—that of a man—a man with strips of dry black flesh hanging from his bones.

'Great heaven!' exclaimed Itzig, 'what's the matter here?' But Panton made no answer. He was staring intently at the shrivelled features of the dead man. As he gazed he saw something shine from between the skeleton fingers of one clenched hand. Stooping, he drew it out with a cry of astonishment—the great pearl, Abdallah's god, appealed to in vain during his last agony.

'My pearl!' exclaimed Hermann.

'No—mine!' said Panton. 'My Birthday Pearl that Abdallah here stole from me!'

'Are you Panton, then?' asked Hermann.

'Yes,' replied Bob, 'I am. But what do you know about the matter?'

Then Hermann told his story, waiving all rights, if any belonged by reason of the wounds that ached yet in the winter mornings. He could afford to. But what had killed man and horses?

There was a little water left in the bottom of the well-bucket. Hermann tasted it, shook his head, and spat it out. Alongside the bucket lay a native cat, dead. At the troughs, dry now, were others; also crows, all dead.

'I prefer our own water,' said he. 'Empty the whisky out of that bottle in the buggy, and fill it from the well. I'll fix this stuff up when we get home. That pearl's worth a lot of money. A good day's work for you. And for me too, perhaps, if my notion turns out correct. Copper's not so low as it was.'

Analysis disclosed the secret. The well had been bottomed on a very rich vein of copper ore. The water had become so impregnated with the mineral as to become highly poisonous. A thirsty man and thirsty horses might as well have drunk a strong decoction of arsenic.

It required a deal of persuasion to make Panton part with his pearl. Even as Abdallah, he was minded to make a fetish of the thing—it was so pure-looking, and shone with such a mild graciousness, that it seemed very hard to relinquish possession of it. Also, it was his birthday gift, and was bound to bring him luck.

But at last wiser counsels prevailed. Messrs Storr & Mortimer gave £2500 for it, and with this money Panton bought a partnership in Weetah. The lode at 'Poison Well' may be worked yet. At present prices it might pay. And what eventually became of the Birthday Pearl I know not. I note, however, that at the last London wool sales Messrs Itzig & Panton's clip averaged the top price of the season.

THE LATER FLOWERS.

The elder's blooms are flat and fair;
The ox-eyed daisy's in the grass;
And shepherd's-rods, in meekness, stare
From every hedgerow as we pass;
While bees have mournful notes which tell
Of summer's fullness and farewell!

Ah me! I watched the shining hours,
From early crocus till the may
Was sprent in whiteness o'er the bowers,
And gorses glorified the way!
Now later blooms of sadness stand
In pitying glory o'er the land.

How sober is the summer's prime!
How sad her close! How deep the fire
That heralds blossoms of the time!
Amid their glow we gain desire,
And pray that life's declining hour
May hold such wealth of fruit and flower!

WM. JOSEPH GALLAGHER.

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PENAL SENTENCES.

By Major-General Sir EDMUND F. DU CANE, K.C.B.

IN considering the treatment to which convicted prisoners should be subjected while undergoing their sentences it is necessary first to settle what should be the object to be aimed at. There can be no doubt of the answer which would have been given to this question from the beginning of the world's history until a comparatively short time ago. It is expressed in the doctrine that the ruler of any country should be 'a terror to evil-doers'—that is, that those who are tempted to break the law should have a wholesome dread of the consequences to themselves as a check upon such inclinations. To this end severe corporal punishment, death, or mutilation was inflicted; or, if the offender was cast into prison, it was perhaps an underground pit, in darkness and deprived of every comfort and convenience of life, 'fed with the bread of affliction and the water of affliction.'

This, then, is one—and the oldest—answer to the question, and till about one hundred years ago it was considered the only one.

There are some who hold that a righteous vengeance is the justification for the infliction of the punishment; and if so, it must naturally enter into the question of treatment. It is probable that in old days this may have been accepted as a sound principle, and no doubt private revenge and judicial revenge were very much mixed up. The doctrine of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' implies that the penalty should be equivalent to the injury done by the offender, which may be considered one version of the idea of vengeance. But the treatment that strikes terror sufficiently carries out the desire for vengeance, so that the distinction was of little importance until in these questioning days people began to discuss the right to inflict punishment at all. As to that, it may be admitted that the duty of preventing crime is co-ordinate with the right of punishing it.

Latterly, however, a curious version of or inference from the vengeance theory has made its appearance, and been carried into effect by some few prominent authorities. These seem to assert that when an offender has been convicted and endured his punishment society and he are quits, and that his offence should be entirely ignored in awarding punishment for any further infraction of the law. So that we hear of incorrigible offenders who are known to live by crime being punished no more severely than one who has casually fallen into crime. To most people such a result would be considered a *reductio ad absurdum* of the theory, and would be held to prove sufficiently that any such ground for apportioning punishment must obviously be unsound. The great body of judicial authorities do, in fact, entirely repudiate the doctrine and this application of it, holding rather that the previous commission of offence is a reason for increasing the penalty—on the same principle as physicians increase the dose if the smaller quantity is found ineffective. This conflict of practice and the comparisons it gives rise to create no doubt a certain amount of scandal, and it is to be regretted that there is no way of bringing to reason those who perversely set the opinions of the general body of judicial authorities at defiance.

When in comparatively modern times the treatment of convicted prisoners came to be discussed, and it was admitted that the neglect and brutality which characterised the methods up to the last century could no longer be continued, two views of the principles which should govern the improved methods presented themselves, and each party argued on the assumption that theirs was the only view.

One side concentrated its attention on the offender individually, and treated the matter as if the whole object was to produce an effect upon him. The other side thought more of the great mass of possible offenders, and held that the first

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object was so to treat the one who was caught and sentenced that not only he himself but any other person who contemplated a crime might be deterred from it by thinking of the miseries that he saw might possibly follow on its commission.

The first of these two views naturally enough soon led those who held it to go a stage deeper still, and to question whether the individual could not be better dealt with and prevented from again offending by another method altogether—namely, by reforming him. This idea fitted very well with the feeling of humanity which is one of the characteristics of the present period, and which does honour to it, though it sometimes goes astray.

Discussion on these and kindred matters had been hotly carried on for some years when, thirty-five years ago, I first became connected with prisons in England. Sir Joshua Jebb and others had been making great efforts to carry into practice and develop ideas which have lately been revived, and which are believed no doubt to be quite novel and advanced. A record and a sample of these experiments is to be found in Major Griffith's *Memorials of Millbank*. At this particular moment crime was thought to be increasing in an alarming degree, and the management of the convict prisons was commonly thought to have conduced to this by erring in the direction of mildness.

A very competent Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the whole subject, and issued a very weighty report, in which, among other things, the opinion was expressed that the punishment as actually carried out was 'not sufficiently dreaded.' About the same time a committee of the House of Lords took into consideration the treatment of prisoners under short sentences in county and borough prisons. Legislation followed on these two reports in 1864 and 1865, and on these reports, and in accordance with this legislation, was established the system on which prisoners are treated in prisons of the United Kingdom. The Prisons Act, 1877, did not repeal the Prisons Act, 1865, which regulated in detail the treatment of prisoners under sentence of imprisonment up to two years, except by mitigating its rigour in one or two matters. Its object and effect in the main, so far as concerns the present question, was still further to ensure that the treatment of all prisoners should be uniform.

It will be clear to anybody who studies these reports and the steps taken in consequence of them that the answer given by these high authorities, and sanctioned by legislation, to the question, 'What object should be aimed at in framing the system to which prisoners should be subjected while undergoing their sentences?' would have been that it should be in the first place deterrent, but that reformation should be considered and encouraged, subject to the deterrent effect not being diminished. To illustrate this it is only necessary to study the Prisons Act, 1865. For example, by that act all adult male prisoners sentenced to hard labour are to be employed on labour of the treadwheel or of physically laborious type during their whole sentences; or, if these sentences exceed three months, for, at all events, that period. The wooden bed, without mattress, similar to that used by soldiers on guard, was authorised. The separate confinement of all prisoners was provided for; but though this has some penal effect, it was chiefly to prevent mutual contamination. It is lamentable to see considerable tendency to relax this, with the probable result that prisons will again become nurseries of crime.

But it would be an entire mistake to suppose that the principle of reformation was ignored or contemned by the public or by the legislation of those days. On the contrary, it was in the following year—1866—that the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts were passed; but it was seen, in fact, that the two processes, punishment and reformation, were distinct; that the latter required much longer time and must be carried on under a different set of conditions to the former, and that it was more applicable to offenders whose age was such that their character and habits might be altered and improved by good influences than to older persons in whom these were more fixed. They also knew that the law and resulting practice as regards sentences of imprisonment absolutely precluded the adoption of reformatory methods in prisons as the leading principle of treatment, because the necessary condition of time was absolutely wanting.

This is a point which has been entirely missed by those who would substitute reformation for deterrence as the leading principle in local prisons. They fail to perceive that an entire recasting of the criminal law and the actual practice as to the lengths of sentences would be necessary, and, further, an enormous increase in the size, number, and cost of the prison establishments.

Reformation of a criminal means an entire change in his thoughts and habits on certain points. Old ideas and old habits cannot be altered in a few days, and new ones formed so as to be permanent. They must be imbibed gradually, and are most effectively brought about by association, under appropriate conditions, with, and supervision by, persons whose principles are sound and who will exercise an influence for good.

The period necessary for this process will no doubt differ for different people; but it may safely be said that it would never be less than several months, and more often several years.

Now, consider the periods for which prisoners are actually sentenced, and whether they allow time for the process. Take as an example the year ending 31st March 1895, which is as good as any other; in round numbers 153,000 sen-

tences of imprisonment were passed. This number of sentences produced an average daily prison population which may be put at 12,000 sentenced prisoners. Clearly, therefore, the mass of these prisoners must have received very short sentences, and in fact 99,000 had fourteen days or less; 130,000 had sentences not exceeding five weeks, probably in reality not exceeding a calendar month; another 10,000 had sentences up to two calendar months; and another 6000 up to three months. Only 1629, an insignificant proportion, had sentences of a year or more. It must be obvious that if a sentence of imprisonment is to be carried out on the lines of a reformatory, as has been proposed, these short sentences must be increased very considerably. In order to make this possible the law must be altered, the judges and magistrates must be persuaded to give effect to it, and the prison establishments, instead of providing for 12,000 sentenced prisoners, must be multiplied so as to provide for the accumulation which will result from the longer sentences, and rise to a number which I shrink from estimating. If the average length of reformatory sentences was only ten times as long as the present average of short sentences—and they could not be less or even so little—then the accommodation must be increased tenfold!

The local prisons now cost roughly £400,000 per annum. What would be the cost of maintenance of this large number of reformatory prisons? And what the initial cost of providing them?

These considerations show the proposal to be impracticable, apart from any question whether it is desirable. But it must also be obvious that if deterrence plays a secondary part, the effect of the example on the potential criminal must be very much weakened, and one of the most important results of inflicting punishment thereby lost.

The above reasons show that, practically, deterrence must be the foundation of the system applied to the immense majority of prisoners committed to local prisons.

Deterrent punishment cannot, of course, be inflicted without subjecting the offender to discomforts of various kinds; but in discussion on the subject it is very common to meet with unwillingness to admit the necessity for each particular item in the punishment, or an appeal for pity for the 'poor creatures,' or for indulgences which it is supposed will give rise to a responsive gratitude or other development of the higher feelings; and if these notions prevail we shall return to the condition of things referred to in the beginning of this article, when the prisons failed because punishment was not sufficiently dreaded.

These discomforts are, after all, not excessively severe under the existing system, for public feeling has long prevented any excess in this direction. To a well-fed philanthropist it may seem very hard to be limited to a diet which is cut close to what is 'sufficient, but not more than sufficient,' to use the language of the medical committee which framed it; but there are unfortunately many honest folks who never have more. To sleep on boards without a mattress is a hardship such as soldiers, sailors, travellers, sportsmen, and others voluntarily put up with; and hard physical labour is disagreeable only to the indolent, and therefore most appropriate as a punishment to persons of the criminal type, who for the most part fall into crime from a desire to obtain the means of enjoyment without working for them.

There are no doubt some prisoners who after undergoing a sentence of imprisonment are not deterred from, sooner or later, committing crime again. The same may be said of persons who have gone through the reformatory treatment, for many of our worst criminals are failures from the reformatories. Many reckon on escaping detection; others in time forget the lesson. Still, the results in the main of the deterrent system are good. Not only has crime decreased immensely during the past twenty years under our existing system of punishment and reformation, but the returns published by the late Prison Committee showed that seventy out of every hundred who have once been subjected to the deterrent system are never heard of as criminals again, and about half of the remainder are cured after a second course of the same treatment, making 85 per cent. This is not very far from 93 per cent. claimed as the result of much longer treatment and under much more favourable circumstances for Red Hill Reformatory, for young persons, cited as the most favourable sample of these institutions, and is quite as good or better than can be claimed for the average of reformatories. Incorrigibles might very properly be kept in confinement under suitable conditions for long periods, to protect society against them.

Reformatory methods might, however, with advantage be applied to some persons now sentenced to short periods of imprisonment who are just too old for existing reformatories. But these must be committed for a sufficiently long period to reformatories to be created for the purpose.

The foregoing remarks may be summed up as follows: Reformation and deterrence are both objects to be aimed at in treating criminals. Reformation takes a long time, deterrence may be effected in a short time. Reformation affects only the individual, deterrence operates to prevent others from yielding to temptation. The criminal law and judicial practice permitting in most cases of only short sentences, time is not given for reformatory treatment to have effect, so that deterrent treatment is the only alternative. By law and the recommendations of important committees and commissions, deterrence has hitherto been adopted as the leading principle in prisons

of the United Kingdom, and has been most successful in its object of repressing crime. If reformatory treatment is to be made the leading principle, the law and practice must be altered to admit of longer sentences, and the number and size of our prison establishments must be very largely increased, and their cost likewise. This may be justifiable for some portion of the persons now sentenced to short terms, either to give them opportunity to reform or to protect society from them if incorrigible.

As we have said, the returns published by the late Prison Committee show that 70 per cent. of persons sentenced never return, and that 85 per cent. of persons who undergo one or two short sentences do not return—surely a very fair result when compared with the returns of Red Hill and other reformatories taking young people for long periods.

A very fantastic view of the origin of crime came into prominence recently, and was apparently much supported by some members of the late Departmental Committee on Prisons, who seemed to hold that crime was an evidence of mental disease, and should be treated accordingly. They were, of course, able to obtain expressions of opinion from certain medical witnesses in favour of the idea, which is apparently founded on the theory that crime is so unnatural and illogical that nobody in possession of their reason would commit it.

It would be much more nearly true to say that to commit what we call crime is the natural tendency of mankind, and that to refrain from it is artificial. Nature tells human creatures, no less than it does animals, to gratify their senses—for instance, to take possession of anything they see and like without reference to rights of property; and as for logic, there is no doubt that the gains by crime are enormous. The ten commandments, with their injunctions not to steal, and so on, did not come by nature, but are clearly in restraint of nature.

Yet the former view of crime, absurd as it may appear, has received some sort of countenance from the Parliamentary Committee on the Prisons Bill, which has passed an amendment requiring that one of the commissioners shall be an expert in mental diseases—a requirement which tends rather to show that those who proposed and passed the amendment entirely misapprehend not only the nature of crime but the functions of the commissioners, for the work it is supposed such an officer would do is much better performed under the existing organisation by a medical inspector.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER X.—PAID IN FULL.

MEANWHILE Ruth had joined the crowd outside the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn. She was eager to know what was going on; for she had no thought now except the one thought of finding John Jarvis. A search-party had already been organised by Tudway. It was impossible for him in his convalescent state to take an active part in the expedition; but, since the wreck of the *Seagull* had made him famous all along the coast, his words were listened to and obeyed. Highways and byways between Cablethorpe and the 'Cross' inn, including all the intermediate dike-land, were to be explored without any further talk or loss of time.

The search-party started off in a body; but as soon as the first diverging road was reached the separation began. Ruth attached herself to the main division, which had received instructions to keep along the road that led direct to the 'Cross' inn. A chilling, drizzly rain had begun to fall; it had been thawing fast for the last four-and-twenty hours, and there was hardly any ice left in the dikes. The possibility, therefore, of Jarvis having met with death by drowning—for the banks were slippery and the roads dark—was seriously discussed to account for his disappearance.

When Ruth presently saw lanterns moving in every direction over the fens, like eager prying eyes, a sense of hopefulness returned. Besides, the friendly voices—for she recognised more than one voice as belonging to a workman from the timber-yard—cheered her in the midst of all this terrible uncertainty. All that could be done was being done to-night to discover some trace of the missing man. More than once a shout came from over the fens—a shout that brought every one to a standstill. But nothing followed; and Ruth's spirits sank to zero again when she caught sight of the light in the bar-parlour window of the 'Cross' inn—for it was there that the search-party had arranged for their reunion. She stood with an eager outlook at the cross-roads for those who had not yet come in. While one man of the party yet remained to report himself there was some hope. She stood there, a solitary figure in the night, with the rain beating in her face and the chilly wind blowing gustily around her. The rest had entered this old roadside tavern, arriving in twos and threes from various points. When hope

had almost left her and she was on the point of turning away in despair, Ruth's attention was drawn towards a number of lanterns—seven at least—coming slowly along one of the high-roads. The funereal pace at which the lights were moving set her heart beating madly. She imagined a burden being borne along by a number of men, and she started to run down the road. Suddenly she stopped. Among those of the expedition who had just entered the 'Cross' inn was the local doctor. She hurried back, and found him in a group that stood near the inn door.

'Come,' said Ruth, laying her hand tremulously on his arm; 'I think you're wanted. Look! there is some one hurrying'——

As she spoke one of the lanterns became detached from the rest, and began to move rapidly towards them.

'What's to do?' shouted the doctor.

'We've found him,' was shouted back. 'He was a-lying at Grimoldsby's corner, on the Washdyke Road'——

'Dead?'

'Ay,' replied the man, swinging his lantern in the direction of the advancing lights—'aboot dead; ay.'

Ruth was prepared for some such news; but the man's answer caused her to stagger with a sudden feeling of faintness, and she would have fallen had she not clung desperately to the doctor's arm. For a moment every one of those moving lanterns grew dim as in a mist and went out. But she made a brave effort to overcome the cause of stupefaction that was threatening. Perhaps the keen wind and chilly rain did something to revive her, for she speedily recovered, and urged the doctor to hasten forward. 'Go to him,' she cried; 'save him! It may not be too late.'

That night John Jarvis lay at the 'Cross' inn, lingering doubtfully between life and death. The doctor remained until nearly daybreak, and then he left Ruth in charge; for he had other patients in the fenlands who needed him, for miles round. Ruth took her place at John's bedside. Her love for him, if for no other reason, urged her to do all that was in her power to turn the tide of ebbing life. She believed that her brother Gabriel had done this wrong, and the belief made her still more eager to make every effort to save John's life. She thought of the garret in Nelson Square, from which she had come to avert this peril. Would John die after all, and make the misery of her life complete? She looked down into his pale face in the dawning light, and at this moment he slowly opened his eyes. And presently—when she bent nearer, and raised him gently and smoothed his pillow—it was with a sense of unspeakable joy that she heard him whisper, 'Ruth!' It seemed to her as though it were the first time that he had ever uttered her name.

Descending the stairs after leaving John's room at the 'Cross' inn, the doctor encountered Lawyer Burtenshaw.

'Well, what do you make of the case?'

'He's not likely to recover consciousness to-night.'

'To-morrow?' suggested the lawyer.

'Can't say.'

'No? Well, we shall not clear up this mystery till he does.'

'Probably not,' replied the doctor laconically.

When Lawyer Burtenshaw drove off in his gig for Alford the rain that beat down upon him was heavier and the wind more chilly; and the night had become so dark that he could not see an inch beyond the reflection of the gig-lamp lights flung upon the road, which his swift-footed mare seemed to be doing her best to outstrip. The lawyer, although enveloped in a thick overcoat and well packed in with wraps, shivered continually as if he had taken a malarious inspiration out of the misty fens.

The old family mansion—where generations of Burtenshaws had diligently plied the law—was in the market-place of Alford. This man was a bachelor, the last of his race. He threw the reins to his man—who came from the stables adjoining as the gig drew up at the door—and let himself into the house. The servants had retired, but they had left a good fire in the drawing-room. Mr Burtenshaw, still shivering, sat down with his elbows on his knees and his head between his hands, lost in thought. For an hour or more he sat in this brooding attitude. Then he rose, put on a greatcoat and a low-crowned hat, and, lighting a candle on the landing, crept downstairs. He reached the door of his private office on the ground-floor and went in. The room had the appearance of a library. It was luxuriously furnished. There was a massive oaken bookcase filled with law-books. A number of portraits of legal Burtenshaws, one of them in wig and gown, decorated the panelled walls. Almost in the centre of the room was a large desk; and the carpet spread out beneath, patterned with converging lines like a spider's web. Had Lawyer Burtenshaw been a thief intent on crime, he could scarcely have behaved with more appearance of craftiness or stealth. He lighted a dark-lantern, although there were already some indications of daybreak, and made his way through a back-door into the stables. Opening the coach-house door, where the gig was kept, he unlocked the box under the seat, and drew forth a hand-bag. The light from the lantern flashed for an instant upon the letters 'J. J.' Then the lawyer took the bag under his arm and returned to his office. A great iron safe stood in a corner of the room. In the centre cavity of this safe he deposited the bag, turned the lock upon it, and went out at the front door.

The rain had ceased. There was a streak of rosy daylight along the eastern sky. He chose the

road by which he had come from the 'Cross' inn on the previous night. Was he bent upon being among the first to make inquiries that morning as to John's condition? It would seem so; for he frequently turned into a bypath across the fields, when a shorter way was offered, in order to reach his destination. The old grim smile had come into his face. He had resolved to crush Gabriel Beek—crush him utterly at last. A warrant for his apprehension would be out to-day; and before nightfall, as Lawyer Burtenshaw believed, the fellow would be safely under arrest.

This walk and the keenness of the wintry air gave the lawyer an appetite; and he presently turned into the parlour of a roadside inn to partake of bread and cheese, with a tankard of ale. He had scarcely seated himself before this simple repast when some men came into the tavern; and the door of the room which Mr Burtenshaw occupied having been left ajar, he could distinctly overhear their talk. He soon discovered that the subject under discussion was one that concerned himself.

'They've found him, have they?'

'Ay,' was the reply that reached the lawyer's ear; 'and what's more, mate, he's like to recover. They *do* say Beek's manager has a'ready named the man what struck the blow, and'——

'Why, 'twas Gabriel Beek, weren't it?'

'No, no. 'Twas that lawyer chap, Burtenshaw, he *do* say, and'——

Lawyer Burtenshaw waited to hear no more. He hurried out by a side-door, and turned his steps in another direction. The thought of going to the 'Cross' inn had been abandoned. The grim smile had left his face. He peered about him with a look of dread. He was no longer the hunter; the thought of crushing Gabriel Beek was becoming illusive and shadowy. It was he who was hunted now.

He turned into an unfrequented byway that led indirectly towards the sea, but with no fixed purpose. He groped forward like one suddenly struck blind. He had exercised his brain for years past to discover a means of getting Beek and Son's business into his own hands. He had been doubly prompted, therefore, to make an attempt upon John's life; for by means of circumstantial evidence he had perceived the chance of directing suspicion against Gabriel Beek. It had been a desperate game, and in the impulse of the moment it had appeared worth the playing. But his calculations had proved unsound. He had lost. Jarvis had unexpectedly regained consciousness, and had already pointed to him as the man who had dealt the blow.

He sank against a gate by the roadside, with his head between his hands. He would never get the Beek estate into his clutches now. That which he had coveted so long, which he had plotted so cunningly to possess, had slipped through his fingers at the last moment. He staggered under the weight of this stern and bitter disappointment. He would be forced to surrender. Could he appeal to Jarvis for mercy? Who could prove that it was he who had done this deed? But he was now ready to accept any compromise. He would deliver up to John the hand-bag which lay hidden away in his iron safe, and invent a plausible reason for having the thing in his possession. Could he not plead that he had retained it through a dread lest it should fall into the hands of Gabriel Beek?

The situation must be boldly faced. Lawyer Burtenshaw was shrewd enough to know that nothing could be gained by flight, and he now turned resolutely to retrace his steps towards the 'Cross' inn. He was determined to confront Jarvis; for most troubles, as he well knew, lose half their terror when once confronted. But as he looked across the fenlands what should he see, to his utter consternation, but the burly figure of Gabriel Beek slouching towards the spot where he crouched! No one could mistake the look on the fellow's stubborn face. The long outstanding debt must now be paid in full. There was no escape.

The lawyer peered about him wildly. Gabriel Beek carried a heavy oaken stick in his hand. He raised it threateningly, and shouted out an imprecation which sent the colour from Burtenshaw's cheeks.

Some distance ahead there was a large pool or tidal basin. There was a boat at the edge of this pool. If Lawyer Burtenshaw could reach this boat, and row across to the opposite bank before the fellow could intercept him, it might be possible to cut off all pursuit; for the waters of a broad dike fell into the basin on the land side, and emptied into the sea with every ebb of the tide. The lawyer ran towards this spot, and threw himself into the boat. He believed himself out of danger, and breathed again. But the real danger to him, as he soon found out, had only now begun.

To his intense horror, when the boat had glided into the centre of the pool, Gabriel Beek appeared above the flood-gates which shut in the great volume of water, and grasped the huge windlass with both hands.

It was a fearful moment. The tide was ebbing fast. One turn of that windlass and the flood-gates would burst open, and the water in the broad basin would be precipitated with a mighty rush through a vaulted dike direct into the sea. Lawyer Burtenshaw dipped his sculls. He made a desperate struggle to gain the opposite bank. But the current suddenly seized upon the boat. It was irresistible. The panic-stricken lawyer looked round; his fingers lost their grip, and the sculls dropped from his hands. A man with the face of a demon was working vigorously at the windlass overhead; the gates were thrown back with a cannon's boom, and in an instant

the boat containing Lawyer Burtenshaw was swept through the gap, and was gone.

CHAPTER XL.—CONCLUSION.

SPRINGTIME had come. The ice had melted in the dikes; the meadows were developing a richer and deeper green; the wintry gray had gone out of the sky, and a glorious expanse of sunlight was spreading daily over fenland and sea. Skylarks rose above the dunes, and the monotonous murmur of the waves below made their song seem the more bright and sprightly.

Captain Tudway's old ship still lay upon the sands at Cablethorpe, washed by every tide. Hettie Beek, seated at the cabin window one day, looked out upon the sea.

'Ted,' said she, 'it's time we were breaking up this hulk. We shall have to wait till the back end of the year, as we country-folk call the autumn, if we don't have a sale of ship-wood soon.'

Tudway took a seat at her side. 'I'll never sell this cabin,' said he. 'I'm going to fix it up in the garden, Hettie, when we're married.'

He lit his pipe and leant back thoughtfully.

'We'll call it Captain Tudway's cabin always,' said Hettie.

Tudway nodded. 'Hettie,' said he, blowing a cloud, 'what a lot of things have happened since we last sat talking here together!'

'So I've been thinking,' said Hettie. 'It's quite a romance.'

'Yes. Six months ago your father was, to all appearance, hale and hearty. But that old pirate, Burtenshaw, ran him down—as Uncle Tudway would say—and sank him. There's no doubt about that now.'

'Ah, well! Lawyer Burtenshaw's own end,' said Hettie, with a grieved look, 'was more terrible than father's. There's no doubt now that he was drowned. The mystery as to who made the attempt on John's life will never be quite cleared up.'

'It was like good old John, for every one's sake, to say as little as might be about the affair,' said Tudway.

'John thinks of every one,' said Hettie, 'except himself.'

'One can hardly be expected, when knocked down upon a dark fenland road,' pursued Tudway, 'to throw much light upon a situation. John suspected the lawyer. He spoke of him to Ruth as the culprit; and besides, John's bag containing Uncle Tudway's money was found in Burtenshaw's safe. That looked suspicious enough. But now that John has got over the shock, and can calmly recall to mind all that happened upon that particular night, he fancies that he left his bag under the seat in Burtenshaw's gig. So one must draw one's own conclusion.'

'Well,' said Hettie, 'there's one good thing come of it. Ruth's devotion has saved John's life; and John has found out during his tedious illness that she loves him.'

'Ah! And, what's better still,' said Tudway, 'John has found out that he cares for Ruth. So, in all likelihood, Hettie, there'll be a double wedding in the family this spring.'

Looking from the cabin window, Hettie saw vivid colours thrown upon the sea. A glorious sunset had spread over the sky above the line of fenland hills, and the waves were tumbling into the golden light.

Tudway, after smoking his pipe in silence for a while, said:

'Gabriel has been tracked at last. At the office of the Riverside Timber Syndicate—which had more to do with billiards than timber—a letter was found. This letter led to the discovery of his whereabouts; and the discovery has confirmed our worst fears.'

As the colours of the sunset deepened in the sky, the uplifted waves assumed a brighter hue, subsiding at last into white foam in the lengthening shadows of the dunes.

'While travelling here and there through Texas—though where he found the money to travel at all is not known—he met with his death. It was a tragic one enough, Hettie; but that will hardly surprise you. He got into a quarrel in some dive, as the bar-saloons are called, and before he could defend himself he was shot down.'

Still the colours deepened, and the uplifted waves assumed a still brighter hue. Seagulls went by in single file; and as they moved swiftly towards the distant dip of ocean, they seemed to grow into the scaly form of a serpent gliding stealthily over the waves, until seen no more.

GOLD ASSAYING AS A PROFESSION.

By P. G. Holms.

THE man in the street has bracketed together the two words 'gold' and 'assay.' The mining paragraphs in the financial columns of his newspaper frequently put on record that such a mine on such a date produced ore assaying so many ounces or pennyweights to the ton. The scrimp knowledge of the man tells him that it is better and more prosperous for a mine to yield ounces of gold than pennyweights, for is not one ounce equal to twenty pennyweights? Beyond this limit he is ignorant. He wots not of dry and wet assays; he cares not that the assayer may determine minute quantities of platinum, silver, copper, lead, iron, tin, amid many other substances. It is of no interest to this man that there are gravimetric, titrometric, volumetric, gasometric, or colorimetric assays. The result of a gold assay means the rise or the fall of a share to him. It is, therefore, the purpose of this short paper to give some little prominence to the much-neglected art of gold assaying, as it is a profession almost unheard of in this country, save by the above-mentioned man in the street.

Imagine a gold-mine. You may select many climates—Siberia or Africa, Klondike or Australia, California or India. Situate your mine where you will; so long as it be a gold-mine the procedure of assaying is the same all the wide world over. Select a mass of ore weighing, perhaps, fifty pounds and smash it up. Do not expect to see any gold in it, because the precious metal is probably so thinly and uniformly scattered through the quartz that it is impossible to spot a grain together. Continue grinding the ore till it is in the form of powder. This powder is heaped into a cone, which is divided into four parts, of which the sampler takes two whose angles are opposite to one another. Mix these two parts thoroughly and again divide into four; take two portions again, and so on till a sample of convenient bulk is obtained. By this logical method the sample yielded is, on any ordinary calculation of probability, certain to represent accurately the original mass taken.

A certain quantity of this sample is now weighed out, two equal amounts being taken as checks upon each other. The weighing may be done in denominational values of either grammes or assay tons. The assay ton is a most convenient invention, and is very simply explained. The ordinary ton contains 32,666·6 ounces; if, then, we make a unit (an assay ton) weighing 32·6667 grammes, each ·001 of a gramme will equal one ounce per ton. Thus, no calculation is needed at all to estimate the gold richness of an ore *per ton*.

Say we weigh out then two separate portions of the ore of one assay ton (A.T.) each. With each mix thoroughly bicarbonate of soda, litharge, borax, glass, and flour in varying proportions; when thoroughly uniform in colour, empty the mixtures into fireclay crucibles, and strew on the top a thin layer of salt. Put on the lids of the two crucibles and surround them with living coal, coke, or burning vaporised benzoline in a crucible furnace. The crucibles are heated till the masses of ore and fluxes are in a state of tranquil fusion—that is, not bubbling or boiling. The white-hot fluid is then poured into iron moulds and allowed to cool. On examination, after cooling, the fused masses will be found to consist of: (1) A layer of white substance, which is salt. (2) A slag. This is usually dark in colour, often resembling malachite, and is formed by the fusion of the borax and soda with the worthless or earthy matter (gangue) in the ore. (3) A lead button, produced from the litharge, or lead oxide, originally mixed in the charge. This lead button contains all the silver and gold in the ore. The heat of the furnace drives off from the lead oxide its oxygen, so that pure lead is left; this, in virtue of its weight, percolates downwards through the slag during the heating in the furnace, collecting all the gold and silver present, and eventually forms a button weighing, if a proper amount of flour has been added originally, about sixteen to twenty grammes. The flour has the effect of varying the size of lead button produced, and is said to possess a *reducing* action.

The next step in the process is to get rid of the lead without also losing the gold and silver. This is done by an operation known as cupellation. The cupel is a small, round, bone-ash cup, which is placed in a sort of fireclay tunnel with one end closed up, known as a muffle. The muffle is heated from the outside, either by burying it with coals or by playing burning gas on every part of it. When the cupel has attained the heat of the interior of the muffle, the lead button is placed in it and the door of the muffle shut, so as to procure the greatest amount of heat possible. When the lead is seen to be melted and fuming, the muffle door is opened to admit the air, which is sucked in by the intense heat.

The oxygen contained in the air oxidises the lead into lead oxide, and the bone-ash cupel absorbs lead oxide like a sponge, but refuses to absorb the gold and silver; so that at length there is left in the cupel only a button of the two precious metals. It is to be supposed that two ore samples have been treated similarly both in the crucibles and cupels; but for the sake of convenience it is better to explain the treatment of one only. The bead of gold and silver obtained

weighs, let us say, ·0016 of a gramme. This is noted down. The bead after weighing is flattened out in a flatting-mill, so as to expose as large a surface as possible to the nitric acid which is then added to it. On heating, the silver is dissolved, but of course the gold is untouched by the action of any single acid. The remaining pure gold is treated with stronger acid, called 'parting acid,' to drive off any suspected trace of silver, and then washed with water. If the 'parting' of the gold from the silver has been successful, the gold is left as a thin, small sheet; from this all moisture is driven off by heat. On weighing, the gold may be as heavy as ·0007 of a gramme. Then, as it has previously been noted that the total gold and silver bead weighed ·0016 of a gramme, the weight of silver present must have been ·0009 of a gramme. That is to say, in one assay ton of 32·6667 grammes there are ·0007 gramme of gold and ·0009 gramme of silver. It has been stated at the commencement of this article that in an assay ton each ·001 of a gramme represents in a real ton one ounce. Therefore we have $\frac{7}{10}$ths of an ounce of gold—that is, 14 pennyweights (20 dwt. = 1 oz.)—and $\frac{9}{10}$ths of an ounce of silver—that is, 18 pennyweights, to the ton. *Quod erat faciendum.*

Many minor processes, such as roasting, scorification, and inquartation, enter into the work done in an assay; but it has been desirable to make the process as clear and free from complication as possible, and for this reason a simple ore has been selected. Of course the results obtained from two assay tons assayed simultaneously ought to be coincident with one another, and this is why two assay tons have been supposed to be treated together in the above explanation.

As regards the chances open to a man taking up the profession of a gold assayer. He ought, in the first place, to have a good knowledge of inorganic chemistry, especially as regards mineral analysis; of geology and mineralogy, both theoretically and practically; and a smattering of electricity and engineering. With his mind thus stored, a young fellow may get from £15 to £30 a month in any prosperous gold-mining district as the servant of a company; or he may establish an assay office of his own, charging a two-guinea fee for each assay.

Again, a sharp, adaptable man will keep his eyes open and study the many various processes for gold extraction. He may classify the ores under the processes to which each seems to yield the largest percentage of gold. He may learn how to design plants of machinery. In fact, he has it in his power to become a metallurgist with perhaps £150 per month salary. From such an income it is easy to save, if the Scylla and Charybdis of drink and gambling are steered clear of; for these two vices are made prominent by the want of proper society in mining settlements.

With a moderate capital it is easy to finance, when the amateur financier has his hand on the pulse of the share market, and knows to a pennyweight the amount of gold which a mine or group of mines will produce.

It is well to remember that in this peculiar branch of service the Americans have paramount influence; but it is also well to remember that the new Klondike fields are in British territory, and that although, while the alluvial diggings last, the miner needs no assayer or metallurgist to aid him, yet when the great quartz deposits come to be tapped, there will be a great demand for gold assayers created.

THE CANDIDATE'S WEDDING.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

ANY candidate who had so recently tasted the sweets of popularity, whose supporters at the mass meeting the previous night had cheered themselves hoarse, and had sung 'He's a jolly good fellow' till breath failed them, might well have shrunk back appalled at the change that had taken place in a few short hours. Could these scowling faces be really the same that, flushed with enthusiasm, had confronted Douglas as he stood on the platform waiting at the close of almost every sentence until the vociferous cheers of his excited audience had subsided?

It did indeed seem as though Barker's gloomy prophecies would be fulfilled to the letter. The news that Douglas insisted on marrying the defaulting chairman's daughter had spread with lightning-like rapidity throughout the district, and had produced the most unfavourable impression upon the exasperated shareholders of the Southpool Building Society. The idea that he was actuated solely by chivalrous motives was openly scoffed at. They argued that no man in his senses would act in that way who had not some very substantial reason for doing so. They began to suspect that he must himself have had some guilty knowledge of the frauds, and had possibly even secured a share of the proceeds. If that were the case he might well have cause to fear that Meredith would expose him if he broke off the marriage. And even if he were innocent on this occasion his character could hardly be above suspicion, when he was evidently

incapable of feeling that righteous indignation against his future father-in-law's conduct which the circumstances more than warranted.

Many who were not shareholders agreed with them; while others, though believing Douglas to be absolutely blameless, regarded his conduct as imprudent and unseemly. The result was that numbers declared their intention of voting against him, and some, who were not prepared to go that length, announced that they would abstain from voting altogether. It was little wonder that the enthusiasm of those who had determined to stand loyally by him had faded away, and that they remained silent and unresponsive, gazing at him with reproachful glances as the carriage rolled by.

Even Douglas winced when the opposition candidate, happening to drive past at the same time, received a round of hearty cheers. Yet he turned a smiling face on Elsie, who was still tearfully beseeching him to allow her to return home, asserting again and again that unless the wedding was postponed she was quite certain that he would not be elected.

'Keep cool, little woman; keep cool,' he said placidly. 'Why should you leap to the conclusion that I shan't be elected?'

'Didn't you see the faces of those men—the men with your colours in their coats?'

Douglas took her hand in his and patted it reassuringly.

'When we come out of church,' he said, 'I shall have a talk with those men. Don't you worry yourself, little girl. It'll be all right, you'll see.'

'No, no,' she exclaimed almost hysterically, 'it won't be all right—it can't be; and you know it. I must have been blind, but I see it all now. In the eyes of these people I am nothing more nor less than the daughter of a swindler, and in order to be loyal to me you are sacrificing perhaps the only chance you will ever have of getting into parliament. I won't accept the sacrifice, Douglas—I can't; I daren't. Tell the coachman to drive back, or I'll stop the carriage and get out at once.'

She had risen impulsively to her feet; but Douglas drew her gently back again.

'Sit down, my dear girl, and listen to reason,' he said soothingly. 'You mustn't put me on a pedestal in that way, because I don't deserve it. My conduct is not in the least heroic, I can assure you. The situation is simply this: I should be a coward and a sneak if I were to break off our marriage because of what has happened, and those good, honest thickheads you saw would be the first to say so when they had time to come to their senses. My impression is they'll come to their senses before the polling-booths close; but in any case, my dear, remember that by marrying me to-day you save me from being regarded as a despicable cad, and you prove that your father's innocence is, to you at least, absolutely above suspicion.'

She lay back with a weary little sigh of resignation.

'Oh dear!' she said, 'I wonder how it is that you always contrive to get your own way, Douglas.'

'Simply, my dear,' replied the modest youth, 'because I never try to get my own way unless I feel quite sure that I am right.'

Her eyes twinkled in spite of herself.

'I hope that—that in the future,' she said, with a little laugh, 'I shall sometimes be able to get *my* way when I feel quite sure that *I* am right.'

'I should rather think so,' rejoined Douglas merrily. 'Why, you dear little goose, if I were sure you were right I should never dream of opposing you.'

'Yes; but *you* mustn't decide whether I am right or not. It must be quite enough if *I* feel sure that I am right.'

Douglas laughed jovially.

'Well, well, we'll settle all that later on. In the meantime don't forget, my dear, that I wouldn't lose my little wife for all the gold-mines in South Africa, let alone a seat in the House of Commons. Ah! here we are at last.'

The carriage stopped abruptly at the door of the church. The street was seething with an excited crowd. As Douglas helped Elsie out of the carriage and gave her his arm, he was greeted with a tempest of hoots and groans. Fierce, angry faces were thrust close to his, and in spite of the efforts of the police he was rudely hustled as he drew Elsie into the porch. Twenty-four hours previously he had been the most popular man in Southpool.

The unfortunate Barker, whose appearance suggested that he was attending a funeral rather than a wedding, sat gloomily in a pew near the door. Except for him, Ethel West, the vicar, and Mr Joseph Sutton, the chairman of Douglas's election committee, the church was empty. Fearing a disturbance, the vicar had instructed the police to refuse the public admittance.

'Ah, you're there, Barker,' exclaimed Douglas. 'Up to time, as usual. Got the ring?'

'Yes,' replied Barker in funereal accents, 'it's quite safe, Mr Grant.'

'Good man,' said Douglas, patting him affectionately on the back. 'I knew I could depend on you.'

At that moment the vicar, who looked pale and anxious, drew Douglas on one side.

'My dear sir,' he said nervously, 'I'm old enough to be your father. You won't mind me speaking frankly—will you?'

'Not in the least,' rejoined Douglas cheerfully. 'I shall be delighted to hear anything you wish to say, and shall be very grateful for any advice you care to offer me.'

'Thanks,' said the vicar in his blandest and

most persuasive accents. 'I felt sure that you would not resent a little friendly advice from one so much older than yourself. Well, believe me, I most fully appreciate and admire the—the chivalrous motives which have induced you to refuse to postpone your wedding; but don't you think that, under the circumstances, your conduct is—you'll pardon me speaking so bluntly—is, to say the least of it, imprudent?'

'Perhaps so,' rejoined Douglas; 'but may I, with the utmost respect, venture to ask whether we should shrink from doing what we believe to be right because, from a practical point of view, our conduct may appear imprudent? Are we to obey the promptings of conscience only when we can do so without running any risk? Are we'——

'Yes, yes; just so, just so,' interposed the vicar hurriedly; 'but still, you know, we must rule our conduct by the dictates of common-sense, and I merely suggest that, in deference to the wishes of your friends and supporters, you should consent to postpone the ceremony for a few days until Mr Meredith has had an opportunity of disproving the charges brought against him. Come, I knew your father very well. We were chums together at college, and I take a genuine interest in your welfare. Take my advice, and don't throw away what is possibly the best chance you'll ever have of winning a seat.'

'My dear sir,' replied Douglas warmly, 'I assure you I'm most grateful to you for the kind interest you take in me, and thoroughly appreciate your excellent advice. At the same time I feel confident that a moment's reflection will show you that, now I've gone so far, it is quite impossible for me to draw back. Even those who most strongly disapprove of my conduct would despise me for doing so. If I had at once announced that the wedding would be postponed, I should, as you suggest, no doubt have acted more prudently. But now that I have actually brought Miss Meredith to the church, and you are here to perform the ceremony, shouldn't I cut a very contemptible figure, shouldn't I appear an atrociously flabby, weak-kneed, indecisive sort of fellow if I drew back now? Besides, think of Miss Meredith's feelings. I couldn't—I really couldn't inflict such a slight on her. Wouldn't you, in your heart, think infinitely less of me if I did?'

'Oh, well, if you put it that way,' replied the vicar testily, 'I suppose I must say no more; but I fear you are taking a step that you will have serious cause to regret.'

'In any case,' said Douglas cordially, 'I shall always remember with sincere gratitude that you gave me the best advice in your power.'

With an impatient shrug of the shoulders the vicar walked off to the vestry.

At that moment Douglas's eye caught a glimpse of the glum face of Mr Joseph Sutton, the chairman of his committee, a tall, stout, prosperous man of business.

'Excuse me a moment, dear,' he whispered to Elsie; 'I want to speak to Mr Sutton.'

He advanced smilingly towards Sutton, who appeared in anything but a friendly mood.

'Good-morning, my dear sir,' said Douglas, shaking him warmly by the hand.

Sutton almost glared at him through his gold spectacles.

'Look here, Grant,' he said bluntly, 'you must excuse me saying that you've made a most awful mess of this business. I wouldn't give a brass farthing for your chance of being elected. Why couldn't you have postponed your marriage for a few days? It's pretty rough on us when we've been working like slaves to put you at the top of the poll.'

'It is,' assented Douglas, 'confoundedly rough on you, and I don't wonder that you feel it so. But that must be my excuse, Mr Sutton.'

He pointed to Elsie, who stood alone in the centre of the aisle, her slim little figure and wistful face illumined by a ray of sunshine from the window opposite.

'You've a daughter of your own,' continued Douglas—'one of the nicest and prettiest girls I ever met. Suppose, just for the sake of argument, that you had got into trouble like Meredith, would you think the less of any young fellow who stood by her loyally, who resolutely refused to admit that anything her father or any one else might have done could make her for one moment less precious in his eyes, less worthy of any mark of respect it was within his power to show her?'

Sutton tried to preserve his severe expression, but his eyes softened perceptibly.

'I know you wouldn't, my dear sir,' continued Douglas. 'You'd think all the more of him. Besides, you see I couldn't possibly back out now; and as the thing can't be helped, I want you'—he linked his arm in Sutton's and drew him towards Elsie—'I want you, as her father can't be present, to give her away.'

'But, look here,' expostulated Sutton; 'I really can't. It isn't fair to ask me. It places me in a false position. I disapprove of the whole thing; I really do. I've been saying so all morning.'

'Yes, yes,' said Douglas soothingly as he hurried him along; 'but you see you can't let your old friend's daughter be given away by a pew-opener. Elsie, as your father can't be here, Mr Sutton has kindly undertaken to give you away.'

'It's very kind of you, Mr Sutton,' said Elsie.

Sutton was about to expostulate, but when he held Elsie's small hand in his, and looked into the sad little face that should have been lit up with smiles and blushes, the words died away on his lips.

'It's a privilege, my dear,' he said kindly, draw-

ing her arm through his. But he couldn't make up his mind to let Douglas escape quite so easily.

'My dear young lady,' he said as they walked up the aisle, 'I 'm an old married man, and if you 'll take my advice, you 'll begin by not letting this young man have too much of his own way. If you don't put your foot down at once you won't have a will of your own in three months from now.'

'I 'm sure,' said Elsie softly, 'that Douglas will never insist on having his own way unless he feels quite sure he 's in the right.'

'Oh,' remarked Mr Sutton, with a grim smile, and the conversation ceased.

The vicar got through the service as quickly as possible. He was naturally anxious to be rid of the turbulent crowd outside that was growing noisier than ever, fearing serious damage to the church if they forced their way past the police.

As the newly-made man and wife went into the vestry to sign their names the noise became so uproarious that the pen trembled in Elsie's hand; Ethel West, one of the pluckiest girls that ever breathed, turned pale; and even Mr Sutton, the most solid and resolute of men, began to look ill at ease. Barker still preserved his funereal aspect, and was apparently too miserable to care what became of him.

'Upon my word,' said Mr Sutton, 'I think we 'd better go out at the side door, and get a cab at the railway station.'

'I should strongly advise you to do so,' declared the vicar earnestly.

'Not we,' rejoined Douglas, proudly drawing his wife's arm through his. 'We 'll go out at the front door and meet them face to face.'

'Well, well, well,' said Mr Sutton, 'I 'll say no more. I know it 's a waste of breath, for you 're sure to get your own way in the end.'

As they walked down the aisle the uproar grew louder and louder.

'Why, they 're cheering,' said Douglas. 'What can they be cheering for?'

'Probably the opposition candidate,' rejoined Sutton, with a grimace.

'We 'll soon put all that right,' said Douglas cheerfully as they passed into the porch. 'Will you allow us to pass, officer, please?'

As the policeman drew aside even Douglas stood dumfounded at the astonishing transformation which had taken place. The steps and the asphalt walk leading to the churchyard gate were covered with crimson baize, and a number of pretty little girls stood with baskets of flowers ready to strew them in the path of the bride. Gorgeous banners with 'Vote for Grant,' 'Grant for ever,' and so on, fluttered above the heads of the crowd, and the opposite windows were gay with Union-jacks and brilliantly-coloured streamers. As the bride and bridegroom appeared at the church door a mighty cheer rose from a thousand throats, and hats and sticks were waved frantically in the air.

'Why, bless my soul and body!' gasped Mr Sutton, 'what does all this mean?'

A tall, handsome, middle-aged man, who had apparently been addressing the crowd, advanced to meet them. Elsie rushed towards him, and clasped her arms round his neck; while the people cheered themselves hoarse, and Douglas was pelted with flowers and rice.

The secret was out. It was Mr Meredith. The secretary of the Building Society had accused him of complicity in the frauds he had himself perpetrated, in order to satisfy an old-established grudge; but had subsequently made a full confession admitting that he alone was guilty, and had supplied irresistible proofs of Mr Meredith's entire innocence. Thereupon Mr Meredith was promptly released; and as the greater part of the stolen money had been returned by the penitent secretary, the rage of the shareholders had merged into frantic enthusiasm, and the utmost efforts had been made to give Douglas and his young wife a reception that should entirely obliterate the memory of what had taken place.

It is almost unnecessary to add that Douglas was elected by an overwhelming majority, and received numerous votes from those who differed from him politically, but admired the pluck and loyalty he had shown under exceptionally trying circumstances.

WRITERS FOR THE YOUNG.

WHEN Hannah More presented Gladstone the boy with a copy of her *Sacred Dramas* in 1815, with the apology that she did so because she was going out of the world and he was just coming into it, we had a link between the older and the newer literature for children, then almost non-existent. That Hannah More, although now neglected, was a great force for good to her own generation there is no doubt whatever. She was almost ashamed to confess in her old days that her writings had brought her £30,000, much of which was spent in charity and works of benevolence. To a generation that knows not the *Shepherd of Salisbury Plain* and her hundred and one stories with a purpose, Canon Ainger says, in another connection, that the parable, the fable, and the proverb have hid a moral purpose and are responsible for a great deal of the everyday morality of the world. John

Ruskin was brought up on Maria Edgeworth until he inherited the *Arabian Nights* in his tenth year, and Andrew Lang still remembers 'Rosamund' with affection. It may be that Miss Edgeworth and the Aikens represent the influence of Rousseau in the nursery; there is no doubt that Ann and Jane Taylor represent an evangelical revival at the end of the eighteenth century, and worked wonders in interesting and educating children by means of prose and verse; and 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star' still shines in most reading-books, while 'My Mother' still voices the feelings and affections of youth. Aiken and Barbauld's *Evenings at Home* contained that gem, 'Eyes and No Eyes;' Day's *Sandford and Merton* and Maria Edgeworth still find readers—all proving that although the writers for the young were few at the beginning of the century, yet they were large-hearted, large-minded people, else they had never so influenced their generation and lived until now.

Every year witnesses the issue of a host of fresh books for the young, and still the production goes on. So much is this the case that many people are afraid that the juveniles do not always get at the best literature. For instance, Miss Betham-Edwards tells us she got her education from a leather-bound copy of *Shakespeare;* she disapproves of purely children's books. 'I had few in my own childhood, and read only the English classics, and found them entertaining enough. The present fashion of writing story-books especially for children is, I think, a mistake. It tends to weaken their taste for literature, and when they grow older they are not able to appreciate the best forms of literary style.' Harriet Martineau, who must have been no common child, as she was no common woman, says she devoured all *Shakespeare* while sitting on a footstool, reading by the firelight while the rest of the family were still at table. She made shirts with all due diligence, for she was fond of sewing; but it was with Goldsmith, Thomson, or Milton on her lap. Let but noble books be on the shelf, the classics of our language, and the child will get nothing but good. Sir Walter Scott was no believer in writing down to young people, and would have had little sympathy with the cry for extreme simplicity—almost inanity—in many reading-books of the day. 'Bring children,' says Miss C. M. Yonge, 'as soon as possible to stretch up to books above them, provided these books are noble and good.' When a boy has once acquired a keen interest in biographical or historical reading, his taste is for ever elevated. Mr Goschen said once that he liked to see boys and girls amuse themselves with tales of adventure; with stories of gallant deeds and noble men; with stories of the seas, of nations, of wars; with descriptions of scenes different from those in which they live. He much preferred *Alice in Wonderland* to the stories of Tommies and Freddies who read the book. Mrs Molesworth is of opinion that there should be two sets of books in the children's library—one of books for the young people reading for themselves, and another more advanced to be read by parents and guardians. Children readily listen to an interesting book, considered to be above them, if well read by one they love.

Many men of talent and genius have turned aside from severer and more engrossing labours, and amused themselves in penning something for youth, which in more than one instance has proved their principal passport to remembrance. This is hardly the case with Scott and Dickens, who wrote best for grown-up people. Yet Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* were entirely successful, although the *Child's History of England* by Dickens was not. J. M. Barrie puts *Ivanhoe* only second to *Robinson Crusoe* as a boy's book, and *Quentin Durward* he mentions as Scott's second best book for boys. Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* are classic in their way. John Ruskin succeeded in telling a fairy story perfectly in his *King of the Golden River*, which was penned for his future wife. Thomas Hughes is remembered by *Tom Brown's Schooldays* and its sequel; while Charles Kingsley not only wrote for and dedicated his Greek fairy stories, *The Heroes*, to his children, but also wrote for other children the *Water Babies*, *Glaucus*, and *Madame How and Lady Why*. While young people may read with interest and delight George Macdonald's *Alec Forbes* or *Robert Falconer*, this author has led young people into a world of their own in *At the Back of the North Wind*, *Ranald Bannerman's Boyhood*, or *Guttapercha Willie*. The sombre genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne relaxed in his *Twice-told Tales* and his delightful biographies in *Grandfather's Chair*. Much of Washington Irving also forms good reading for children. Marryat's *Children of the New Forest*, *Masterman Ready*, and his rough and hearty sea-tales are liked by young people, and so are the best stories of Fenimore Cooper. Dana's *Two Years before the Mast* is a classic. Dinah Maria Mulock began her literary career by writing for young people, and was entirely successful in *Cola Monti*, the story of a genius, and many others. Harriet Martineau's *Feats on the Fiord* is better remembered than some of her lessons in political economy. Mary Howitt and Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe could both charm and instruct young people; as also Mrs Whitney and the author of the *Wide, Wide World*. So could Mrs Oliphant; and Miss C. M. Yonge has done some of her best work in this department. Jean Ingelow turned aside from poetry and wrote *Stories told to a Child*, and others; while Jacob Abbott, A.L.O.E. (Miss Tucker), Isabella Fyvie Mayo, Agnes Giberne, Mrs Marshall, Annie S. Swan, Max Pemberton, and S. R. Crockett have all had plenty of readers. In recognition of Miss C. M. Yonge's 'great services as a pioneer of that religious and high-toned literature for young

people which for the last fifty years has been a special glory of England and the admiration of America and other countries,' it has been resolved to found a university scholarship for girls at Winchester High School, bearing her name. Six thousand pounds were asked for—just the amount Miss Yonge herself handed over once for the cause of missions. Other names crowd upon us, such as Miss Alcott, author of *Little Women;* Mrs Hodgson Burnett, author of *Little Lord Fauntleroy;* Kate Douglas Wiggin; the author of *Tip-Cat* and *Laddie;* and Sarah Bolton, author of *Girls Who Became Famous* and quite a small library of excellent short biographies.

Jules Verne has exploited the heavens and the earth for the material for his wonderful romances. W. H. G. Kingston has also filled a large place in the modern boys' library, and so has David Ker, who seems familiar with almost every available region of the world. Ascott R. Hope, clever and industrious as he has been, has never quite come to his own; neither has Andrew Home, Reginald Horsley, nor D. Lawson Johnstone, author of *The Rebel Commodore* and other works. J. M. Barrie reckons Hope's *My Schoolboy Friends* as in some ways more delightful than *Tom Brown's Schooldays.* Max Pemberton, F. Whishaw, Bloundelle Burton, Hugh St Leger, and Frankfort Moore have all plenty of readers. Samuel Smiles is not a boys' writer in the ordinary sense; but there is enough backbone in his books to set up the present generation in the path of perseverance and well-doing. All the classics have been retold and simplified. Rose Selfe has given us Dante's Purgatory in *How Dante Climbed the Mountain;* Mr Church has retold the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and Greek tragedies; Plutarch, the King Arthur Legends; and Northern Sagas have not escaped; nor Shakespeare, as witness Lamb's *Tales;* and we have also a selection called *Tennyson for the Young.* But the story is still the thing, and romance and modern narrative gain both the ear of youth and old age. Sir Walter Besant, for instance, finds *The Three Musketeers* as delightful now as when he sat in a corner, breathless, panting, and followed all a livelong holiday 'the fortunes of the immortal three who were four.' He asks of a story one thing—'Seize me, and hold me with a grip of steel. Make me deaf and blind to all the world so long as I read in these enchanted pages. Carry me whither thou wilt. Play on me; do with me what thou wilt, at thine own sweet will.' Besant also finds that Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* has the distinctive character of a good story in that it pleases, or rather seizes, every period of life, and appeals to all ages and every age. It has no motive, no moral, and no plot, and yet the boy of twelve reads with delight as well as the older reader. But we have now only left ourselves space for a few particulars about the more modern story-tellers for young folks.

'Ballantyne the Brave,' as Stevenson terms him, began to write for the young about the middle of the century, and kept hard at it until his death at Rome in 1894, having produced during that time upwards of eighty volumes of wholesome and delightful reading. He was a deft and purpose-like workman, with a high moral tone, and imparts useful information in a pleasing way. Withal he has humour of a kind. Six years spent in his youth in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company furnished him with his first literary capital. In 1854, while a partner of T. & A. Constable, Edinburgh, Mr William Nelson, the publisher, who had formed a high opinion of his powers from his *Hudson's Bay*, suggested that he should take to literature as a profession, and begin with a story. Ballantyne, amused at the idea, said he would try to do so. He went to work at once, and produced *Snowflakes and Sunbeams*, which was followed by *Young Fur-Traders* and his ever-popular *Coral Island*, which J. M. Barrie places above *Swiss Family Robinson.* No man was more conscientious in the preparation of his stories. In the writing of *The Lifeboat* he was hand-in-glove with the cockswain of the Ramsgate lifeboat; and when he came to lecture in Edinburgh on the same subjects, he started a movement which furnished lifeboats for our coasts. By way of preparation for writing *The Lighthouse*, he lived for three weeks in the Bell Rock Lighthouse; for *Fighting the Flames* he careered through the streets of London on fire-engines, clad in pea-jacket and a black leather helmet. He prepared himself by travel or interviews in the same way for his later books. Ballantyne regarded his power of writing as a direct gift from God, and trained himself for his mission by the experience thus gained in writing his stories.

Mr G. A. Henty now stands an easy first in point of popularity amongst writers for young people. It is somewhat remarkable, did we not remember the age of Defoe when he penned *Robinson Crusoe*, that the most popular present day writers for the young are none of them juveniles. Jules Verne is seventy, and Henty and George Manville Fenn are nearer that age than sixty. Born in 1832, Henty did not graduate at Cambridge, but rather in the rough-and-tumble school of experience into which he plunged when engaged in the Purveyors' Department in the Crimea. Later, as special correspondent of the *Standard*, he saw life in many aspects during the Austro-Italian and Franco-German wars; he was in the Abyssinian and Ashanti expeditions, and has written books about both campaigns. He was also with Garibaldi in the Tyrol. Probably as part justification of his own success as a novelist, as well as in his capacity of writer for the young, he has pointed out that scarcely one of the prominent novelists of the day is a university man, and women who know nothing of the classics write as good fiction as men. His experience while editing a short-lived boys' paper

called the *Union-Jack* has also led him to remark upon the lack of talent in composition conspicuous in the efforts of young people. Henty himself early excelled in composition, and wrote his first novel at twenty. He considered it very bad, and it was never published. He began to write for young people in this way: he used always to have his children with him for an hour after dinner, and would then tell them stories. These stories were continuous, and often lasted for weeks. It struck him one day that if his own young folks liked these tales, a larger public outside might also like them. This led him to write and then read one of his stories, and when it was of the proper length he offered it to a publisher. It was promptly accepted, and Christmas would now hardly look like Christmas without one or two stories from his versatile pen.

Mr George Manville Fenn, who, like Mr Henty, has also figured frequently as a grown-up people's novelist, and probably comes next to him as a boys' favourite, has been in his time schoolmaster, private tutor, journalist, proprietor of *Once a Week*, and a frequent contributor to *Chambers's*. Any facility he has in composition he declares comes from constantly writing out the ideas that have more or less impressed him in his career. He believes, as R. M. Ballantyne did, that a talent for writing is in-born, 'just as one is given a melodious voice, to another a handsome personal appearance, to another the power to speak in public forcibly and well. Of course these gifts can be largely developed, but I am sure the genius must be there or the cultivation would be a sorry affair. In my own case, I was as a boy thrown very much on my own resources, and books were, I may say, my only friends; consequently I devoured everything I came across, good, bad, and indifferent; but still I naturally possessed a great love of reading.' Before beginning a book he turns the subject over in his mind, then tries to realise and individualise his characters. After making many notes, he tries to place himself in the position of the different characters of his story. Then he goes briskly at it—so briskly, indeed, that his copy is sometimes a puzzle to the compositor unless type-written. In most of Mr Fenn's recent books the action and development of the story is carried forward mainly by means of dialogue. How popular his books are may be seen by watching any young person engrossed in them, or by consulting a librarian. In one library in a large town last year his *Real Gold* was issued sixty-seven times, and was the most popular book on the list. *Dick o' the Fens* was not far behind, having been issued sixty-four times.

R. L. Stevenson first caught the ear of youth and age by his *Treasure Island* and its successors, *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*, the first two of which were contributed to Mr James Henderson's *Young Folks' Paper*, where they did not attract any special attention. Stevenson's first title for *Treasure Island* was *The Sea-Cook*, which was altered as it now stands at Henderson's request. It was begun with much 'complacency' while living with his father at Kinnaird, above Pitlochry. Stevenson, counting on one boy in his daily reading aloud of the result of his industry, found two in his audience, as his father, the late Thomas Stevenson, of lighthouse fame, enjoyed the story as much as the writer. Stevenson's own father told stories, 'and every night of his life he put himself to sleep with stories which dealt perpetually with ships, roadside inns, robbers, old sailors, and commercial travellers before the era of steam.' Dr A. H. Japp, after a visit, walked off with the completed manuscript of *Treasure Island* in his pocket, which he bore to London, with the result we know.

The Rev. Charles Dodgson, author of *Alice in Wonderland*, who had a weakness for never owning its authorship, began, like Mr Henty and other notable story-tellers, by relating his wonderful narratives to young people. Mrs Hargreaves (daughter of Dean Liddell) says that most of his stories were told to herself and her sister, now Mrs Skene, when on river expeditions to Nuneham or Godstow, near Oxford. 'I was Secunda, and Tertia was my sister Edith. I believe the beginning of *Alice* was told one summer afternoon, when the sun was so burning that we had landed in the meadows down the river, deserting the boat to take refuge in the only bit of shade to be found, which was under a new-made hayrick.' In answer to a request to tell them a story, this delightful tale was begun. Alice's adventures were written down also by request, and so became when published the heritage and delight of every English child.

Edward Lear, author of *The Book of Nonsense*, was born in 1812, and passed away at Villa Tennyson, San Remo, in 1888. His famous book, like *Alice in Wonderland*, was prepared for the delectation of children, in this instance those of Lord Derby, and was not at first intended for publication. On its appearance its success was enormous, and John Ruskin has placed on record his appreciation of the book. Heinrich Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter* arose from the inability of the Doctor to find suitable Christmas books for his son of three years of age. He secured a book of blank pages, into which he speedily drew his pictures, and added the rhymes. When published one parent said, 'Dear Doctor, what a delight you have given us! I have a child of three who can recite the whole contents of the book.'

Sir Evelyn Wood wrote from the Soudan that he had cried over *Laetus*, by Juliana Horatia Ewing, and her *Jackanapes* has been called 'an exquisite bit of finished work—a Meissonier in its way.' Mrs Molesworth thinks that Mrs Gatty's magazine, *Aunt Judy*, where many of Mrs Ewing's

stories appeared, was almost an ideal one for young people, from its excellence and freedom from anything objectionable. Some people may think Mr Swinburne a little extravagant in his praises of Mrs Molesworth when he says that since the death of George Eliot 'there is none left whose touch is so exquisite and masterly, whose love is so thoroughly according to knowledge, and whose bright and sweet invention is so fruitful, and so truthful, and so delightful.' Mrs Molesworth (Mary Louisa Stewart) was born in Holland in 1839, and was educated at home, and partly in Switzerland. When she had children of her own she began to write for their delectation. The first suggestion that she should publish came from her friend, Sir Noel Paton, and she sent *Tell me a Story* to Macmillan, and it was promptly accepted, and for the past twenty-four years she has had one or more volumes every season. Her early novels appeared under the pen-name of Ennis Graham. It seems to have been easy for her to write for young people, as she has always had an especial love for children, for flowers, and for the country. Her own earliest and best training came by translating both from French and German. In preparing her books she does not believe in copying her MS., but writes as she wishes the words to stand, the formation of the sentences being then the work of the brain 'unassisted by the sight of the written words. I believe that this leads to great precision of thought, and I believe, too, that it makes the style fresh and vigorous, besides greatly lessening the manual labour.'

After Mrs Molesworth no name is better or more favourably known than L. T. Meade (Mrs Toulmin Smith), daughter of a rector of Nohoval, County Cork. She wrote her first book at seventeen, came to London, studied East End life, which gave colour to many of her early stories in the *Sunday Magazine* and elsewhere, and for six years acted as editor of *Atalanta*. Her own children have sat for their portraits, notably one child who appears in *Daddy's Boy*. Her industry and versatility continue unabated. At first she made copies of her manuscript, but she never does so now. All her stories are dictated, and sometimes she gets so carried away by the movement and action in the narrative that she hardly knows how it is all going to end.

The ten most popular books for children of ten years, according to the booksellers and as given in the *Academy*, are:

Alice in Wonderland.	Mrs Molesworth's Stories.
Robinson Crusoe.	Eric and St Winifred's.
Lang's Fairy Books.	Jungle Book.
Andersen's Fairy Tales.	Grimm's Fairy Tales.
Water Babies.	Treasure Island.

The multiplication of books for both old and young more than keeps pace with the demand. Care and judgment are required in order to select wisely, but never in the history of the world was there a richer and wider selection of books which charm and entertain, or impart useful information, and give moral impulse besides.

'VERSE.'

You say the glamour of romance,
When told in song, has passed away;
That few will give a second glance
At what is known as 'verse' to-day.

'The present is a busy age,
And who amongst us has the time
To idly sit and con the page
That holds a minor poet's rhyme?'

You smile because he loves to tune
His lyre and voice the charms of Spring—
The rosy dawn, the golden noon,
The sheen upon the swallow's wing.

So well you know the ancient theme
That treats of April shine and shower,
The music of the crystal stream,
The beauty of the woodland flower.

Oh yes! he does not soar on wings
Which spurn the earth and cleave the sky;
He but transforms the lowly things
That in our common pathways lie.

For he whose silver measure strives
To clothe the meanest weed with grace,
Believes that even humblest lives
Need not be coarse and commonplace.

And if his simple strain is heard
Above the clamour of the throng,
And purer founts of thought are stirred,
The world is better for his song.

If what you count of little worth
But dries a tear or soothes a pain,
Or gives one noble feeling birth,
His talent is not used in vain.

And if his theme is seldom new,
And if the minor notes prevail,
What matters so the song be true?
Is every bird a nightingale?

And while he sees that Spring is fair,
And finds a poem in a rose,
And hears God's music everywhere,
Why should he yoke himself to Prose?

The ivy cannot choose but climb,
The blossom cannot choose but spring;
And—though you may not read his rhyme—
Ah well! ah well! he still must sing.

R. MATHESON.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

By P. L. M'Dermott.

CHAPTER I.—THE FIRST PARTNER.

PERHAPS nowhere else in the world is the struggle of man's determined will against the adverse conditions of nature so hard as on the goldfields of Western Australia. What the daring and resolute pioneers of this region suffered, what adventuring prospectors suffer to-day, in their quest for gold can hardly be realised at home. The grim irony of the geographer sprinkles the map with lakes and rivers, but the mirage which mocks the fainting explorer is not more delusive. The land is in truth an arid desert of rock and sand and scrub, and the 'lakes' are mere dry, saline beds. Where water does exist—the miners strike it sometimes in their deep shafts—it is brackish. On the surface there is none to moisten the parched lips and swollen tongue of the prospector.

But this desert is full of gold, and the thirst for gold is a more powerful incentive to effort than the thirst for water is a deterrent. Men will dare all and everything in quest of the yellow metal. That the typical miner wastes in wild and generous dissipation the precious dust which he has gathered in patient privation does not in the least moderate the cheerful resolution with which he sets forth into the desert again when the fruit of his labour is squandered and he has sufficiently recovered from the effects of the bout. Unremitting toil while it lasts, and unreflecting indulgence afterwards, form the rule of many a man's life on the goldfields. And at last, after winning and wasting thousands of pounds in this fashion, he probably dies penniless, or is found dead in the bush from thirst or hunger.

Besides the regular mining population, who are always ready to rush from one field to another more promising, the discovery of a new goldfield attracts all sorts and conditions of men. It would be hard to name a calling or profession, a rank or station of life, unrepresented in a mining camp. Just as difficult would it be to indicate a type of human character, good, bad, and indifferent, that is not to be found there. Law there is—British law—on the Australian goldfields; but in the earlier days of a new settlement public opinion is the more influential instrument of government, and it seldom or never goes wrong. There is a lack of order, there may be lawlessness at times, but the habits of the wild mining towns of Western America do not prevail, and an honest man's life is secure wherever he goes.

Perhaps, when all is told, the best type of all this motley community is the genuine, toiling, reckless miner himself, who never can become other than he is, because he never cares to keep the gold which his labour brings him. The getting of it is the salt of his life, dominated as this getting is by a supreme element of chance or luck, whereby one man after a few hours' work may come upon a 'pocket' of gold worth a thousand pounds, and the next man to him obtains no more out of months of patient toil than is sufficient to procure him his frugal tea and 'damper' and salt beef.

While it is difficult for persons at home to realise the conditions of a miner's life, it is perhaps quite as difficult for the sunburnt denizen of the goldfields to comprehend the dismay of the adventurer from home on his first arrival at a mining camp or town. It is hardly possible for a young man, leaving England with his heart buoyant with hope of the fortune that may await him on the goldfields, to approach famous Coolgardie through a desert of meat tins and dilapidated eucalyptus trees, and try to gaze around through the clouds of reddish-brown dust which envelop the place, without at least a momentary sinking

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of the spirits. The intense heat and the thick dust parch both skin and throat, and the blessed water which both crave for has to be bought by the gallon—like beer or milk in England.

It was a curious chance that threw into companionship, at a drinking bar in Coolgardie, two pronounced examples of the opposite types—a soft and somewhat disheartened youth from England, and a hard and grizzled miner. They were as unlike in outward appearance as any two human creatures could be, and to those who noticed the intimacy that sprang up between them the thing was a curiosity. Everybody drank in the place, and many drank too much; but although a particular bar was the daily resort of these two individuals, no frequenters of the place drank less than they did. This fact the barmaid, to whose special services they were partial, could vouch for.

Jim Solus (as he was called from the unusual circumstance that he never went prospecting with a partner) had come from South Australia almost with the first rush. Since then he had made some half-dozen solitary expeditions into the bush, bringing back on each occasion as much gold as kept him in Coolgardie for a month or so. Beyond this, his prospecting had been without visible result. Other men had made 'finds' and disposed of them successfully; Jim Solus remained a dry-blower, and appeared satisfied to remain one. At this many persons marvelled, for Jim had the reputation (how acquired no one could tell) of possessing a keen scent for payable gold.

It was drawing near the conclusion of Jim's usual month's rest when the young fellow from England attracted his observation. The youth always came for his refreshment to Jim's barmaid, and this might have been why Jim noticed him. He was a quiet, good-looking lad, observant and apparently shy; but these were hardly qualities to arouse interest in a tough old miner. And the interest of Jim Solus was aroused. The pretty barmaid noticed it and was puzzled.

Jim invited the young man to drink with him, but there was nothing in this. When, however, Jim talked a good deal to him regarding his friends in the old country, and his hopes and prospects here; and when, a day or two later, the young fellow told the barmaid that Jim had made him remove from the hotel to his own wooden hut at the back of Bayley Street, it was evident that Jim had taken a fancy. And, regarding the new arrival critically without looking at him (a thing which some girls know how to do), and thinking of his modest and quiet manners, the barmaid admitted to herself that the young fellow was a likely object enough for a sun-baked old digger to take a fancy to.

This barmaid was, as has been said, an attractive young woman. The Coolgardie barmaids are a peculiar product of Australia, and work very hard, but earn a great deal of money. Their wages are high, for they often have to dispense liquors to the thirsty crowd not only all day, but great part of the night as well. The miners, however, treat them with a rough politeness of their own, and the presence of these young women has a restraining influence upon their language which is very noticeable. The girls are favourites with them, and are not only put up to every 'good thing' going, but are presented with shares in the miners' adventures as well.

'Jim,' said the barmaid to the young man, 'appears to have taken a liking to you.'

'I wonder why, Miss Lily? I think he is awfully good-natured! He does not even know my name.'

'Oh, yes, he does. You told him a day or two ago. Dicky Hulme, isn't it?'

The young fellow half-turned his face to her with a sudden movement (he had just been looking out into the dusty street) and coloured a little. What was it? Nothing more than the way she uttered the words 'Dicky Hulme'—a way that was unconsciously soft and musical.

'I had forgotten it,' he answered. 'Jim has forgotten it, too—of that I am quite certain.'

It was now the barmaid's turn to blush a little for having betrayed so careful a memory.

'Yes, Jim is very good-hearted, I think,' she observed. 'Miners mostly are; but Jim doesn't have much luck.'

'Ah,' said Dicky Hulme pensively; 'I suppose it's mostly luck.'

'Hard work and luck,' she replied, and left him to attend another customer.

A day or two later, as the two men smoked at the door of their little hut, the old miner suddenly observed:

'Dicky, you are falling in love with that barmaid.'

'Jim, I say, now, what puts that in your head?'

'Because I have eyes. She likes you, too—but that don't count for much. I want to say this, that, whether she cares for you or not (at the present time), you had best take your header at once. In a week or ten days we must be off.'

'And you'd advise me, Jim,' said the young fellow, much amused by the simplicity and sincerity of Jim's advice, 'to fall in love with a barmaid before tackling my work?'

'Certainly,' was the answer. 'You have neither father nor mother, sister nor brother. What do you want to find the gold for, then, except you have a sweetheart?'

There was something in this—a good deal, the young man admitted. But he showed some hesitancy still. Jim's observation had not deceived him in the matter—Dicky Hulme was falling in love. But now, admitting this fact, the dissatisfied thought annoyed him—she was only a barmaid!

'Do you really think, Jim—you have been so good-natured towards me,' he added, 'and you know everything out here so well that I would trust you in anything—do you think I—I ought to let myself care about—a barmaid?'

'Which shows,' observed Jim, 'that you do care for her. Very natural it is, too. A barmaid? Well, they are all first-rate girls—hard-working, honest girls. But Miss Lily is the best of them.'

The young man did not dispute this assertion.

'Look here,' Jim continued, beginning to perceive Hulme's point; 'we respect our barmaids out here, and think them good enough for the best of us. What are we? Pshaw! this isn't England. I hope you'll never get a worse girl in case you don't get Miss Lily.'

It requires little to demolish the half-hearted objections of a young man in such a case. Hulme's hesitation—if it was at bottom real—soon vanished.

'And do you fancy she—she cares for me, Jim?'

He was sorry for putting the question, for the miner shrugged his shoulders and answered coldly: 'How should I know? She doesn't know much about you. It is a thing you must find out for yourself.'

'At any rate, Jim, you will tell me all you know about her?'

'Not now, my lad. Go on with your love business, if you like. What has anything I know about the girl got to do with it? I know nothing to Miss Lily's discredit—if that's what you are fishing for,' he said, turning round and looking the young man full in the face.

'No, no, Jim!' he quietly replied, reddening with shame. 'God forbid I should have such a thought. I would fight any man that said a word against her!'

'That's it,' remarked the other, with satisfaction. 'Well, hurry on the business, Dicky, and some evening in the bush I will tell you all I know about her. I hope you'll win her. She is a good girl.'

Jim Solus went back to Bayley Street for some tobacco. Left alone, Hulme had to admit that, at first blush, falling in love (with a barmaid or any other maid) didn't seem precisely the most prudent way of making a start in a new country. But there are two sides to every question. Supposing a fellow, he reasoned, did fall in love, and had fair hopes of winning the lady, could there be a finer incentive to exertion? Success in such case means more—much more—than gold! What disappointment meant he did not then speculate. Success was what he fixed his mind upon. With a twofold prize to be won, success was bound to come. Jim Solus, doubtless, could have told him stories of young men who went away to the diggings full of hope, and grew gray and worn out with disappointment, and died at last in the bush; and of sweethearts who waited the weary years for them, until the eyes grew dim with watching and the heart died with its last hope. But it was not Jim's vocation to talk of such things to a young man just in love, but rather to encourage him.

Had Jim himself lacked the incentive which he was advising Hulme to draw from the barmaid's eyes, seeing that after years of labour he was still a failure, and apparently a contented one?

In a week or ten days, Jim had said, they were to be off. Naturally the young fellow was impatient to make the start, and full of high hopes. But his hopes were doomed to disappointment. In a day or two he began to feel ill. At first he thought nothing of this, and tried to shake it off. He went down to the bar as usual, but drank only lemonade, and more than once he fancied that the barmaid was looking at him attentively. Then, one night after retiring to bed, with a headache about which he said nothing to Jim, he was seized with a violent shivering fit. His limbs ached as well as his head. In the morning he was in a fever.

'Typhoid,' said the doctor whom Jim summoned. 'Is there any one to take care of him here?'

'Unfortunately,' replied Jim, 'I've got to start prospecting, and have all my swag ready. He was to have come with me. But I'll get some one to look after him.'

A miner's wife who lived near was applied to, and willingly promised to attend to the patient in Jim's absence. But Jim was not entirely satisfied with this arrangement. He went down to Bayley Street, and getting a glass of whisky from the girl called Miss Lily, stood over it in anxious abstraction for several minutes.

'My mate, Miss Lily,' he observed at length, 'is down with typhoid.'

'Poor fellow—so soon,' said the girl. 'I thought last night, by his looks, he was ill.'

'And what's worse, I must start for the bush.'

'Who will look after him, Jim?'

'Why, Jack Brady's wife promises to see to him. She'll do her best, I know; but she has her own house and children to look after as well. I thought, Miss Lily'—— he added, with some hesitation, and then stopped.

'I'll do anything I can, if you wish me, Jim,' said the girl, interpreting his thought. 'That is, whenever I have time to spare.'

'My word, Miss Lily, but you are a stunning good girl!' exclaimed the old miner. 'Well, I'll leave you money enough to get the poor lad everything he wants. And if I have any luck this venture you shall share it.'

'And the poor fellow was going to be dividing mates with you!'

'So he is, and so he will be, if there's any

luck to divide,' said the miner, with emphasis. 'I must start the day after to-morrow, but I'll see you again about him.'

'What direction are you going this time, Jim?'

'I intend to strike eastward from Twenty-five-Mile. I think there is something to be struck out that way.'

The fever went ahead with poor Hulme. Everything was done for him that the rude conditions of the place rendered possible. Mrs Brady was assiduous in her attention every moment she could spare from her own domestic duties; and the kind-hearted barmaid not only came several times during the day to perform any little nursing office which those brief intervals enabled her to do, but sat up with the half-delirious patient during the night, when she needed rest so badly herself. The patient endurance of women is wonderful. Many a rough miner, on the bed of sickness, has had cause to bless the gentle hands and warm hearts of West Australian barmaids, when the desert bush afforded no other nurse or doctor.

Jim Solus, with his condenser and other 'swag' loaded on a small country cart, started on his solitary expedition with a feeling of depression which he had never experienced before.

'It's all on account of the lad,' he argued with himself, as he trudged along the arid track in a blazing tropical sun. 'But he'll be all right when I come back. Mrs Brady and Miss Lily will take care of him—especially Miss Lily. Isn't she a stunning girl! And if I have any luck this venture she shall share it.'

Jim, it may be mentioned, had drawn all his money from the bank and given it in charge to the barmaid for the benefit of the patient.

'In a couple of months,' added Jim, after smoking for a hundred yards or so, 'the lad will be all right again, and by that time, maybe, I'll be back once more in Coolgardie. I needn't be so anxious about him,' he said, trying to shake off that sinking of the spirits which he ascribed to young Hulme's illness.

And so he resolutely set his face to the bush, for a quarter where he was convinced there was payable gold to be found, and where he meant to mark off a double claim for himself and 'partner.'

RICKYARDS AND ORCHARDS.

THE first real harbinger of the coming spring is the chaffinch. Who has not sat to listen to him and his hundred fellows in garden, orchard, and meadow, and felt that the sun grew perceptibly warmer, the south wind blew yet softer, and that the spring came on with surer and steadier steps as all around fell, with that so sweet monotony, the gentle trill, followed by the descending ripple of the final notes?

The spring passes into summer, and in the full-throated chorus none but the keen observer picks out each singer from the throng; none but he notes the gradual dropping out of first one and then another performer. Most of us only awaken to the silence of the early autumn to find it broken by our faithful, crimson-bosomed companion of the coming days of 'winter and foul weather.'

Save to those who sigh for Southern skies and perpetual summer, the suggestions of the robin's voice are altogether pleasant. Summer has its drawbacks; surely one of them is the inability we feel to appreciate that luxury of luxuries—a good fire. But the robin sings the adieu of hot, stifling nights, and the welcome of long evenings; above all, the returning power of those silent, patient occupants of our bookshelves, so sadly neglected in the summer for the louder and more obtrusive attractions of garden, river, and shore. Already September evenings are long and chilly, and we return penitent to study-chair and paper-knife.

But September days are possessed of a magic power to draw us afield, and we yield more willingly with the thought that they must be used while they remain.

Perfect September weather. There will be enough of frost in the early morning to make a cheerful blaze acceptable at breakfast-time; fog there will be too, probably. 'Perfect weather, indeed! It will be far enough from that if there be any trace of fog about,' says some one. Fog, however, there will likely be; and let me tell you, my carping friend, that there are fogs and fogs. I am speaking of British weather, remember, and that for the benefit of people prepared to be therewith content. Such will not willingly relinquish the pure, clean fog of the country morning—the vaporous veil thinning and rolling off this way and that before the silent, conquering sun; opening overhead to show a patch of pale-blue sky; retreating into the wide shelter of the great hedgerows; curling away from the rippling shallows of the river; and finally dissolving into a haunting blue haze, throwing no chill into the warm stillness of the day, but ready to steal forth again over the level meadows of the river-side when the sun has dropped into the west.

To the lover of the country, autumn—autumn in my own county—presents features not to be matched at any other of the year's four seasons

for picturesqueness, and also for what, to the genuine 'yokel,' is better than any artistic grace—pleasant suggestions of comfort and good cheer: rickyards, with their solid promise of food for man and beast; orchards and hopyards giving promise that American cider and German beer shall not, for this season at least, drive the British farmer quite out of the field.

Hay and corn harvests, with which the most confirmed grumblers can scarce find fault, have made this autumn's rickyards more than usually cheerful sights. And I doubt again if there are many places which for solid comfort excel or even equal a well-filled rickyard. One sees in it a provision of food for patient toilers for many a long month, warmth and rest o' nights for many weary limbs. Even to look no farther than the present moment, a rick is a comfortable thing. There is no such shelter from the blast, no such warm and fragrant bed, as a hayrick partly cut. Dry hay and straw seem the very embodiment of the idea of snugness and shelter.

The great hayrick, long in the sides and broad in the ends, is the size of many a cottage. 'Tis almost a pity, probably thinks its owner as he surveys it admiringly, that the heavy crop throughout the country will bring down the price of next year's old hay from nearly five to below three pounds a ton. Five pounds is such a good, round, comfortable sum—a farmer's, a John Bull's sum, like the guinea to which he still clings when he buys or sells his horses and cattle. What a pity that we have allowed the cold, thin 'sovereign' to oust it! There is precise, thin-blooded frugality in the very syllables.

The wheatricks he eyes with more unalloyed complacency. Wheat has risen—seems inclined to rise still. His neighbour has not stopped to emulate *his* well-thatched ricks, which stand high and dry on the stone staddles; the round, the oval, with the nob of straw on the summit of the gently-rising peak, as though one might lift off the whole covering of shining yellow thatch as one raises the cover from a dish.

At the next farm, the wheat being 'got' in good order for immediate thrashing, the farmer thinks the 'nimble ninepence better than the slow shilling.' So across the three or four intervening fields and hedgerows rises the thick, white smoke of the engine. It shoots up swiftly to some twoscore yards from the funnel's mouth and then lingers, a dense flattened ball, undispersed in the still air, and not unbeautiful as the sun irradiates its fleecy substance.

The silent autumn air throbs with the low hum of revolving fly-wheel and band and busy thrasher. There is no discord or harshness in the sound; it is a contented country voice, droning in tone, yet steadily busy. Only if the man who 'feeds' the hopper slackens in the regularity of his supply does the hum rise into something of a whistling shrillness, which falls again to its former contented pitch as fresh sheaves are thrown to the hungry maw.

A yard where the thrasher is at work does not, to the onlooker, bear out the fear of machinery displacing manual labour. There is no dearth of hands here. The engine may run quietly, to some extent unattended, for half-an-hour at a time; but the man who drives it must not engage in any other work which will prevent him from giving a frequent glance at the furnace and the steam and water gauges. He cannot reckon upon giving more than an overlooking eye and occasional hand elsewhere, so he is generally the head-man, the bailiff, where one is acknowledged by that name. If the engine and thrasher are from a contractor, men are usually sent with them to take all responsibility of the machinery; if they are the farmer's own property—and most large agriculturists can now find pretty constant work for steam all the year round—then we may be sure that the careful master will not be far off.

At large farms water is often laid on from an adjacent stream by means of a water-wheel; but if this is not the case, or the thrashing is going on in a distant rickyard or field corner, there will be a boy busy journeying to and fro with the water-cart. There must be one man at the hopper to 'feed,' and at least two on the rick to supply him; another to attend and change the swiftly-filling sack where the stream of shining wheat pours from its square wooden gutter; yet others to deal with the thrashed straw duly thrown out in its place, the accumulation of which round the machine cannot be permitted for a minute. To these add an odd man—there are always odd men hovering necessarily round a large job of this kind—add these, and you get a substantial total. Many of the hands must be 'extras,' too, for the ordinary work must go on. The wagoners and their lads are not here, for the teams must not stand idle in this 'open' weather, but are already turning the white stubble, from which this very wheat was so lately drawn, into shining, purple-brown furrows again.

Unfortunately utility and beauty do not now always go hand-in-hand. We can hardly expect the hard-pressed farmer to put the latter quality first. Corrugated iron is too cheap and universally useful to be ignored by the practical man. A long range of this material, erected on pillars as an open barn, not only effectually thatches the ricks, but, when they have disappeared from beneath it, serves as a wainhouse and general shelter.

The shining length of convex metal is certainly far from welcome to the artistic eye; when painted a deep reddish-brown, however, and viewed among plentiful shade of surrounding foliage, it is much improved. And, after all, it has never been pretended that farming was an

occupation carried on solely from an ornamental point of view. Very few trades are so; and if it has happened that the various successive scenes of the farmer's year have till the last few decades resolved themselves into a series of the most charming tableaux, the artist must look upon that fact as an entirely gratuitous benefit for which he has to be thankful while it lasts, and must refrain from complaints if a needful change in the farmer's methods deprives him of one or two links in the chain.

However, the ruffled lover of the beautiful may surely find the wherewithal to soothe his spirits in the orchards; it will take many new methods to make them unlovely. For him the virtue of an orchard lies to no small extent in its age; and happily, at present, new orchards are in a distinct minority. Another good quality is a certain air of general unkemptness; and whether that be an economical evil or not, it is usually not far to seek.

They are looking their best now, the orchards, not the least of my county's many beauties. There have been heavy rains since the gathering of the early corn harvest—before, indeed, certain laggard fields could show a clean surface—and, consequently, the grass has a soft greenness not always seen in autumn. The tall pears which tower above the general level of the orchard trees are resplendent in every shade of crimson. The damsons gleam with a pallid yellow; but the damson is more general among the gardens and in the cottage hedgerows than in the orchard ranks. The sunbeams fall on bright globes of shining fruit, red, yellow, and green, among the more sober leaf-tints; and these various gleams of colour are answered from below by the gathered heaps on the ground.

The idea of a farmer getting a profit in hard cash from his orchards is to a certain extent modern. Profit of a sort, of course, he looked for, but it was an indirect one. He made cider from the fruit after his own traditions, and he and his household and his farm-servants drank it. Not they alone, but every drover and messenger and hanger-on of the farmer's trade who came to the door knew that whatever else might be wanting, there would be cider enough and to spare. If there came an unusually prolific year of fruit, and it occurred to the farmer that perhaps he was making more drink than would supply his needs and keep in sound condition for the next twelve months, he would perhaps sell a cask or two to some acquaintance or to a publican in the market town.

I wonder how many of my farming friends would care to admit that a decade or two ago, when prices were persistently falling, and they themselves were talking loudly of the workhouse, it was the suggestion of the 'missus' that the fruit might be more profitably sold than turned into cider, unlimited in quantity but—some of it—doubtful in quality? There will be mighty difficulties in the way of adopting the lady's suggestion, and she must be a woman of force of character if she wants to carry it through. Old custom—'Never *have* sold the bit of fruit'—therefore, &c. Doubts as to where to look for a purchaser; doubts, one being found, as to his stability financially. Much correspondence, too; altogether, a transaction very novel and out of the usual way of farmer's business.

But presently a satisfactory market is found: pretty close at hand, too—only in the town some five or six miles away, so that there will be no railway business, rates, &c. But, behold! the buyer insists that all the several kinds of fruit—and the farmer has some half-dozen scattered up and down throughout his acres of orcharding—must be kept carefully distinct. 'Redstreaks,' 'Normans'—the white, the strawberry, and the others, must all come to the weighbridge unmixed. Not a difficult thing, you think, the separate kinds growing each on their separate trees, and therefore falling, when shaken, into their own heaps. Quite so; but then it is contrary to custom, which is a very steep and awkward stile to surmount. For although the farmer may have been in the habit of reserving a few bushels from one or two favourite trees to make a special cask for his own drinking, yet the bulk has gone into hotch-potch, one sort with another, the ripe with the rotten.

But the price offered for ripe fruit in good condition is really surprisingly large, and he is willing to strain a point or two, at any rate as an experiment. So two or three wagon-loads come creaking into the town, the wheels thick with the orchard mud, the wagoner and his boys staring about them and asking half-sceptically—the whole idea is unusual, and therefore may be perhaps a hoax—for 'this 'ere place where they do make the zider.' That weighbridge, again, is a hard bit of iron to swallow. By the bushel is the farmer's mode of selling his fruit, if he is to sell it at all; he has occasionally sold a little table and cooking fruit that way since the children have grown up and less was required at home. But at that long range of new brick buildings, where there is a gas-engine and much shafting and curious machinery—from the sight of which inquiring agriculturists are rather rigidly excluded—the go-ahead gentlemen and their clerks in the office quite smile at 'per bushel,' and recognise the ton weight as the only standard by which they can draw cheques. All this has been duly made matter of previous stipulation; but nevertheless the carter probably appears at the warehouse door without having weighed the wagon at the town weighbridge. Must he go down there with it again, then? Yes; it appears he must, and, moreover, return thither afterwards with the empty wain and get that weighed too; and must, above all, take care of the weight-ticket, which will be produced in due time, moist and torn

and crumpled, for payment. It is a troublesome business altogether.

But in time the cheque is duly drawn; and the bank duly cashes it, after but a glance from the cashier's keen eyes. And really the amount is quite substantial, as the 'missus' does not fail many times to point out. And certainly that arrangement of unlimited cider was very unsatisfactory—the men always in the cider cellar; for, as for locking up, the granary was quite trouble enough without putting the whole place under lock and key. The proposal of no cider at all for general work, or an allowance within the strictest limits, with an extra weekly shilling or sixpence, is well received by the men. There will be a much heavier consignment sent in to the cider-works next autumn, and a correspondingly larger cheque.

And really it is astonishing how much farther the crop seems to go; there is quite a cheerful row of casks in the cellar after all. This is accounted for by remembering that here, as elsewhere, profusion tends to waste. In a good season the trees were loaded; there would be no stint in the filling of the barrel-shaped wooden 'bottles' that ride in the tail of the wagon when it goes to town, and hang on the collar-hames of the horses as they go afield. No need to be particular or to fret oneself over a few bushels or a few score bushels rotting on the ground—the pigs will have them, or what is left of them. But put a definite substantial price 'per ton' on 'Normans;' let it be known that the dark purple-red 'Old Foxwhelps' are worth almost anything we choose to ask, and forthwith we will view the orchard with a keener eye. From our gnarled immemorial trees have we been gathering fruit to press into muddy liquor, which is swilled down the throats of carters and cowmen; and behold we journey to London, to the Islington Show, or what not, and, as we sit in a restaurant, liquor is called for by the names of these very trees—called for and produced in bottles dainty with wrapping-paper and silver foil; a Latin motto, too, on the label. We see it decanted, creaming slightly and delicately, and we see it discussed with gusto and much approval. If these things are so, no wonder that our cheque is drawn for a figure so pleasing to contemplate.

This, or something like this, has gone on within moderately recent times; and, indeed, to some extent still goes on; for new ideas and ways are not adopted universally in the agricultural world. There are farmers who, if they light on this paper—but I feel pretty secure; they have something else to do—will laugh at many of my remarks as coming 'a day behind the fair.' There are others—a small class perhaps—to whom it may offer a new idea or two. No profession or business embraces wider ranges of class than farming, and degrees of intelligence and information vary accordingly.

But from the artist's point of view this is a digression. He need, however, be under no immediate apprehension of seeing any time-honoured old-world item of the beautiful swept away. The cottage-farmer still makes, and will make for years to come, his own liquor from his own fruit. And fortunately it is precisely the homestead and buildings of the cottage-farmer that stand highest in the order of artistic merit. The improvements on his holding are not so extensive or conspicuous as on that of his neighbour—the gentleman-farmer. The back door of the house—sometimes, indeed, the front door—opens into the fold-yard without any circumlocution, the fold-gate lets you direct into the orchard, and thus the house with its thatched roof and quaint windows, the fold with its rickety buildings, and the sloping orchard with its gnarled and twisted trees and its heaps of shining fruit, combine to form one delightful picture.

The row of empty casks drawn up in the yard, and the horsehair pressing-cloths spread on the fence to dry, tell what is going on. From the mill-house, too, comes the oft-repeated shout which cheers the plodding horse in his steady round. Ceaselessly the great stone wheel trundles on in the circular trough, while around it surges a muddy mass of thick and uninviting pulp, which, when sufficiently liquid, is transferred to the press and placed in layers between the cloths aforesaid. For the very squeamish, perhaps, the operation of cider-making—old style—is one of the many in the food department of life upon which it is as well not to look. But we are not squeamish, knowing that uncommonly good liquor has been made in many a gloomy hovel where the sanitary inspector is unknown and unthought of; and we shall have no qualms when our special cask comes home a month or two later. For, in spite of works in the town, and silver foil and Latin mottoes, there are handy men in the county yet; dry old 'files,' who, with a few bushels of good fruit, and the old stone mill and the old tools, can turn out a cask of cider worth drinking yet. Whether there are men growing up to replace them is another question; it is to be hoped so, for they grow very old—they, and the men who used to thatch the ricks.

VINDICATION.

By Mary Kernahan.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

IT was a wild night in late October when I drew rein at last before the inn. How the wind blew! The dead leaves as I dismounted were whirled in rotting heaps to my feet—poor playthings of the tempest that bent the great elms on either side of the road. A gust of rain came with them. For the autumn had come early that year; November would not be in some seasons more advanced than October then. There was a roar in all the chimneys, a sound of cracking boughs from the pastures. And it was at such a time, in such a night as this, I had found the place which I had been seeking—sometimes idly, sometimes earnestly—through some of the best years of my life.

I had found it at last. And what avail now that I had done so? I walked in with a moody countenance, throwing scarce a look to the smirking landlord, the whole futility of the fancy that had drawn me thither staring me plainly in the face now that I had accomplished my whim.

An ancient place; but I had expected nothing less. Remote, yet on the high-road, its carven woodwork and jutting windows would have delighted some I knew to the heart; but I had not come hither as an antiquary, and cared little for its outside walls. Set openly and without shelter—it was in the very teeth of the gale that evening—it looked, to my impatient eyes, ready to fall into a crumbling heap and so end my quest; ay, and would do so some autumn night in the equinox. I could hear the hollow crash of its ruin echoing for a moment in one deeper note the wind that had been thrilling in its chimneys; and then, silence. Well, let it stand one night longer.

What had I come hither for? With tools secretly brought—the whole wild fancy seemed to stare me in the face and mock me—as if I had but to seek to find. I had given word briefly that I would make choice of a room later; at present the only thing desired was peace and quiet, and a meal of some kind—whatever the house could offer. It had come to this, that I was seated alone, with food before me, and with time in which to think, and all the thinking I was capable of led to no conclusion.

What had I come hither for? I did not know myself. It was all too vague; and if I had had a companion with me, and told him at that hour all there was to tell, he would have thought me a madman—as most men are accounted who spend their lives in search of buried treasure. My doings looked like it. I owned it fairly to myself with a grim, contemptuous sense of honesty—but the contempt was for the world. I had not lived a more saintly life than other men, and this was perhaps a whim, but I knew it was not treasure I sought—it was the clearing of a dead man's honour.

And now, how was I nearer to doing so, having traced him to this place? I pieced it together coldly as I sat at food, a certain dullness and hopelessness having fallen on me since I set eyes upon my goal. I, Francis Prestyn, had traced the other Francis, of whose blood I was and by whose name I was called, to this ancient hostelry in hope of—what?

He had been bosom-friend of the exiled Charles—so hand and glove with him, beloved and surely trusted, that all men knew of the favour, and of the prince's signet-ring from his own finger placed on that of his friend's. I knew every particular so well that I could have given a description of the ring had it been needed. What letters had I not conned, what papers had I not sought for, since I had come to man's estate and been possessed by this overmastering fancy?

He had long mouldered in his grave. Why should I heed that men said he was a traitor?

I was called Francis Prestyn; I had lived a lonely life; I had so incorporated myself with the thought and with the soul of him that the stain on our name was mine—not mine only as Prestyn, but mine personally.

It ought to have been enough for men's ears that he lost name and land for Stuart loyalty; a man who would with eyes open do that was scarce likely to turn thief. Yet, later, when certain men banded together to send to Charles in France; when men who had gave richly, and those who had little left, generously; when noble women threw jewels into the treasure-box that it might be taken overseas to the rightful king, for the rightful cause; when they all with one accord chose the king's friend for the perilous journey, entrusting him with treasure and message—he took flight, bearing both with him, and delivered neither. And men said—as men will say—he had been tempted.

Some said he went to Spain, bearing an assumed name; others that he fled over the high seas to a continent beyond, and lived a rich, unhappy man, and vanished out of life at last, leaving no trace—a traitor. Others of the family bore his name, and his shame as well; though there had not been wanting those who asserted that some mishap had befallen him on the journey

across Channel—that he had been followed, robbed of the treasure, and, with a proud man's impulse, had either gone into exile or made away with himself, not to look men in the face again. For myself, Francis Prestyn of a later day, I had never doubted the latter—till my fancy took possession of me.

Those were troublous times. Who knew but he might have apprehended some such following? Who knew that he might not have buried the treasure safely in some secret place, thinking to return after many days and find it? What more likely than that? I said to myself proudly when I came to man's estate and thought things out, and so set forth on this barren quest.

It had taken seven years to discover this last trace. Whether he fled at once or remained in England some days none seemed to know; the broad facts had seemed sufficient to all. Yet after all those years, in these later days, I had found it through an old letter preserved in another family than mine.

Sir Francis Prestyn had disappeared, it said among a hundred other items. He had lain one night in a hostelry on what had been once his own land, an inn that had formerly been kept by an old servant of his. And in the morning it was found that he had fled, wishing no man, evidently, to know the way he took—having plainly escaped by the window, for the door was fastened, and the outer doors also, and there had been no movement heard in the house.

I began to shape it into words at last in my own mind, and surely if my friends looked on me as a madman they were not without reason in their opinion: I hoped to find the buried treasure.

Not for its own sake. For the sake of my own long and sullenly-held belief; for the sake of proving that, as Francis Prestyn did not take the treasure with him, he at least never had the spending of it; for the sake of reinstating in his old place of honour the man I had become one in heart and soul with.

And now here was I, eating and drinking under the very roof that had covered him; and when I had but asked the landlord in what room Sir Francis Prestyn had lain, he had stared at me like an open-mouthed yokel. He had not had the place long, he said; he could not recall the name; yet it was an inn at which any gentleman—that the fellow was servilely sure of—might have made call.

Was there any legend of Francis Prestyn—long dead, I was at the pains to tell him curtly—connected with the place? No, there was none. And now he began to look on me with toleration—a foolish, learned fancier of forgotten days—a peerer into every corner for moss of years. He had evidently acquaintance with the kind. They were not of the sort who rode away without payment, either; were rather, I saw scornfully, wont to linger out weeks in a place, scanning each tombstone. His civility increased.

I pushed my plate aside, heavy of heart. Yet I had no mind to leave. There were gapers at the door as I passed out into the hall and walked—idly, to all outward appearance, yet with the blood in my veins in a very fever of unrest and anger—round the ruinous place. It had drawn me from Flanders; it had been a very magnet for years; and now that I was here, what had there been to come for? Darkness settled on its walls; an owl hooted from its ivy.

Was there any room more than another in which my kinsman was like to have lain? I only knew that there was one that took my fancy. It was low down—so low that I could not make sure it was a bedroom—and so nested in ivy, some of the trails hanging thickly over the window as if it were a room disused, that it stirred some sleeping fancy in me before I set myself to work to find reason for the dwelling on it. And some slight show of reason there seemed to me. If Francis Prestyn had escaped in the night, he had achieved the task with greater ease from that window than from another—no need of ladder. The more I looked at it, the more some smouldering desire in my breast grew warm and increased. I would see what money could do—little as I was overburdened with the dross—though it were the landlord's very room.

He came to my beck sure enough—I bore his servility with less impatience this time, trusting it might aid me to my desire—and listened, all ears, till I had made known my request.

I saw his face fall. For himself, I was welcome to the room, he said, with a flourishing bow; any gentleman could have it who chose; but it was a room none desired. No, there was no legend; but it bore an evil repute. His women only cleaned it at stated times, and then in broad daylight, and there were never less than three persons who ventured into it together. It had been said for generations to be haunted; by whom, and in what fashion, there was none of his time could tell. For himself, he thought it an idle tale; he was glib in saying that, fearing I should dislike the place. There were other bedrooms and to spare at this season; I could take my choice of the best.

His eyes opened—he looked at me in extraordinary amazement—when I told him curtly I would have that room or none, fearing neither man nor spectre, I added grimly. I felt it, in the mood I was in. He began to look at me with that air of toleration again; truly, here was antiquarianism run rampant. Yet, if I chose to be so liberal, he said—for I had spoken plainly

on that head—and if I desired the room, he could find some one who would light a fire there, and aired bedding should be made ready by nightfall.

I did choose, I repeated. He thought me a man of wealth as well as fancy, and took my curt speech, born of self-impatience, as the natural manner of one accustomed to command.

'I would take a walk,' I said.

'In the tempest?' he submitted, with fresh amazement, open-mouthed, and with a commiserating eye. I flung back answer to him that I liked these north-country breezes.

Night was beginning to brood over the place, over this wild northern upland to which, it seemed to me now, I had been drawing nearer and nearer for years. And now that I had found it, a tempest held it in its grip, as if, scattering leaves, snapping branches, whirling down chimneys—for I had seen one fall—raging at the very foundations of the ruinous inn, it sought to find—as I did—and would wrest some secret—even as I would have done, by very force—ere it could be still.

It blew so fiercely in my face that I could scarce keep my footing, yet I went obstinately on, looking neither to the right nor to the left; and whether I was in the lonely high-road, or passed through narrow lanes where the leaves lay ankle-deep—whether the path was uphill or down—it was all one to me at that hour. By what fortune I walked so long without losing my way I shall never know. Yet I found myself at last, conscious of no weariness, within sight of the inn.

The fierceness of the hurricane had rather increased than lessened. But lights were shining now from the windows of the ancient place, even from the room that had taken my fancy; the house looked more inviting than in the hour when I had first drawn rein. And yet the same weight, the same coldness in my breast fell upon me as I entered.

There was some bustle and stir within; maids passed, I could see, that they might gaze upon me. I knew that they accounted me whimsical, almost to impiety, since I ventured into a haunted room. Yet the women, I think, had some passing admiration of my courage—for so, in their country fashion, they deemed it—and if I had but paused to think, it was natural enough; yet I had nothing but a stirring of impatience, a cold scorn of this gaping wonder as I closed the door of my room.

For I closed it at last—and bolted it; the night had come.

THE BY-PRODUCTS OF THE BLAST-FURNACE.

DURING the last twenty years a silent revolution has been taking place in the Scotch iron industry that has given it a fresh lease of life, and enabled it to enter on a new era of prosperity which but few expected to see. This change has been brought about, not by any new or startling discovery whereby the make of metal could be increased or the cost reduced, but simply by the prosaic method of saving the rubbish, or, in other words, of collecting the by-products which had previously been allowed to go to waste.

One important point in which the blast-furnace practice of Scotland differs from that of other parts of the United Kingdom is the fuel used. In Scotland the coal is used as it comes from the mine, in the raw or uncoked condition; whilst in England it is always first converted into coke. This is not due to any preference for coal on the part of the Scotch ironmasters, for they know well enough that coke is the better fuel for the purpose; but it is due to the exigencies of the circumstances, and they, like other manufacturers, have to make the best of the materials which they have at hand. Coals suitable for making coke are comparatively rare in the Scottish coalfields; and to bring either the coal or coke from other districts, whilst occasionally necessary for special purposes, would be far too expensive for general work. Fortunately, both Lanarkshire and Ayrshire abound in splint coals which, though not suitable for coke-making, can be used in the blast-furnace without coking; and though these are not so suitable as coke for blast-furnace use, and about thirty-six hundredweight of coal is required in place of one ton of coke, it is from them that the by-products to be described are derived; and in the light of the recently-gained experience it is not likely that the Scotch ironmasters would change their coal for coke even if they had the opportunity.

The method of making pig-iron in the blast-furnace is well known. The blast-furnace itself is a circular stack, fifty to a hundred feet in height, and twenty to thirty feet in diameter, something like a huge chimney. Into the top of this is charged the ore from which the iron is to be obtained, the fuel to supply the heat, and limestone as a flux; and from the bottom is tapped out the molten iron and slag. As the whole furnace is kept filled nearly to the top with the charge, there can be very little draught to keep the combustion going, and it is necessary to force in the air by means of blowing-engines. This is done through a series of openings near

the bottom of the furnace; and in modern practice the air is always strongly heated before it is sent in.

As the air comes in contact with the hot fuel combustion at once takes place, a very high temperature is produced, and the hot products of combustion pass away upwards, in their passage imparting their heat to the cold descending charge, and themselves being cooled, so that they leave the furnace at a comparatively low temperature (about 600° Fahr.).

The gases are combustible even when coke is the fuel used, because, owing to the very high temperature and the large excess of fuel, the carbon can only take up half the oxygen with which it can combine, and so is only half-burnt, the combustible carbon-monoxide being formed instead of the incombustible carbon-dioxide. When coal is the fuel used other combustible constituents are added to the escaping gas. The hot, ascending gases coming in contact with the coal near the top of the furnace distil out of it all the volatile matters—gas and tar—which mix with the gases and pass out of the furnace; and as this volatile portion is often nearly half the weight of the coal, the gases are thereby much enriched. The solid residue or coke which is left descends with the charge until it comes to the region where the air is blown in, and it is there burned. This fixed residue or coke is therefore the only portion of the coal which is usefully burned in the blast-furnace; and as it forms only fifty to sixty per cent. of the coal, it will be seen why so much more fuel is required when coal is used than when coke is provided.

In the early days of the Scotch iron industry the gases were allowed to escape into the air and burn at the top of the furnace with a lurid glare which illuminated the country for miles around, and made each blast-furnace a glowing beacon visible from afar; and though the value of the gases for heating purposes has long been known, and the first attempt was made to utilise them as far back as 1845, the adoption of such methods was very slow. It is only within the last ten years or so that the last open-topped furnace disappeared from Scotland, and in some English districts they still linger on. The top of the furnace is now closed by means of a valve which can be lowered to let in the charge, and from below which the gas is drawn off to the gas-mains to be distributed to the boilers and heating-stoves; and in most of the Scottish works all steam required for driving machinery is raised and heat for the air supplied by the combustion of this so-called waste gas.

When coal is distilled in retorts, as in the manufacture of coal-gas, many other products besides gas are given off, and the tar and ammonia are always recovered and utilised. When the coal is distilled at the top of the blast-furnace similar products must be produced; and if any ocular demonstration were required, it was to be found in the abundance of tar which deposited in the gas-mains; but no attempts had been made to recover these. The cost would be very great, the profit to be made doubtful, and so the iron-masters held back, and year after year allowed the materials to go to waste, waiting for some one more far-seeing or more reckless than the rest to make the trial.

In 1880 the first plant for the recovery of by-products was erected so as to settle the question of the practicableness and profitableness of recovery on a large scale. The firm which undertook the work was Messrs Baird & Co., Limited, and the ironwork at which the plant was erected was that at Gartsherrie, famous in the history of the iron trade as being the first at which Neilson's invention of the hot-blast was put into use on a large scale. Many experiments and inquiries were made, and the plant erected was designed by Messrs Alexander & M'Cosh, by whose name it is now generally known. At the Gartsherrie works there were sixteen furnaces in blast, arranged in two rows, one on each side of the works, and the recovery plant was in the first instance fitted to one row of eight furnaces.

The recovery was beset with many and serious difficulties—as, indeed, what great advance in industry is not?—the principal one being the enormous amount of gas which had to be dealt with. In the gas-works a ton of coal yields about 10,000 cubic feet of coal-gas; but in the blast-furnace this would be mixed with the much larger volume of the products of combustion, amounting to about 110,000 cubic feet for each ton of coal consumed, so that the amount of gas to be dealt with was about 120,000 cubic feet for each ton of coal.

Each furnace produced about forty tons of pig iron in the twenty-four hours, consuming about thirty-two cwts. of coal for each ton of iron made, or about sixty-four tons of coal in the twenty-four hours, and about two hundred and fifty tons of air. The amount of gas, therefore, would be 7,680,000 cubic feet per day (twenty-four hours) from each furnace, or 61,440,000—say, in round numbers, 60,000,000—cubic feet per day from the eight furnaces. This enormous volume can hardly be grasped, but some idea can be formed of its practical meaning by comparing it with the quantity of coal-gas needed to supply a large town. The various gas-works in Glasgow which supply the city and surrounding districts, with a population of about 1,000,000, make 12,400,000 cubic feet of gas per day, which, as will be seen, is less than that produced by two blast-furnaces, and less than one-quarter of that which had to be dealt with by the new plant at the Gartsherrie works. Scattered through this vast amount of gas was the small amount of tar and ammonia which was to be recovered—about the same as would

be recovered from, say, 5,000,000 cubic feet of coal-gas.

Naturally, when the problem of designing the plant was set about, the engineers studied what was being done in the gas and other works, and they came to the conclusion that the only way of dealing with the gases was to adopt on a very large scale methods similar to those already in use—that is, to cool the gas very thoroughly, and then wash out the tar and ammonia by means of water. Time and experience has shown that this judgment was sound, for several forms of plant subsequently designed to deal with the gas on other principles have been unsuccessful, and have been abandoned. The plant required to deal with this large quantity of gas by cooling and condensation had to be of enormous size.

The gases passed from the furnace, at a temperature of about 600° Fahrenheit, into a large gas-main, by which they were conveyed to the cooling plant. As this tube was of considerable length, it to some extent acted as a cooler, and the gases entered the atmospheric condenser at a temperature of about 400° Fahrenheit.

The atmospheric condenser consists of 200 iron pipes, each 2 feet 6 inches in diameter, and 40 feet long, placed vertically, arranged in sets of ten, and united alternately above and below, so that every particle of gas has to travel through twenty tubes, altogether a distance of 800 feet. As these tubes are freely exposed to the air, they offer a very large cooling surface, and in hot weather they can be sprayed with water, and thus the gases are rapidly cooled, and leave the condenser at a temperature of about 120° Fahrenheit. The gases are thus cooled far below the boiling-point of water, and therefore it might be expected that the tar and water would be condensed and deposited. The deposit obtained in these tubes is, however, very small. No doubt the water and tar are condensed, but they are in such a fine state of division that they remain suspended in the gases in the form of mist, which needs a very long time to settle, and so they are carried forward by the onward current to the water cooler or condenser, which is placed next. The water condenser is a large iron chamber 45 feet high, 45 feet long, and 18 feet broad, divided into six chambers, connected alternately above and below, so that the gas must travel through them all, and they are crossed by 2700 iron tubes, 3½ inches in diameter, through which water is kept circulating. The result of this is that the gases are cooled to about 60° Fahrenheit, the ordinary atmospheric temperature, but deposit only a small further quantity of tar and water, the principal effect, therefore, having been to further cool the gases.

The gases next pass to the scrubber, where the final purification is effected. This is a huge iron tower 80 feet high and 25 feet square, which is crossed by a large number of perforated shelves. As the gas ascends it is met by a descending shower of water delivered at the top in the form of a fine rain. The water is thus brought intimately into contact with the gas, and the tarry matters and ammonia are washed out of it whilst the gas passes onward.

As the various washers, &c., introduce considerable resistance, and thus hinder the flow of the gas, some form of suction must be used to draw it through and deliver it under suitable pressure to the boilers or stoves where it is to be burned. Many engineers thought that the washing would so reduce the heating power of the gas that it would cease to be available for the purposes for which it is required. This, however, has been found not to be the case. The removal of the tar must necessarily reduce the heating power somewhat; but this does not in any way interfere with its usefulness; and, though the gas has been washed with water, owing to its low temperature it carries much less water vapour with it than it would do if it passed direct from the blast-furnaces.

The tar and the water containing the ammonia in solution are run into tanks, where they separate into two layers, and whence they are removed for further treatment.

The amount of crude tar obtained is about 40 gallons for each ton of coal consumed, or 2480 gallons per furnace per day. This crude or green tar contains a large quantity of water, to remove which the tar is pumped into boilers and gently heated. The tar is very different from that obtained in the manufacture of coal-gas. It must be remembered that the tar does not exist as such in the coal, but is produced when the coal is broken up by destructive distillation, and the composition of the tar depends on the temperature at which the coal is distilled. In gas-making the coal is shovelled into very hot retorts, and is therefore distilled at a high temperature, whilst in the blast-furnace the distillation is brought about at a comparatively low temperature near the top of the furnace by the ascending current of hot gas. The blast-furnace tar, therefore, does not contain any of the substances which serve as the starting-point for the manufacture of the various coal-tar colours, which give the value to ordinary coal-tar, and the manufacturers when they had got the tar hardly knew what to do with it. Once a manufacturer has a large supply of a material, he will usually soon find some purpose to which it can be put, so it was not long before uses were found for the blast-furnace tar. It is now heated in closed retorts to a fairly high temperature, when it is broken up into oils which pass over any pitch which is left in the retorts.

The oils can be used for fuel or for burning in lamps of the Lucigen type, where the oil is sprayed by means of air or steam, though it is

too heavy for burning in ordinary wick-lamps. By suitable treatment it may be made to yield excellent disinfectants. The pitch which is separated from the oil is used in the manufacture of briquettes or fuel blocks.

The water which is condensed contains the ammonia. It is boiled, the vapour passed into sulphuric acid, and thus the ammonia is converted into sulphate of ammonia, which is of great commercial value, though the price is much lower to-day than it was when the first recovery plant was erected. The amount of sulphate of ammonia obtained is about twenty-three pounds for each ton of coal consumed—that is, considerably above half-a-ton per day from each furnace.

No sooner was Messrs Baird's plant in operation, and its success assured, than other ironmasters followed suit. Of course the designs were modified where modification was found to be advisable; but all that have succeeded followed exactly on the same lines—namely, cooling the gases by passing them through cooling tubes, and then washing them with water; and it speaks well for Messrs Alexander & M'Cosh that none of the more recently erected plants have given a better recovery than theirs, though some are a little cheaper to erect. The value of the recovery has now been demonstrated, and every ironwork in Scotland, with one exception, has erected or is erecting plant for the recovery of the by-products from its blast furnace gases.

An estimate has recently been published of the results of the recovery process in an ironwork running four furnaces, which is as follows:

Coal consumed	2000 tons per week.	
Pig-iron produced	1400 "	
Pitch recovered	100 tons	value £120
Oil recovered	20,000 gallons	" 125
Sulphate of ammonia	20½ tons	" 225
		£470

—the total cost of the process—being wages and cost of working £30, and cost of acid £20, 10s.—thus leaving a very handsome profit.

From these figures it will be seen what an important part the recovery of the by-products may play in the prosperity of the industry, and its introduction is second only in importance to that of the hot-blast by Neilson in 1828; and, if it has not saved the Scotch iron industry from extinction, it has introduced into the West of Scotland a new industry, which must add largely to the wealth and prosperity of the community.

BURMESE DOCTORS.

By E. D. Cuming.

HE wears a waistcloth which once may have been a large and cheerful tartan, but whose brilliancy is now subdued by honourable drug-stains; his hair is unkempt and wispy, and he needs a bamboo staff to aid footsteps tottering under the load of rare and curious knowledge which is reflected in the inscrutable gravity of his countenance. His gait is a happy blend of dignified deliberation and professional haste; and the people who draw aside to make way for him pause to offer the little obeisance due to Wisdom and Learning as personified in Sayah Hpo Khin.

When Moung Thway, the timber merchant, awoke this morning he felt listless and out of sorts; and his wife, Mah Noo, being a nervous woman, sent for Doctor Hpo Khin, who lives in that little house under the great trees on the Kemendine Road. When the messenger said to Doctor Hpo Khin, 'My master, Moung Thway, complains of sickness in his inside, and prays the very honourable and learned Sayah to come to his house,' he happened to rub his left ear. It is just possible that the gesture was due to the unwelcome attentions of a mosquito; but the trained perception of Doctor Hpo Khin recognised in it a sure indication that there was nothing much amiss with Moung Thway; therefore he made answer, 'Your good master invites me to earn Merit, and I will come.' Ten minutes before, a lad had approached his veranda, and with a profoundly respectful *shiko* had begged him to come and see his father, who felt sick. That lad, as he squatted blinking before the effulgence of wisdom, happened to scratch his right cheek; whereupon the doctor replied that, much to his regret, many and urgent calls upon his time prevented his coming to see the excellent parent of the meritorious youth before him. There are gestures which indicate that an illness will prove fatal. Scratching the right cheek is one; and as the doctor saw that he could do no good he declined to attend.

While the learned man is making his way to Moung Thway's house we may look into his antecedents. Evincing as a lad more than ordinary interest in astrology and a weakness for hanging about the *pa-la-say*, or drug shop, his father apprenticed him to the famous Sayah Bah Toon, who had the best practice in Rangoon. Hpo Khin's parents had no objection in the world to their own son becoming a doctor; on the contrary, they were delighted that he should show pre-

ference for a profession which commands so much respect. The *hpoongyee*, or priest, of course stands first in the order of social esteem, then the government official, and after him the doctor. One reason for the respect accorded the medical practitioner lies in the fact that his occupation involves mental exertion, which is not popular among an indolent and amiable people. Another is that each time the doctor prescribes he does a good action and earns Merit—whereby a doctor with a large practice must accumulate so much Merit that the happiness of his future state is a matter of no concern to the most anxious. He also accumulates money, or would if he possessed the gift of saving, which, being a Burman, he does not. If he charged fees for his visits he would acquire no Merit at all, so he never asks for payment. To do so would be contrary to tradition and professional etiquette; but when the patient's relation lays an eight-anna bit before you, and says, 'Learned sir, I beg leave to honour you with this trifling gift,' you naturally take it; and when the patient's relations forget this ceremony—well, next time they send for you, you probably have an engagement elsewhere. The same course of action is open to you if the fee with which you are honoured falls short of the sum you deem worthy of your acceptance. Sayah Hpo Khin expects a rupee for each visit, including medicine; but, as he is a very kind-hearted man, he accepts whatever coin he knows a poor patient can afford. This is contrary to Sayah Bah Toon's method; he expected three rupees a visit, and nobody ever ventured to offer less after the day when he left lying on the floor the two rupees a patient's economical wife laid at his feet.

Hpo Khin did not pay any premium when he was apprenticed; he ran errands, boiled the rice, and made himself generally useful about the house, and in return was allowed to see his master compound fearful and wonderful mixtures, and also had access to his books. There is one standard work on medicine which every doctor must know thoroughly; it describes the symptoms of different diseases and the remedies; also it describes what are called the 'four elements'—the heart, gall, liver, and blood—of the human body. English doctors do not entertain a high opinion of this work. But how can they be entitled to form any at all when they have not given trial to any of the medicines mentioned therein? After a few years' apprenticeship, Hpo Khin was entrusted with an occasional 'case' by his busy master; and he achieved so much success that when the old man died, full of years and honour, he succeeded to his practice.

It must not be supposed that every Burmese doctor started in life with such advantages as did Sayah Hpo Khin. He was the son of respectable parents, and they insisted that he should be properly trained for the profession. If you are in a hurry to begin, you may buy the necessary books—they are few and inexpensive—lay in a stock of herbs, and call yourself a doctor without more ado. Your future will depend on luck. A neighbour may call you in to prescribe when no other medical man happens to be within reach. If you, of your book-knowledge, treat the case successfully, have no fear then for the future; your career is assured. On the other hand, if the patient grows worse under your care it does not much matter, as you can put the blame on the malady, and nobody is any the wiser. If you adopt this plan of teaching first and learning afterwards, it is a good plan to accompany a medical friend on his rounds and pick up practical knowledge in that way. The dealer in drugs very usually blossoms forth as a doctor after a few years' experience in compounding. Through making up frequent prescriptions he gains information, and then has only to learn the diseases for which they are appropriate. If his experiments upon confiding neighbours turn out successfully, well and good; if they don't—so much the worse for the confiding neighbour.

Sayah Hpo Khin has arrived at Moung Thway's, and is received by that gentleman's wife, who squats respectfully to answer his questions, and then spreads a clean mat for him beside the patient.

'Let me see,' says the learned man; 'it's so long since I had the pleasure of attending you that I have forgotten the date and hour of your birth.'

Moung Thway, of course, can give this information off-hand; but he imparts it in a low tone, because there are several people about, and it is unadvisable to make public the moment of your birth lest evil-disposed persons should work spells against you. He was born when there was light enough to see the veins in the hand on the eighth day of the waxing of the moon of Taboung, year 1218; it was a Friday.

'Good,' says the Sayah; 'now I can make the necessary calculation. Where is my calendar?'

He draws the brown bunch of palm-leaf slips from his *pasoh*, and therefrom ascertains that the patient was born when the planet Mars was in the ascendant. Mars rules the liver, and to-day is the patient's name-day to boot. So Moung Thway's liver must be out of order. A few questions evoke answers which confirm the assumption; Sayah Hpo Khin then looks at his patient's tongue, feels his pulse, and repeats some Pali rhymes which he has learned from his book. He does not understand them himself, nor does Moung Thway; but the book says that these particular rhymes are beneficial for disordered liver, and that is enough for any reasonable man.

'I shall prepare the medicine for you this evening at a propitious hour,' says the Sayah, 'and bring it to-morrow.'

Having said this, he puts his palm-leaf calendar back in the fold of his *pasoh*, and, folding his hands over his knees, gazes out into the street with an air of deep abstraction. Mah Noo takes advantage of his absent-mindedness to get a rupee out of the box and lay it on the floor, muttering the usual apologetic request to be allowed to honour him thus. Sayah Hpo Khin awakes to mundane things, picks up his rupee without a word, and takes his departure.

Following the principles inculcated by his revered master, Doctor Hpo Khin 'feels his way' with a gentle remedy. If this answers, he continues it; if not, he tries another and another, and yet more, until he finds something that does produce results; or, what is more likely to happen first, Moung Thway sends a polite message to say that he is much obliged for the attention bestowed upon him, and intends to try another practitioner. Theoretically when a doctor finds a case beyond his skill it is his duty to say so and cease attendance, leaving the patient to call in another medico; but this is not often done, human nature being much the same all over the world. It is, however, very usual for a doctor to bring a colleague with him to consult in a difficult case.

Doctor Hpo Khin is regarded with a good deal of awe as well as veneration. He keeps a ghost about the house—not a partner who does work for which he takes credit, you understand, but the spirit of a person deceased which he has charmed from a new grave in the burying-ground, and which he entertains as a sort of watch-dog. Selecting a propitious hour on a suitable night, he went to the graveyard, taking a bit of magic wax and also a little boiled rice and some water, which he offered at the new grave to symbolise the hospitality he was prepared to offer the ghost of the occupant. The spirit, thinking no doubt that the doctor's premises, dark and redolent of mysterious drugs though they are, compared favourably with its present abode, accepted the offer, and, in return for some rice and water daily, protects his dwelling and all it contains from the pryings of the curious. Hence the doctor can leave his house for the whole day without misgivings, for the boldest thief would not venture to place foot on the lowest step of the flight that leads up to his veranda. I have never met any one who has seen the doctor's ghost, but nearly everybody to whom I have addressed inquiries knows somebody who is well acquainted with Somebody Else who has. That Somebody Else has never been found, to my knowledge; and as his confession that he had seen the ghost would involve the assumption that the ghost had had reason to anticipate intentions on its patron's property, I do not think that Somebody Else is likely to be discovered by mere inquiry. From all I can gather, however, the doctor's ghost is really a demon. There are awful whispers of huge, hairy, brown hands, each the size of a man's body, having been seen by Somebody Else; and it is very generally understood that any one who fell into those hands in the doctor's absence would be torn to pieces in a moment. The Sayah himself is reticent on the subject; he knows very well that the imagination of the wicked transcends a hundredfold his own descriptive power; and besides, it would not be etiquette to refer to a domesticated demon.

If Moung Thway finds that medicines do him no good, he will turn his back on Sayah Hpo Khin and the whole brotherhood of drug-doctors (*Baindaw sayahs*) and call in one of the fraternity who seek to achieve cures by an astrologically regulated system of diet—the *net khat sayah*, or 'asterism-doctor.' Western science has not yet discovered how potent is the influence of the stars upon the human body; but the laws of their operation have been systematised in the East for many centuries, and the diet-doctors in Burma do a large business. This practitioner's knowledge is of an order very different from that acquired by his brother-medico the druggist. The basis of his education is elementary astronomy; he knows—or ought to know—the twenty-seven asterisms, and is acquainted with the methods of calculating at any time the situation of each asterism in its relation to the moon. When he has mastered this branch of learning he devotes his attention to the matter of food. For medical purposes every article of food is classified in one of seven lists to correspond with the days of the week (Wednesday, sometimes reckoned as two days, being here counted as one). In practice, the day of the week on which the patient was born is the basis of operations, and the treatment is regulated by the influence of the stars upon these various classes of food, certain planets and asterisms 'governing' certain comestibles. It is to be noted that the date and hour of the patient's birth is the only personal factor taken into account by the diet-doctor; the nature of the disease is not considered at all. Broadly speaking, the principle is to change the regimen at the new and full moon. Thus, Moung Thway, now the moon is waxing, may be restricted (apart from his rice, which is never prohibited) to mangoes, bamboo shoots, and pumpkins; he will be fed on these until the moon reaches its full, when the dietary will be abruptly changed to perhaps dried fish, pine-apples, and vegetable curries. The methods of the asterism-doctor are considered extremely heroic, and this practitioner is only called in after a succession of druggists have made a series of unsuccessful experiments on the patient. The condition of the sick man, whose interior has been the sport of numerous weird and nauseous compounds, can hardly be encouraging to the diet-doctor, who is the last resort.

The Burmese say that 'dieting' either kills or cures; they are probably right. It is fair to say that cases of recovery are recorded; the Burman is often a man of iron constitution.

Neither the druggist nor the dietist has the most elementary knowledge of surgery; the only man I ever heard of among the Burmese who could set a broken limb was a priest who lived in Maulmain, and who died some seven or eight years ago. The Hpoongyee Boh was famed for his skill as a bone-setter all over the province, and his patients were legion; his *kyoung*, or monastery, was always surrounded by a crowd; and, had his vows permitted him to take money, he would have amassed a fortune, respectable measured even by European standards. The Buddhist priest, however, may not even touch money with his fingers (I have known an unregenerate vessel ask for a rupee, and take it carefully with the corner of his robe in order to comply with the letter of the law: but let that pass), and the Hpoongyee Boh reaped only a harvest of gifts in the shape of carpets, yellow silk robes, fine mats, pillows, and other goods, which he freely distributed among his brethren. He was a good priest as well as a capable bone-setter, and his name is held in undying respect throughout the country.

Although the Burman who has once learned the good effects of English medicine will travel many days' journey and grudge neither trouble nor money to procure it, he shrinks, if he happen to meet with an accident, from entrusting himself to the hands of an English surgeon. The reason for this is discoverable in the Burmese dislike for mutilated persons, and the consequent fear of the patient lest his injured arm or leg should be amputated. I have never discussed this curiously strong antipathy with a Burman, but think it may be due to the belief that misfortunes in this life are the result of evil-doing in a former existence; and the loss of a limb or an arm among slightly-clad people is necessarily a staring advertisement of the fruits of past misdeeds which do nothing to commend you to the regard of your friends in your present life.

The Burmese pharmacopœia as a whole is a subject for laughter and tears; but there is no gainsaying the fact that it includes a few medicines for such diseases as jungle-fever and dysentery which, if used by the light of common-sense and not by that of astrological calculation, are productive of excellent results. I have heard an English M.D. speak highly of one simple decoction prepared by a Burmese druggist for use in cases of dysentery. It was, if I remember rightly, made from the thick rind of the mangosteen, and my medical friend had found it sufficiently efficacious to recommend in his own practice. However deplorable may be the character of Burmese internal treatment, we find more than a little skill displayed in dealing with wounds, sores, and other external troubles. I recall a case in which an English-speaking Burman, much above the average in intelligence and education, roused the ire of his employers by asking for a month's leave to be treated by a Maulmain doctor. The man was suffering from badly inflamed eyes, and the treatment given him for some two months as an out-patient at the Rangoon Hospital had produced no beneficial effect. He was offered leave to Calcutta that he might place himself in the competent hands of a specialist there, and earnestly advised not to trust his eyes to a 'native quack.' He was not to be moved, however, and eventually got his own way. In five weeks he was back at his desk, without his green shade and with his eyes completely cured. It is worth adding that he wore tinted glasses for six months by the advice of that Maulmain drug-doctor, who must have been a man of some breadth of mind as well as a clever herbalist. Much skill is often shown in the treatment of the obstinate boils and ulcers to which Europeans are naturally more liable than natives of the country. I have never known a pure European seek the advice of a Burmese druggist for such; but the half-caste does so frequently, and a wharf 'tally clerk' once told me he would go to nobody else when he suffered thus. It is due to him to say that his confidence was justified by results, even if the drug-doctor *did* begin the diagnosis by inquiring the date and hour of his birth. Maternal influence and nominal fees are no doubt the predisposing causes of the poor half-caste's preference for native advice in the first instance.

AUTUMN.

Withering leaves on the garden walk,
Russet and gold and red;
The roses dead on the trellised wall,
The flowers in the border dead.

High to the western heaven the Beech,
One glory of crimson light;
Dying, too, as a hero dies
On a well-won field of fight.

Rich was his year, the awakening Prime,
The time of the bud, the flower,
The myriad lives in his lustrous leaves,
The song-bird and his bower.

Happy for all the spring-time gave,
And all from the summer won,
Awaiting the wintry death, he looks
Afar to the shining sun.

Thus would I, when my winter comes,
And all my summer is done,
Rejoice for the gladness of bygone days,
Rejoice for the glory of life, and gaze
Afar to the shining Sun.

T. P. Johnston.

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ROYALTIES I HAVE SEEN.

By T. H. S. ESCOTT, Author of *Personal Forces of the Period*, &c.

THE question whether he had ever met Prince Bismarck, once addressed by the present writer to the late Lord Granville, received from that statesman an answer suggestive of an interesting rather than an important scene in the Queen's private life abroad. Lord Granville seems only once to have met the Iron Chancellor of Germany; then only for a few minutes, and almost by accident. The erewhile Foreign Secretary was in attendance on Her Majesty during one of her German visits, and waiting her appearance in a garden fringed by a dense shrubbery. To him entered the Prussian diplomatist, then, of course, known only as a rising official, and with all his great career before him. The conversation between the two was cut short by the English monosyllable 'Sharp!' ringing through the air. That, it seems, is the slang word indicating the approach of the royal lady. Herr von Bismarck heard the cry, knew its official significance—in Lord Granville's words describing the scene with humorous simplicity—'took one dive into the shrubbery as if into a lake, and so vanished from my view for ever.' Before that disappearance Bismarck had summed up to the British diplomatist his impressions of the Prince Consort's character in the words: 'The most remarkable combination of an entire absence of self-consciousness with personal dignity and intellectual power that I have ever seen among those born in the purple.' Prince Albert died while the present writer was finishing his first term at Oxford. One's earlier reminiscences of that particular royalty who did more than any other individual of his day to educate English taste, as well as to affect the whole ordering of English life, must be rather of an impersonal sort. They were, indeed, of the sort which might have been conveyed by the small cartoons and the underlying legends in *Punch;* they therefore belong to most Englishmen old enough to recall the youth of the Prince of Wales. One heard much of the Prince Consort's punctilious insistence on all details of Court etiquette, be the occasion a levee at St James's, a visit to the opera, or an investiture of knighthood at Windsor. Most of the anecdotes, whose name was legion, illustrating this supposed attribute were probably apocryphal; they need not be revived, especially in a periodical published in the capital of the country where the real Prince Consort was perhaps better known than he ever became south of the Tweed.

The earliest, if not the only, recollection of the husband of the Queen now occurring to me illustrates so aptly one portion of the estimate of him formed by Bismarck, and tends to correct so many misconceptions, that it is worth giving here. The Prince Consort's services to Court economy and the better keeping up of the Court establishment are familiar to all who care to know them from Sir Theodore Martin's biography. Less, or rather nothing, has yet been written about the personal interest taken by the Prince Consort in reorganising the western heritage of his eldest son; in improving the collection of the revenues or the administration of the Stannaries Courts of the Duchy of Cornwall. While these improvements were being planned and carried out during the late fifties and the early sixties it was the lot of this writer to be passing his young days in the extreme west of England. Than his old friend, the late Henry Sewell Stokes, no one was a better judge of administrative ability or knew practically more of the working of the local judicature courts within the province giving a title to the Queen's eldest son. Even the official chronicle of the movements of the Prince Consort would be searched in vain for a record of the visits he paid to the west during several years, and especially about the time when the Prince of Wales was within sight of his majority. On these occasions the Queen's husband travelled with very

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little state. He seemed often to have with him no one but a private secretary and a body-servant. During such a visit as this the Prince had made an excursion, certainly with only one of his suite, to the neighbourhood of Torquay. Within a few miles of that place is the ruined Abbey of Berry Pomeroy, actually in or very near to the rich pasture grounds watered by the prettiest of western streams, the river Dart. In the days now spoken of the whole of this region was dotted by small farms, the farmhouse itself being very often a mere cottage, and the farmer being a labourer as well. The production of the thick clotted cream called on one side of the Tamar, Devonshire, and on the other side Cornish, was and is among the native industries of these parts. The mode of preparation is the heating of the unskimmed milk in a broad and moderately deep pan over a wood fire on the hearth. The Prince Consort would seem to have watched, as he watched everything, this process in the farmhouses between Mount's Bay and Land's End, where his son's property chiefly lay. Strolling now near the abbey ruins just mentioned, the Prince passed a cottage farm, whose door was open, and on whose hearth was the clotted cream apparatus already named. It was in charge of a very small child, who could scarcely support the ladle with which she had presently to skim the contents of the very big pan. Visibly perplexed at the domestic task set her, the infant—for she was little more—was about to give it up in tears of despair, when she heard a kind voice, as of some one approaching her: 'Little girl, I understand all this, and I will help you.' It was the husband of the Queen, who had quietly entered, and who straightway began to show more practical knowledge of this hearthside business than had been displayed by another Anglo-Saxon royalty some centuries earlier, the King Alfred who did not properly tend in the Athelney cottage the baking of the historic cakes.

This aptitude for the practical mastering of the details of any business, great or small, public or private, amounting with the Prince Consort to genius, has notoriously descended from father to son. A single instance, under conditions very different from those just named, of the same sort of faculty as possessed and exercised by the Prince of Wales may be now given. During the earlier eighties, in the monthly periodical for which I was then responsible, Professor R. C. Jebb, to-day M.P. for Cambridge University, had advocated a scheme for the establishment of an English School of Hellenic Studies at Athens, such as the United States, France, and Germany had for some time possessed. If such an article were to lead to anything, it was necessary to have some sort of assurance of the practicability of the project. The minute and almost affectionate interest taken, for family reasons, by the Heir-apparent in all sorts of Hellenic enterprises seemed likely, if it could be secured, to ensure the success of the scheme. The Prince of Wales was warmly predisposed in favour of the plan. 'Let me,' he said, 'ascertain what I should like to know of local feeling in Athens on the matter; we will then, if you please, call a meeting at Marlborough House.'

Obviously this was a subject out of the beaten track, diplomatic or international, and therefore not quite in the Prince's normal line. Within a week of the notion being first submitted to him he had read up the subject so thoroughly as to be able to pass an examination in it at the hands of an expert even such as Professor Jebb. The steps by which foreign schools of studies at Athens had been formed; whatever related to their revenues or their management; the disposition towards the enterprise of Oxford, Cambridge, and of the learned bodies or individuals of London—all these things were exhaustively mastered by the Prince entirely by methods he himself had devised for his enlightenment. Shortly afterwards the meeting which the Prince had called was held in that room of his house employed for such purposes. Having taken up the matter warmly, he had found means of communicating with all the most distinguished men whose names as proper to be invited had been submitted to him by Professor Jebb and myself. The result was that an actual and a potential Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone and Lord Salisbury, found themselves seated side by side. The Foreign Office in London was represented by Lord Granville, who then presided over it; and our diplomatic body by Lord Dufferin, then on furlough in England. The presence of that accomplished man was associated with an agreeably humorous incident in the proceedings. After the Prince of Wales, Mr Jebb, if I recollect rightly, Lord Reay, as the representative of cosmopolitan culture, and one of the house of Rothschild, which had subscribed liberally to the movement, had from different aspects exhausted the subject in the best of unpublished speeches I ever heard, there came a lull in the proceedings. Presently a sheet of foolscap paper was circulated among the company. On this it seemed to be expected, and as was supposed by royal order, that each of those present should sign his name. No one doubted that in doing so he was presenting his autograph to his future sovereign. A pleasant smile played upon the face of Lord Dufferin throughout this little episode. When the paper reached him, instead of writing his own name, having satisfied himself with the completeness of the list, he calmly put it into his pocket-book, then rose to say a few words on the possible advantages to diplomatic relations of that Athens school whose success was now assured. 'The fact is,' as he explained at the time to a friend, 'my daughter collects autographs. I really thought this was too good an opportunity to be lost.' His lordship had indeed made a most

brilliant bag; the Heir-apparent, having been let into the secret, completed the triumph of the diplomatist by adding the 'Albert Edward' to the imposing list.

No better instances than those here chosen need be given of the combined industry, versatility, tact, and varied knowledge of the eldest son of the Queen. He had of course, as princes always will have, every opportunity for mastering the facts; but most of those facts must have been new to him when he first took them in hand. He had not previously displayed any of those archæological tastes which his brother the Duke of Albany had shown; nor had the Prince in his speeches merely reproduced the substance of Professor Jebbs's instructive and brilliant paper. The Prince's details about the work of other nations now to be emulated by England were not only most pertinent, but absolutely fresh and entirely his own. Some years before this the late Sir Philip Cunliffe Owen, who had worked with and under the Prince in every sort of way, had said to me: 'If His Royal Highness takes up any subject, no matter what it be, he will carry it through, doing the work as admirably as it can be done. You need tell him nothing; he knows where to go for every fact, figure, and person; if he wants anything, you will hear at just the right moment. But all this is conditional on one thing. The Prince of Wales likes a free hand, and to do things properly he must be allowed to do them in his own way. But when he has promised to see a thing through, you may with entire confidence leave it in his own hands, knowing that the way he chooses will certainly be the best.' No better commentary on the wise truth of the strenuous, tactful, and kindly man who said these words, and who so long and so well carried on the work of Sir Henry Cole at South Kensington, could be supplied than is given by the foregoing incident.

During the earliest childhood of this writer England was full of the praises of the splendid presence, the grand manner, the more than royal generosity of our future foe of Crimean days, the Czar Nicholas of Russia (Mr Gladstone and Mr Disraeli both in later years spoke of this prince as the handsomest man they had ever seen). Shortly before the great Exhibition of 1851 the memory of a visit he had paid to Windsor was fresh. The press and the public could not find praise warm enough for the beauty of the jewelled snuff-boxes and other gifts bestowed by him on every one who had come near him. The next occasion on which the imperial name was much mentioned in England arrived during the bitter winter of 1854–5; then it was that Tenniel's superb cartoon showed how 'General Février had turned traitor,' and in the death of the Emperor of All the Russias we in England saw an omen of the coming close of the Crimean war. On a bitter spring day, with nothing but the calendar to remind one of the season, a successor of the Czar Nicholas was awaited by a sorely tried crowd of sightseers at Gravesend. The Queen's second son had just married (1874) the Grand Duchess Alexandrovna, whose imperial father was to escort her to her new home. Everything on that bleak, bitter March day seemed to go wrong. The steamer was late; the arrangements for landing were very imperfect; the Czar was invisible to all but a few. Those who saw him can never forget the handsome but pale and worn face, with a settled expression almost of unhappiness, relieved only by a pathetic and softening smile, as, while the sun for a moment peeped out from a cold gray cloud, the mighty potentate, stooping down, directed a fond fatherly glance at his daughter.

The old Emperor William of Germany must recall to many who read these lines the figure, stately in extreme old age, of which only the white head was visible to strollers on Unter den Linden at Berlin. One of his windows opened on the famous promenade. From it Prince Bismarck's great master was seen by me, as by hundreds of others, every afternoon during the early eighties. One reminiscence rather more definite and personal of the monarch may be given. He was announced to pay a visit to Baden-Baden while I happened to be staying there in 1879. Shortly before his arrival he must have accomplished a feat in a railway carriage which a 'change artist' at a music hall might have envied. Only a few minutes before the train actually stopped I had, at a point on the line, seen him in the costume of an old gentleman *en voyage*. When the station was reached the Kaiser stepped forth on the platform blazing in a magnificent and bejewelled uniform. A little later on the same day His Majesty, once more in unofficial costume, was inspecting on foot the pretty things in the shops of the Baden Kursaal, rather suggestive, as they are, of a section of the Paris Palais Royal. Two peasants from the neighbouring Black Forest, evidently a young man and his sweetheart, wistfully eyed some little object, timidly asked its price, and on hearing it almost tearfully turned away. The grand and kind old Kaiser had noted it all. The peasant pair had just reached the exit from the enclosure, when one of the people of the shop came up to them, placed a packet in their hands with some such words, murmured low, as, 'By the will of the Kaiser.'

Of foreign royalties my impression is most vivid of the deadly pale, still youngish man, with a marvellously waxed moustache, whom I sometimes saw when, as a child in short frocks, I stayed with a relative in John Street, Mayfair. Once more only was I to behold this man on whose lip Europe had meanwhile so long trembled. It was in the September of 1870, after Sedan, when Napoleon III. was an exile at Chislehurst. At the moment now referred to he was

driving down King Street, St James's, no doubt on his way to the Army and Navy Club, of which he was once again made free; in that King Street, at No. 13, he had lodged in his early English days. As he passed he looked up, and read the blue plaque outside commemorating the fact. 'I suppose,' said a voice from the deferential crowd which had silently recognised the fallen Cæsar, 'he is coming to engage rooms at his old lodgings.'

I often had occasion to approach in England the late Emperor of Brazil, the most early rising and polyglot of the earth's sovereigns. While the then master of the place was absent this imperial student had appointed to visit Chatsworth. He reached the palace of the Peak soon after dawn, before the household was up, before perhaps all its members had quite settled to rest. The housekeeper, arriving on the scene, found a gentleman talking in a language she did not understand. Fortunately Sir James Lacaita, the great linguist and librarian, was in the house busy with the books. He quickly appeared, and addressed the visitor in French. The Emperor replied in Spanish, in which language Sir James continued. Italian was next employed; presently a particular *patois* of that tongue peculiar to a single district of Naples. It happened to be literally the mother-tongue of Sir James. Then came the inspection of the books. The distinguished cicerone still kept his identity dark. The Emperor assumed the savant to be the butler; he asked as he left the house: 'Do all the servants of the Duke of Devonshire have to pass an examination in languages before his Grace engages them?'

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER II.—A COMPACT.

WHO was Miss Lily? Jim Solus (whose proper name was Gaverick) had given young Hulme a promise that, when they were in the bush, he would tell that love-smitten youth all he knew about the girl. As this was out of the question now, we will, whilst she is nursing Hulme through his illness, and old Jim is patiently prospecting in the distant scrub, relate as much of the girl's history as may be essential to this story.

Some two years previously there lived in a southern suburb of London, near the town of Croydon, a widow of less than forty, whose husband, a clergyman, had died a year before. She had only one child, a youth of nineteen, who was at a school in London preparing for a Civil Service examination. The widow's means consisted of the interest of a sum of six thousand pounds, which her husband had left for her in the hands of two trustees, whom he had known well and fully trusted. These were a solicitor, named Mr Mark Revel, and a private-school master, named Warner. They paid her four per cent. on the money, so that the widow was tolerably comfortable.

One morning, a few weeks before the examination was to come off, the son received at his school the following telegram: 'Come home at once. I want you.—MOTHER.'

The boy flew home to his mother, whom he adored as some sons do adore mothers. The old woman who acted as general servant in the little house, and who had been with her mistress since the latter's marriage, looked, the young fellow thought, very lugubrious as she opened the door for him.

'Is mother in, Betty?' he asked; and then, struck by her looks, added: 'Is mother ill?'

'Not very well, Master Dicky.'

He darted into the sitting-room. His mother lay on a couch, with her face hidden in a cushion. One smooth cheek, which alone was visible, was very white. She seemed asleep, or unconscious of her son's entrance, until he quietly knelt down beside her and kissed the white cheek. Then she moved her head and looked at him with lightless eyes.

'Oh Dicky!' she said, 'I did not expect you so soon.'

'I started at once, mother. You are ill? Have you had the doctor?'

'I am ill, my poor boy,' she replied tremulously, 'but the doctor could do nothing for me.'

Her delicate fingers played for some moments in his hair, and then she said, 'Dicky, we are left penniless.'

'Mother!'

'Read those letters for yourself, Dicky. I received them both this morning.'

The colour rose, a deep angry red, to the young fellow's forehead as he glanced over the letters. He read these, not as they affected himself, but his mother. They were from the trustees, each, unknown to the other, written on board the same ship, and sent ashore to be posted at the same place—Plymouth.

The first he read was from the schoolmaster:

S.S. 'RAVENNA,' *March* 10.

DEAR MRS HULME,—With great pain I inform you of a discovery I have just made, that my co-trustee, Mr Revel, has been speculating with your money, and has apparently lost the whole of it. I only received the news here in a letter delivered to me from Plymouth post-office. I

recently signed transfers for Revel with a view to transferring your fund to another security, and in this way he got command of the money. I need hardly add that I wholly trusted him, even as your poor husband did. I am on my way as far as Madeira for my health, and when I return I will do what I can to put things right. Meantime I have thought it right to inform the police, in case Revel should try to leave England.—With deep regret and kind regards, yours very sincerely, DAVID WARNER.

This was the solicitor's letter, written the same day from the same ship:

DEAR MRS HULME,—I grieve to inform you that my co-trustee, Mr Warner, has absconded from England with your trust fund, which he appears to have realised by forging my name to a transfer. Having reason to believe that he has fled to South Africa, I have lost no time in starting in pursuit of him, in the hope that I may overtake and have him arrested before he has time to dissipate much of your little fortune. I will cable to you if I succeed.—With kindest wishes, yours faithfully,

MARK REVEL.

'The precious pair of scoundrels!' was all the comment the young fellow was able to make upon the foregoing epistles. Then he was silent for a while, until he perceived the deep suffering on his mother's face.

'Mother, mother dear,' he murmured, affectionately kissing her, and smoothing her soft hair with his hand, 'don't you trouble about the money. I think—Mr Perry is sure—I shall successfully pass the examination. After a while we shall be independent enough. Dear, dear mother! do not give way to this trouble.'

There was a dry sob in her throat. If she could have put her arm around her boy's neck and wept, it would have been well for her. But in truth her heart was broken. Delicate health had not left her enough physical strength to bear up against the blow. The shock killed her, for she was dead before evening. Heart disease it was called by the doctor. So it was.

Thus it came about that, at the age of nineteen, Dicky Hulme was left alone in the world. He passed his examination, it is true, urged to it by his teacher, but he had no heart for his work. He tired of it in a year or so, and emigrated.

Meanwhile the two worthies, so faithful to each other in rascality, arrived in Australia to speculate. They had most of the widow's money with them, fairly divided, and first tried their hand with mining shares in Melbourne. They found, however, that the 'Colonials' were pretty well able to take care of themselves in these speculative matters. From one place to another they moved, their funds growing less and less as they went, until at length they found themselves in Coolgardie, pretty hard-up for money, and on the lookout for any chance that offered of making more.

The girl called 'Miss Lily' by the miners was Warner's only child. He had taken her from school when leaving England, and kept her by him since. In the low water in which Warner and Revel found themselves at Coolgardie, it was imperatively necessary to compass some means of existence until they discovered a chance of making money—honestly or otherwise. Lily Warner was a handsome girl, and was obliged to become a barmaid. She had no difficulty in obtaining a place. Barmaids, as before stated, were paid high salaries, and the miners put them up to all the good things they knew. The work was very hard, to be sure, but it was the results that had to be considered. Besides her earnings, Lily—disgusted, as she naturally was, with the whole business—was able from time to time to give her father 'tips,' of which he made good use.

Such was Miss Lily's history. After all, her salary and 'tips' were far from commensurate with the desires of her father and his partner. They had now been some months in Coolgardie, and had achieved little or nothing. Neither knew anything practical concerning goldfields, and although they went on one prospecting expedition, nothing came of it.

One hot afternoon, about a month after the departure of Jim Solus, when the smells of Coolgardie were specially aggressive, and the dust was so thick that to cross Bayley Street was like adventuring in a dense fog on an unknown sea, Warner and Revel sat drinking together in a remote corner of the bar. It was almost too hot for talking, and the pair sipped their drink mostly in languid silence.

At last Revel remarked, 'I don't see Lily in the bar. Where is she?'

'Lying down, probably,' was the lazy reply.

'No. She is up with her patient, I'll bet. Don't you think, Warner, she has done enough of that?'

'Nonsense, man. Let the girl alone. Whenever a man is sick some of these girls go to nurse him. Why shouldn't Lily, as well as another? If I were to interfere it wouldn't add to our already considerable popularity in Coolgardie.'

There was an acidity in the last remark which indicated the amount of solid truth it contained.

'It would come to this, Mark,' said Warner, pursuing the congenial subject, 'that some fine evening there would be a round-up, and we should be invited to depart.'

Revel's sullen look admitted the force of the argument, and he inquired, 'Who is the greenhorn, anyway?'

'I'm sure I don't know. That young chap Jim Solus took a fancy to. Jim holds him dividing mate still.'

'Wonder if Jim's struck anything this time,' said Revel.

'Shouldn't be surprised if he did. He's gone into new ground, and Jim is not the man to do so without knowing what he is about.'

After this there was ten minutes' silence. They drank and smoked, and smoked and drank, and wiped their faces, and sighed with the heat.

'I'll tell you what, Warner,' said the younger man at last; 'we are doing no good loafing about here. Could we muster funds enough for a modest prospecting swag?'

'Why?'

'I would start and see what there is in that district Jim has gone to. If there is one good thing, you know there is every probability of another alongside of it. Hang it all, Warner! if we could get anything worth floating, we might clear out of this infernal place and face homewards again. Wouldn't a good, greasy London fog be refreshing after all this sun?'

'But do you think it would be quite safe for us to go home—just yet?'

'Pooh, man! Who could molest us? She is dead, poor soul, and her son is gone to the ends of the earth somewhere.'

'Well, about this expedition. Are you really ready to go?'

'If I had the swag I would be off to-morrow.'

'I must see Lily about money. She can obtain an advance. Of course, it will be quite understood that we are partners?'

'That's always understood, Warner. We'll put it on paper if you like.'

'I think it would be better, in case we strike anything really good. Just share and share alike; the thing will be very simple.'

'Quite simple,' said Revel; then, throwing away a stump of cigar and lighting a fresh one, he added after a pause: 'There's one other thing, Warner, I should like to be satisfied about. If we are successful—something tells me we shall be—I don't know why—but if we are, I should like a clear understanding with you about Lily. I want her.'

'I offered her to you at Adelaide, you know, and you wouldn't have her.'

'True, Warner,' answered the other, with a grin. 'You wanted to relieve yourself of her as an inconvenient burden, and I was obliged to decline her for the same reason. Without disrespect to Lily, it's best to do plain speaking. But if fortune smiles upon us, and we are able to return to London, things will be different.'

'Very different,' assented Warner lazily. 'But you needn't have brought the subject up, Mark. You don't want the agreement about Lily put on paper too, do you?'

'Well, no,' said the other, 'as long as the thing is understood.'

'It is quite understood, Mark. Let us have another drink. Who is that chap leaning against the door?'

'That's the Bishop of Charnwood's son.'

'He's very drunk.'

'He must be, because he is talking to himself in Greek. And there's Viscount Halemount at yonder table, bargaining with that teamster for a horse and cart. Those two will be pretty drunk before their bargain is concluded.'

A few days later Mark Revel was equipped with the necessary 'swag' by means of an advance of wages obtained by Lily Warner. He started from Coolgardie in the early morning, none knowing his direction or destination except his partner, Warner. For some hours he pursued an easterly route, as though he were making for what is called 'Hannan's Field,' in the vicinity of Kalgoorlie. But he turned to the northward, and kept on his way through the bush until he calculated he was on a line with the mining camp of 'Twenty-five Mile.' Here, as it was near sunset, he halted for the night. Turning his small country horse loose, he lit a fire and put on the 'billy' to make tea, and with this and 'damper' he made his supper; and then, sitting with his back against a gum-tree, he smoked for the best part of an hour.

With the first dawn he was up and prepared breakfast. In less than an hour he was again in motion. Now he was going eastward, or rather in a north-easterly direction, following the half-obliterated mark of wheels which he had discovered half-an-hour after starting.

'Jim's route,' he mentally remarked. 'I wonder how far he went.'

About three in the afternoon he came upon one of those ghastly sights which the terrible bush sometimes affords. First he met a country pony, struggling through the scrub and cropping what it could, yoked to a broken cart. Farther on, a condenser—that rude machine on which the miner depends for purifying somewhat imperfectly the brackish water found here and there in granite hollows—lay broken by the path, along with other contents of the cart.

'I say, Jim,' soliloquised Revel, as he contemplated these things, 'if that broken condenser was yours I'm sorry for you!'

Proceeding a distance of less than a quarter of a mile, Revel came upon the unfortunate miner lying in the bush, naked. Men in the last extremities of thirst are commonly impelled, by some insane motive, to divest themselves of all their clothing. And this was Jim Solus. Regarding him for a minute with curiosity rather than compassion, Revel glanced around for the man's clothes. They were close by, and from a small leather wallet attached to a belt he took an old map.

This he examined attentively. The district was very accurately marked upon it, and Revel quickly fixed the spot he now occupied. About five miles to the north-east the map bore a cross in lead-pencil.

'Ah!' said Revel, 'he has found something there. I will hurry on and see. It looks to be all over with Jim.'

With another brief glance at the dead or dying miner—it mattered nothing to Mark Revel which it was—he hastened forward, and, hot as it was, covered the five miles in little over an hour.

Here an anxious search followed. The place was covered with bush. The surface soil seemed to be all sand. No sign of water, of course, was visible anywhere. But here and there Revel saw, protruding through the sand, an outcrop of yellow quartz. He tramped a quarter of a mile in a circle before he discovered what he was in search of.

A triumphant 'Ha!' broke from him as he came upon the well-known mark of two shallow trenches at right angles to each other. Following the direction of one of the arms of the angle, he found, some distance away, another similar pair of trenches. Then, in due course, he discovered the third and fourth angles of the square making the miner's 'claim,' and at the corner of the last a post was sunk in the ground, with a piece of paper nailed to it, containing in rough hand-writing the following notification:

GOLDEN LILY CLAIM.

I, James Gaverick, of Coolgardie, have discovered and marked off this Claim, for which I intend forthwith to apply to the Warden for a Lease.

JAMES GAVERICK.

Dec. 10, 1895.

Without a moment's hesitation Revel tore a leaf from a pocket-book, and wrote a similar notification over his own name, merely altering the name from 'Golden Lily' to 'Revel's Find.' He tore poor Jim's paper from the post, and substituted his own. Then he made his arrangements to camp there for the night, after again examining the ground curiously, but vainly, for the indications of gold that made Jim mark the claim off.

It would hardly have done to go back to Coolgardie immediately. Revel had plenty of 'tucker' (as they call provisions), and had no need for hurry. He therefore spent a week in the bush, tramping about and examining the ground. But whatever in the way of gold the ground contained was a sealed book to him. He knew absolutely nothing of that elementary mineralogy which informs the ordinary miner's eye of the presence of the precious metal.

At the expiration of a week, having altered the date of his notification to the day of his departure, he started back to Coolgardie. Passing the spot where he had left the naked body of the poor miner, he was surprised to find no trace of it. The dingoes, he thought, or some other starving beasts, must have devoured it, even to the bones. Jim Solus was dead, or as good as dead, when Revel saw him, and no man in that stage ever got up again and walked. That was the end of Jim Solus—as it had been the end of many a miner on these desert fields.

The old condenser Revel passed again, and some scattered fragments of the miner's 'swag.' Turning off the track east of Twenty-five Mile, he retraced his former course as nearly as he could guess, and at length found himself on the Kalgoorlie trail. Late that night he reached Coolgardie, and greatly surprised Warner by walking in upon him.

'Back already! The same old luck, I suppose?'

'No; I've struck it this time, Warner—at least, I have marked off a promising claim, and we must apply for a lease at once. The thing is all luck.'

'I know it's luck. But ours has been so low that I thought it was never going to bob up again. See anything of Jim Solus?'

'No,' said Revel. 'I can't have hit the precise part of the country Jim is gone to. But I believe we have struck a good thing at last. Let me have something to eat and drink; I am hungry and fatigued.'

'The next question,' said Warner, 'will be to get money to keep the lease going until we can put it on the market. We must do it somehow, because if it is a good thing it would be ten thousand pities to sell it. Think what we can make out of it by floating a company in London! There's the mining engineers to report on it, too. We must think it over, Mark.'

'We can pay the engineers when we float the company—pay them with shares, I mean. I know two or three fellows who will do the job for us.'

'I wonder there's no news of Jim Solus.'

'Hang Jim Solus!' said Revel angrily. 'What have we got to do with him?'

The lease of the new mine, 'Revel's Find,' was obtained in due course, and the ground marked off by the government surveyor. Money was obtained by some means, and men put to work on the lease to comply with the labour regulations. Revel got the three 'experts' he had spoken of to sober up and go out to examine and report upon the mine. Their reports were most favourable; 'Revel's Find' was emphatically pronounced by these authorities to be one of the richest properties in the colony. The famous Greenhill Lode undoubtedly ran through it from north-east to south-west.

A STRANGE TONGUE.

JIM KEE, the cook on the ranch here on Vancouver Island, is a Chinaman, and naturally he speaks Chinese. We know he is speaking his own language when he hurls at other Chinese who may be working on the place a flood of linguistic brickbats. No master of hounds (in the old days) or begrimed bargee ever had such a vocabulary of hard, angular, knubbly, three-cornered words as ordinary Chinese words are. If he had, no repartee would have stood against them, and the 'cussee' (or person addressed) would have no alternative but to sink into the nearest available oblivion. But Jim Kee also speaks Pidgin-English. By the way, 'pidgin' is the nearest approach a Chinaman can get to 'business,' and ought not to be spelt, as it often is, 'pigeon.' Well, Jim uses his best Pidgin-English, highly spiced with American slang from over the border, while he addresses us; and if you give him the chance, he will enter into minute details of Chinese manners, customs, and history, all more or less unintelligible by reason of mixed metaphor and the intricacies of the language. One story he tells us is that the Chinese emperor is not a very good man—why we cannot make out—and that 'bimeby he [they] mak-um one other man king.' This, being tainted with conspiracy and all sorts of spicy ideas, interests us, and we ask when the coming overthrow of the monarch may be expected. 'Oh,' says Jim, 'in 'bout three hunnerd year!' Affairs move slowly in China. But, in addition to Jim, we have our Indian neighbours, and often they come up from their reserve close by to buy apples or to sell fish. We can buy a ten-pound salmon from them for a shilling. Then the fun begins. Jim is the guardian of the apple-store, and he produces a small basketful of apples for a 'quarter' (quarter of a dollar). Sometimes the Indians are satisfied, sometimes they are not; and when they are not the fun begins. They speak to us in Chinook; they speak to each other in the dialect of their own tribe. Jim speaks English (his variety thereof), tries Chinook, and when excited, and the bargain is reaching its highest pitch, his feelings become too much for him, and he flies off into Chinese. Then the Indians quail, and take their apples and depart. Therefore there is babel on this coast, but it is nothing now to what it was when the first white men reached it.

In that vast district lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, from San Francisco Bay nearly up to Alaska, of which a large part was then generally known as Oregon—a term now applied to one of the states of America lying between California and Washington—dwelt many tribes of Indians, all of the same race, but speaking no less than twelve absolutely distinct languages; and these languages were again divided up into dialects, many of them so different as to render the speakers of one quite unintelligible to their neighbours on the other side of a range of hills who spoke another. History relates that this ignorance of each other's tongue led to much fighting, and was frequently the cause of the fierce intertribal wars that were then almost continuously waging. The difficulty of the white man who arrived to 'trade' may be easily imagined. A sailor dealing with natives soon picks up a few of the simplest words, and rapidly makes progress; but his powers are sorely taxed when he sails out of the first river he strikes and into the next, thirty miles off, and finds that the natives there do not understand the words he picked up at his first point of arrival. This difficulty so hampered the early traders that a common language, a Volapük, was started. And this common lingo is now almost a complete language, and is spoken by natives all over that huge country which used to be known as Oregon, and is called the 'Chinook Jargon,' or 'Oregon Trade Language.'

This jargon was not made to order and 'taught in the schools,' but gradually grew up as necessities arose, until now at length it has arrived at the dignity of having a dictionary printed all to itself, and out of its precocity it has produced a framework which may some day arrive at the dignity of a grammar. The course of its growth is interesting.

Nootka Sound, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, was the haven to which most ships trading to this coast laid their courses, and here the jargon was cradled. And we find, as might be expected, that many of its most useful words are culled from the tribe that dwelt in that wild and wet district—such as *kloshe*, 'good;' *hyas* and *tenas*, 'large' and 'small;' *kumtuks*, 'to understand;' *mahkook*, 'to trade;' and *wawa*, 'to talk'—these being just the kind of words that would be wanted at first. By degrees other words—words that had a character of their own—from other tribes were added. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that the words added from time to time were such as could be pronounced by Europeans. The Indian languages are uncouth and unpronounceable to any one except, perhaps, a Welshman. The names of many articles of European make which came in the way of trade, and for which there could clearly be no native word, were adopted either whole or in such form as to fit the curves of a native mouth. 'Bed' and 'boat' were easy, but 'cold' becomes *cole*, 'dry' *dly;* and that very difficult word, 'handkerchief,' the gaudy red or yellow one so much prized by the dusky beauties, had to get itself understood as *hakatshum*, a name not altogether unlike that applied to the same article by Euro-

peans of tender age. The historical date of the origin of the language is shown by the word for 'Englishman,' *kintshautsh man*, which, being done into English, is 'King George man,' and distinguishes us from our Yankee cousin, who, whether he hailed from north or south or east or west of his vast territory, is always known as a *Boston man*. Meanwhile another element crept in. Across the great prairies of Manitoba and the North-west, over the peaks and through the gorges of the Rockies, came the trapper of the Hudson Bay Company, the French-Canadian voyageur, a man accustomed to deal with Indians; and his individuality is strongly impressed into the jargon, which adopted his words with the article attached. Thus, under the letter L in the Chinook vocabulary we find that nearly all the words are French: *lassiet*, 'a plate;' *lashase*, 'chair;' *lemahto*, 'hammer;' *leplet* (*le prêtre*), 'priest.' *Calipeen*, 'a rifle,' and *Siwash*, 'Indian,' are from the French *carabine* and *sauvage*. The imitation of sounds, almost an Indian's chief instinct, has produced a number of words—*tintin*, 'a bell;' *tiktik*, 'a watch;' and, most curious of all, *tumtum*, 'the heart' (not that part of the human anatomy subject to periodical pains during childhood, which it might be expected to mean). The word has also come to mean to think or to wish: *Nica tumtum chako hyu snass*—'It is my heart [I think] that a big rain is coming.' The origin of many of the words is unknown, and these were probably the result of some passing event; but many grew from very strange causes. *Pelton* means 'a fool,' and is also an adjective, 'foolish,' and it had its origin in this way: In the very early days there was a half-witted man named Pelton, who did very strange things, living at a settlement near the mouth of the Columbia River, and, as he was well known, any strange conduct on the part of any one came to be reported as 'All the same Pelton.' In spite of his lack of wit, Mr Pelton is probably the only one of that settlement whose name will be handed down to posterity. In 1804 an expedition under two well-known travellers, Messrs Lewis and Clarke, visited the coast, and the salutation, 'Clarke, how are you?' is now the familiar *Clahoiya?*—'How do you do?'

From its earliest beginnings the jargon was found to be so useful that it spread and grew very rapidly. The Columbia River soon became a large centre of trade, and consequently we find many of the words, and also the name of the jargon itself, derived from the tribe of Chinook Indians who dwelt in that district.

In 1863 a dictionary of the jargon by Mr George Gibbs was published by the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, containing about 500 words, classified as follows: Chinook, 221; French, 94; English, 67; Salish, 39; Nootka, 24; the rest being obscure, unknown, or derived from imitation. It is a little strange that there is not one Russian word to be found.

As mentioned before, the jargon has practically no grammar, and should therefore highly commend itself to the schoolboy. Its nouns have no declension, its adjectives no gender, and its verbs no moods or declensions. At the same time custom is forming idioms, and out of idioms may come grammar. It may appear at first sight that it would be almost impossible to express any even slightly complicated thought in a language containing so few words. But it must be remembered that the method of talking amongst savage races is always highly figurative, and thus a few words may in various combinations mean many things. There is no word for the Deity, but *Saghalie Tyee*, 'the Chief on high,' is used instead. *Sitkum sun*, literally 'half day,' means 'twelve o'clock.' It may amuse speculative ethnologists to ponder over what may come of this rudiment of a language in the future. At present it is spoken continually over, say, two thousand miles of coast, and though it is a rudiment, it is growing. New words are creeping in, and fresh races are learning to speak it. Is it not true that out of a somewhat similar babel our beautiful and expressive English language has grown?

VINDICATION.

PART II.

AND now here, I said to myself, was the end of all; I had come to this at last, and my quest could go no farther. If Sir Francis Prestyn had not lain in this room, so easy of escape, there had been none other so well suited to his purpose. I looked round it, having the full courage of my conviction. Yet what was there to find?

It was a grim, oblong room, the oaken walls of it black with age; the shadows crowding in its corners so ghostly that I had a touch less of contempt for those in the hostelry. It would be deemed by any country-folk a dismal place, even the fire and lights serving but to heighten its melancholy. There hung no picture of any sort on its walls; an ancient mirror on a table was framed in oak; and the room and the bed, with its heavy curtains, moth-eaten with age, bearing coldly upon it the look of a hearse, began to give me a creeping chill. Yet I could have sworn even then, to my very soul, I dreaded neither man nor spectre.

And now I took no further look at it, for what I had to do for the next few hours was to wait;

and what, indeed, I was to do after that had begun to resolve itself into a vague melancholy and despair. But I thought of one thing at a time, after the manner of men of my temperament; and knowing I was well provided with candles and fuel, and that they were all agog in the inn, and would be till some time past midnight—for at that hour they would account me visited by a spectre—I sat down to tire out their patience.

After years, what were a few extra hours? Yet the time went slowly. There were prying eyes about me, I knew, seeking each chink in the door, and I could have sworn that two or three listened with bated breath for every sound, though I had forewarned them I should not put the lights out. I caught the sound of their feet sometimes, picturing them to myself clutching each other's hands, starting at every sound, huddling together at every movement. But I did not hear even that at last, so taken up was I with the thought of Francis Prestyn.

The fire, once replenished, had begun to burn low again; but as the night wore on the wildness of the gale seemed rather to increase. It was a very hurricane, a wind fit for the tropics. The room was full of unimaginable noises as the wind swept through it, raving in the chimney as the clock neared midnight.

I remembered that the whole company of them would be outside my door; a faint voice, quickly stifled, of some woman came to my ears for a moment. Yet the knowledge that they were there scarcely touched me. For my thoughts were full of my kinsman—my soul seemed one with his—and I heard the clock strike twelve like one in a dream.

I saw him, in my mind's eye, in this room—where, I had now no doubt, he had lain—pacing the floor with restless feet, looking into the drowsy fire. I saw him in this solitary place on this wild night, sitting as I was doing, nursing his chin on one hand, looking into the glow with dreaming eyes.

How I came to be assured of it I know not, yet it seemed to me I was looking into his very soul, and knew it ardent and eager, full of a great hopefulness. He had the treasure safe—even here, in the room with him—and who knew what the future might bring forth? That by his help, and of his aid, the king might come to his own again? For it was but a matter of time now; a perilous journey borne, the riches given up to the rightful owner.

He was a man of comely looks—I knew it from the portrait—hawk-featured, and with a ruddy colour. It seemed as if I could look upon him, and see his eyes darken and burn. I read the thought that was in his mind; it was something to have lived for this hour.

An ember fell out of the grate and I wakened from my dream. It was long past midnight. And I was alone—at the end of my quest—in Francis Prestyn's room. And what I had looked upon, almost with my waking eyes, was but dream and fancy.

I went to the door and listened. There was no footstep stirring. Those in the inn accounted me asleep at last, undisturbed by spectre or by the fear of one, even deeming me a man too learned, it might be, to have room for fancy. And now I went so far as to unbolt the door; but this room I had chosen being at a distance from the others, and the unwonted vigil having, no doubt, wearied each one of them, I did not hear so much as a breath that I could construe into nearness of human creature. The wind had made pause for a moment; I heard it rise again, gathering force for another blast that should crack the tree-tops, as I slid the bolt into its place.

I knew it to be nothing but the wind, that burst out again in all its fury as I turned, leaning my back against the door, rattling the hinges of it as if an enemy were outside, set upon capturing me. Yet as I looked something smote strangely on my heart—as if a hand had touched me there.

It was not the wind I was thinking of; and I knew that it was the fire, slowly dying, and the candles which had burned low, that filled the room with strange shadows. I heard the sound of the tempest outside, and knew that the noises I heard were but part of it. But it was beginning to be borne in upon me that there was some one in the room besides myself.

My eyes were fixed on one corner, and yet I saw nothing but long, flickering shadows. A weaker fancy might have construed a hundred of them into spectres, but I knew them for what they were. If something lurked in that sombre place, it was in the very blackness of it, close to the wall; there might even be a sliding panel—so it flashed through my brain in a second's space. I became suddenly aware, too, of the loneliness in which I stood in the house, a solitariness I had desired. There might be one behind, with intent to rob and murder, who had drawn the panel back for a moment and looked out; and, so doing, in some inexplicable way I had divined his presence.

I had not come unarmed. My hand went to my breast. I walked—carelessly, to all appearance—to the place where the taller candle burned, and then, lifting it above my head, with a sudden movement flung the light into the corner.

There was nothing to be seen. Oaken panelling, an empty space—dismal enough, ghostly too, to all seeming—black boards, black walls; but neither face nor form there.

Another thought sped to my brain like lightning. I took the candle into the place, setting it on a chair, and tried each panel for some distance on either side, pressing my fingers along the edges, searching everywhere for a secret spring. I must have spent full twenty minutes taking each one separately. There was no movement in any. The

knowledge of my womanishness, the conviction that I had fancied something in a space where there was nothing but bare boards, filled me, alone though I was, with a sense of shame. I had come hither to seek for that which it had been the dream of my life my kinsman had hidden, and I had wasted half-an-hour looking for an imagined murderer.

Yet there had been no waste of time. I remembered that when I had made up the fire and lighted another candle, and sitting down, with my back to the fireplace this time, let my gaze run over the room. I had come hither to search —to see if, on floor or wall, in hole or corner, was any sign of buried treasure.

I held the candle high, walking from corner to corner and looking closely at all—a partly-broken chest, shaped like a bureau, taking my fancy most. I saw that one drawer had the bottom of it broken away; another stuck fast, and took much time and patience; but I had them all out at last. And when the framework was so laid bare, I saw no room for any secret drawer—a hope having possessed me all the time that I might find some letter.

There was nothing there. I turned the framework of it over and over, my fingers growing black with dust. Even when I meant to leave it I went back again, the curious shape of it having taken my fancy—scrutinising each inch for marks wrought in the wood—for the old fever of search was beginning to rise in my veins.

I would look at it once more; after that the flooring, which last I had had more hope of before I came than of aught else in the room. I took up each drawer, and turned it over once again for sign of any scratch that I could interpret into a word, when, happening to glance once more towards that corner where I had first imagined some presence, the same possession fell on me.

It was all in shadow now. The candle was at some distance, but I remembered I had searched it before, and knew the folly of my own imagining, which now had grown so strong that I could only look towards the place with riveted eyes, and could have sworn, had I not found my fancy play me false before, that some one stood there. Without waiting for the candle this time, I found courage enough to walk straight to the place. I touched empty air.

But now I was too full of unrest, too passionate with a kind of despair which kept me constantly alert, to pause even for wonderment at my own folly, dismissing it with the thought that it was a strange thing. I had never known myself guilty of such imaginings before; nor would I let them tempt me to search the panels again, assured already that there was nothing there, for the wind might go down presently and every sound be heard. The hours were advancing and I had not yet searched the floor, the uneven boards of which had long been magnets to draw me.

I began to look at each, taking the light in my hand, kneeling down the better to do so, and beginning at one end of the room. My old fancies were at play, for in many places I found pieces loose and easily detached, and set to work—having tools with me of many kinds—to raise any that looked to my eyes as if they had once been moved. I spent much time on this, often waiting for a gust of wind to drown some sound, and taking board by board. I laid another back with a certain dogged and grim resolution I had found serviceable when I had had sword in hand. I was looking at every nail now, examining each mark; the wind was raging furiously, and I had grown less cautious of the sounds I made. And I was suddenly conscious, and now for the third time, of that strange contraction of the heart.

There was Something in the room. I could have taken oath of it this time, though I had my back that way—and in the same corner where I had searched at first.

And now, whether robber or murderer I could not say. That I was watched I had this time no shadow of a doubt, for the very soul of me was aware of it. And my blood ran cold with a sort of shiver I had never known—not even when Death had stared at me. I dashed forward so suddenly and fiercely that I thought it scarce possible he could regain his secret hiding-place. And yet, when I touched no one—when I flung the light there—when I stood in the very place where he had been, gazing about me, listening, all ears, I could hear nothing but the sound of the wind.

But now my blood had begun to burn—it had passed from frost to fire; and there was nothing else in the room to me, and I would wrest the secret of that corner if I lay in that house a month. I began to go over the panels again, pressing where I had done before, sliding my fingers along the edge of each, pressing even as I slid, that not one inch of the wood might escape me. It was of little moment to me in that mood that I had already tried all these. My fingers were upon the third panel when a sudden rush of blood went to my heart. Something moved.

My right hand went to my breast; my teeth clenched. With the left hand I pressed where the right one had been a moment ago. The panel was sliding.

I strained to pierce the darkness, listening for the first step forward of the murderer, the sound of his breathing. I gazed, fascinated, till the whole narrow doorway had rolled back, waiting for a step. None came. With my face to the place, I walked backward till I was able to take the candle in my hand. Then I advanced, still watching, till I stood at the very opening, and looked down a narrow flight of steps, woven over with cobwebs, thick with dust, that looked as if no foot had disturbed it for centuries.

AT A FRENCH BULL-FIGHT.

THERE is a common misquotation of a well-known text, that 'money is the root of all evil.' And if you mean by 'money' the removal of all necessity to work, the saying is really more true in its perverted than in its original form. For, at any rate, as applied to nations, the '*love* of money,' necessitating constant labour and perpetually stimulating inventive skill, produces, on the whole, more good than bad effects. The Irish peasant, for instance, so long as he is contented with a fare of potatoes and butter-milk, shares his bedroom with the pig, haughtily refuses to earn sixpence by so degrading an act as carrying a bag for you, and is the finest material in the world for agitators to employ in houghing cattle or dragging men and women from their beds in the dead of night. But, once emigrated and started keenly in the competition of money-making, this self-same subject lives a blameless life and dies a mayor.

Glance down the countries of Europe, and the decrease in the scale of decency and humanity from north to south is both glaring and instructive. You will begin with the Norwegian, who exists in a country composed mainly of boulders, and you will find that he tells the truth, has a cheaper and better regulated system of telephones than any other nation, regulates his liquor-traffic on the Gothenburg system, and scarcely knows what murder is. You will end with the Sicilian or modern Greek, who spends such time as police supervision leaves entirely free in brigandage and cutting the throats of girls; or the Corsican, who regards it as his mission in life to shoot from behind a rock the sixteenth cousin of the man who accidentally killed his great-grandfather's cur dog.

If you would pursue your investigations still farther south, and anywhere outside a city wall, it may be well to do so from behind a bullet-proof cuirass, as you will be infallibly shot at sight if you happen alone on any considerable number of the inhabitants. From which it would appear that the more perfect the climate, the more productive the soil, the easier, in fact, that it is to live, the less you must expect to find of cleanliness, godliness, or humanity.

Of this conclusion the land of France, lying midway in the *descensus Averni*, offers at present a curious and interesting illustration. 'Judge me a nation by its play.' In the north they are trying hard, and more or less successfully, to introduce rowing, football, and other manly sports as occupations for their spare time. In the south there is a furious contention still going on as to whether they shall or shall not allow the naturalisation of the Spanish bull-fight.

In the month of August 1894, just before the first definite prohibition by the government of these disgusting spectacles, some of us happened to witness a typical one. And horrible as the details were, it may not be out of place to record them.

Ever since the prohibition the struggle has been going on in a desultory fashion between the government in Paris and the people in the south. The Minister of the Interior, if he happens to be what the southerners call *méchant*, launches fitfully from time to time fresh prohibitions. Sometimes the military is used to actually prevent a particular *corrida*. Then there is more or less of riot and uproar. The shareholders in the arena, annoyed at the loss they have suffered, coolly arrange and advertise another show. This time the military receives no orders. The show takes place. The local senator or deputy presides at it; the local judge attends and enjoys it. Next morning there is a legal inquiry; the bull-fighters are solemnly fined (the minimum legal amount) and banished (which means that they are given first-class tickets across the nearest frontier). Their banishment lasts just until they are wanted again. Thus, as a French gentleman explained to me, 'Tout ça s'arrange bien en famille, et on peut se ficher pas mal de la loi.'

Now for what we saw, and how we came to see it.

Four of us were spending our summer holidays in the Pyrenees, and we had descended to the ancient town of Bayonne, once an English stronghold, and the scene, at the beginning of this century, of some of Wellington's most dashing exploits. A grand old town it is, with the arms of England still silently looking down at you from the cathedral's vaulted roof, with its massive and absolutely useless fortifications, and its splendid river, formed by the junction of the Nive and the Adour, rolling down to the sea at Biarritz. Every available bit of wall was placarded in gigantic letters, 'TOROS EN BAYONA;' and every one you spoke to said, 'Of course you are staying over Sunday for the show?' We did stay over Sunday, and, with the weakness of curiosity, we joined the swelling tide of some ten thousand human beings that poured through the pay-gates into the Amphitheatre.

This Amphitheatre, or *plaza*, is an enormous building on a hill a little way outside the city walls, erected a few years before by a company who had gauged only too well their countrymen's contamination from their Spanish neighbours. It is a cheap parody in brick and stucco of a Roman colosseum, a shoddy affair, daubed with a hideous drab, and penetrated with an evil, slaughterhouse reek of dead things lurking underneath the gloomy colonnades through

which you climb to your seat. These seats are not of marble; they are low benches made of painted deal, arranged in ascending tiers, for all the world like the gallery of an infants' school. The half of these seats which are exposed to the sun are let much cheaper than those which are in the shadow, and are proportionately more crowded. In fact, an hour before the show begins they are crammed with an excited audience, who sit there under huge umbrellas, gesticulating, shrieking, and whistling to distant friends, smoking cigarettes and spitting, supplying meanwhile the waste with constant goes of rough claret or lemonade, purveyed in a friendly way by struggling attendants, from a solitary tumbler.

All round the topmost tier are huge masts, gay with bunting; the tricolour of France, the red and yellow stripes of Spain, the Imperial Eagle of Russia all hobnob together. Somehow, we were not sorry to miss the Union-jack.

The time drags on, and the shaded seats begin to fill up. The president's box is the last to fill, but the great man (nearly always either a member or official of the government which has forbidden bull-fighting) enters it on the stroke of four, accompanied by the officers of the torpedo flotilla which is lying off one of the quays in the river. Tremendous enthusiasm greets their appearance, mixed with clamorous stampings and phrenetic cat-calls for the first victim.

The vast arena, freshly strewn with dry sand, glares in the hot sun. Suddenly two *alguazils*, or marshals, dressed all in black and mounted on really fine horses, dash into the ring to the strains of a small band of trumpets and kettledrums, seated opposite to the 'sixty *exécutants*.' The marshals make obeisance to the president, who is perched some fifty feet above them, and are understood to be asking permission to present the *cuadrilla*, or gang of bull-fighters. Behind them come six *alguazils* on foot, dressed in the costume of Philip IV.'s reign. Next in order come the two great heroes of the day, the *primas espadas*, whose proud prerogative it is to direct the torturing of each bull in turn, and administer the final death-blow with a sword-thrust. One is a man of forty-five, Cara-Ancha by name. He is bald and rather fat, and does not look remarkably agile. In fact, he is by no means the man you would select to turn loose into a high-walled field with an average Welsh bull if you valued his life or his clothing. The latter is magnificence itself. Dancing-pumps, white silk stockings, tight-fitting knee-breeches, and an Eton jacket of green silk, all heavily braided with gold lace; his long black hair is tied up in a Spanish net, and he crowns the whole with a rakish three-cornered hat. The other is Francisco Bonarillo, a smart young fellow of twenty-three. His dress is as gorgeous as his colleague's, and he steps along with the swagger of a volunteer captain. Both these men have worked their way up to their present pinnacles of fame by arduous work as *sobresalientes*, or assistants, and continuous practice in the art of killing tethered cattle in the slaughterhouse with one scientific thrust. The programme informs us that Cara-Ancha 'received his baptism of blood' in 1865, and that he is quite a Tory in his art, for 'il conserve les passes de la haute école.' Bonarillo has won his laurels chiefly in South America, where 'son mode élégant et particulier de combattre et sa manière intrépide lui ont valu de chaleureux succès.' *

Next enter, in costumes scarcely less striking, the *picadores*, *chulos*, and *banderilleros*. The *picadores* are mounted on the sorriest steeds that ever called aloud for the merciful offices of the cat's-meat merchant. The public facetiously call them 'herrings,' and regard the fact that their purchase-value is about one sovereign as crushing proof of their fitness for the horrible cruelties to be shortly practised upon them.

The *chulos* and *banderilleros* are not mounted. Their functions will be explained later.

The whole *cuadrilla* obsequiously bow the knee to the presidential box, and retire whilst the president flings down the key of the *toril*, or stable, gaily decorated with a bunch of ribbons, to the *alguazil*. The latter rides with it to the keeper of the door, and then, with a great show of haste and terror, gallops wildly out. The *picadores* and the gang on foot return and take up their places along the edge of the wooden barrier, some five feet in height, which surrounds the arena. Immediately behind this barrier, which is designed for the safety of a man hard pressed, runs a narrow passage, with several openings into the sand, and backed with a second barricade, considerably higher, and shutting off the spectators from all danger. The doors of the *toril* are flung wide open, and to a fanfare of trumpets the first bull dashes out. He is a magnificent black beast, in the pink of condition, and you feel inclined to admire at first the bold rush with which he enters, and the coquettish rosette of red and white ribbon, the *divisa* of the farm where he was reared, on his left shoulder. But your admiration receives a kind of chill, and a nasty feeling runs round underneath your waistcoat, when you learn that this rosette is threaded through the top of a steel skewer some five inches long. You cannot see the skewer—for the excellent reason that just as the animal emerged from his stall it was buried up to the top in his body—where it remains throughout the subsequent proceedings. These proceedings are regulated and arranged with the most minute and scrupulous adhesion to traditional etiquette. The *suerte*, or 'game,' as it is feelingly described, is divided into three parts:

* The public admiration for these *espadas* can hardly be exaggerated. One of them was killed some little time ago by a bull which proved one too many for him. Sixty thousand people followed his coffin to the tomb.

(1) teasing the bull with coloured cloaks, and jumping out of the way when he charges, combined with the 'game' with the 'piques' of the *picadores;* (2) sticking *banderillas* into the bull; (3) finally exasperating the animal with the *muleta*, or small scarlet cape, and killing him with the *estoque*, a long, rapier-like sword.

And that is what we saw enacted six times running that Sunday afternoon.

Arrived in the centre of the arena, Cortito (that was the bull's name) stood perfectly still; he was dazzled by the brilliant light and confused by the roar of the people, coming straight from his dark and silent stall. But the skewer is smarting in his shoulder, and when one of the *chulos* glides up to him from behind and trails his gaudy cape before his face, Cortito is after him like a shot. The *chulo* runs for the barricade, and before he is half-way there one of his fellows has diverted the animal with another cloak. This game, which in itself is really rather pretty, and demands considerable pluck and agility, only lasts a few minutes. The people have paid their money for blood, and blood is what they want. So the *chulos* attract the bull near to a *picador.*

The latter is sitting motionless on his poor old worn-out horse, with his *vara*, or lance, tightly gripped in his right hand against his right side. This lance is simply a very thick broomstick, ten feet long, with a short spike at the end, and a bunch of tow wrapped tightly round the wood just where the spike enters it. It is intended to push the bull away and hold him off. As soon as Cortito perceives the man on the horse he stops suddenly, paws the ground, and snorts with rage. The poor, patient horse stands still, too, his knees shaking with terror, despite the bandage over his right eye, which is there to prevent his seeing too much and getting out of the way. Suddenly Cortito charges with lowered head. The *picador* leans forward, sticks him with the *vara* just as his horns are almost touching the horse's ribs, presses downwards almost vertically, and shoves with all his weight and for all he is worth, edging his steed off to the left the while. The latter rears up in horrible fright and plunges desperately. Sullenly the bull presses forward; down goes the lance. See! it is through his hide now, spike, wadding, wood and all. Have you seen a schoolboy's pocket bulging out and revealing the bulky contents within? That is what the bull's side looks like as the wooden pole slides lower and lower, six inches, a foot, two feet between his skin and his bones. The furious struggle lasts for a minute or two. At last Cortito can stand it no longer; he wrenches himself free, wheels round, and makes for a *chulo* who is mocking him just behind. But his sharp horn has scored a point, and gashed the horse's chest. Up runs a *chulo*, and stuffs a handful of rags into the wound. It would never do to have that bleeding unchecked. Some of the actors' fine clothes might be stained and ruined. And the worshipful public has not yet had half enough fun for the sovereign expended on that horse. The poor beast is dancing about with pain and fear, and almost at once Cortito comes at him again. The *picador* is late this time; Cortito gets both his horns into the animal's abdomen, works them savagely about, and then, with gigantic strength, lifts man and beast into the air and flings them heavily to the ground. In a moment half-a-dozen *chulos* are there distracting his attention, whilst others raise the fallen rider. The horse lies kicking wildly; three or four men beat him furiously on the boniest parts of his legs with heavy sticks, and he struggles up. Rags are no good this time. Surely they are going to put him out of his misery! Do you think so? If you do, you don't yet know the Spaniard and his ideas of sport. Look; they are hoisting the man into his saddle again. He is thickly padded, and has suffered no hurt whatever from his fall. His legs are protected with strips of steel, wrapped round and round with buffalo hide. He grips his *vara*, digs his spurs, with rowels as big as a crown-piece, into the poor brute's flanks, and makes him gallop round the ring to meet Cortito once more.

The spectators yell with delight, and leap wildly up on to their seats. Indignant shouts from those behind: 'Assis! Assis! nom de Dieu! Mais on ne peut rien voir!'

Again Cortito gets in under the *vara's* point; this time he buries his horns in the mangled brute's chest, and hurls him backwards. Ah! they may flog his wretched victim as much as they like now; he will never stand up again. Viciously the *chulos* wrench the big saddle and bridle off, and leave him there to bleed and writhe. Presently, with no kind of hurry, when the coast is clear, a butcher in red comes up and deals the *coup de grace* with the *puntilla*, or short dagger, which is stabbed into the spinal cord in the neck. A handful of sawdust is scattered over the wreckage, and there it remains till the end of the tragedy.

Another *picador* is ready, and the ghastly butchery is gone through once more. Cortito's glossy black hide is striped with a hideous broad band of smoking crimson from the gashes of the *vara*, and the *divisa* is white and red no longer. With splendid pluck he still shows fight. Panting and blind with rage, he tears to strips the cape which one of his tormentors has dropped—and dropped rather hastily. Look at those ladies—save the mark!—laughing till the tears roll down their cheeks because the poor brute has tripped and fallen in the blood-stained rags. See! he is up again, and wildly chases to the barrier a *chulo* who has left himself too near. Over the wood goes the man, and with a supreme effort

Cortito leaps clean after him. It is child's-play for the man, of course, to drop back into the arena, but the audience goes wild once more with delight. Those in front leap up again, and are as lustily cursed as ever by those behind.

This is the 'triumph of mind over matter' which Théophile Gautier has given as his reason for revelling in bull-fights; a noble triumph, in sooth! such as can be rivalled, perhaps, in the annals of King Theebaw or the purlieus of Constantinople.

Now is the time for the spectators in the front row to exhibit their lion-hearted courage. From their impregnable retreat they crane forward, and boldly stab and flog Cortito with their sticks till he is forced back into the sand.

His drooping head and desperate, appealing gaze round the sea of faces would touch the heart of a fiend. At least one would have thought so an hour ago. For the minute he has realised that he is fighting a hopeless battle, and, careless of the flaunted mantles, he wanders wearily in search of the stable whence he came. His appeal is quickly answered. The trumpets sound a fanfare, and Act II. begins. A man is standing in the centre; the *chulos* vault the barricade and leave him there. Cortito is tired out, and does not see the man at once; he still walks slowly round the edge, stopping, with pitiable ignorance and vain displays of noble strength, to trample and gore the horses' carcasses. The man advances a yard or two. In his hands he has two *banderillas*. These are sticks a yard in length, *enjolivées*, as they say, with spiral frills of pink and white paper. At the end is a small harpoon-head, a sharp steel blade with a deeply barbed point. In a flash Cortito sees him, and advances at a run. The *banderillero* awaits him, pluckily enough, and, at the moment when he charges, thrusts one of his infernal weapons into each shoulder, leaps aside, and bolts for safety. Stung to fresh madness, Cortito shakes the *banderillas* savagely; one dangles and beats his side, the other flies out high into the air. Another and another pair are fixed into him, with more or less adroitness. Being a high-mettled beast, he is spared one—and one only—fiendish refinement of cruelty. Had he refused to charge, the *banderillas* would have contained lighted squibs, which, after fizzing for a minute, would have exploded with a sharp and terrorising detonation.

Again the trumpets sound; this time it is with his death-warrant. Weakened and exhausted, the poor brute stands there in the burning sun, with roping nostrils, lashing his bleeding sides with his tail, and feebly pawing the burning dust. This is the moment for the *espada*. Daintily he approaches, with his sword hidden under the scarlet *muleta*. Five minutes more of teasing him ensue; a dozen futile charges at the aggravating cloth, and at last Cara-Ancha plunges the rapier up to the hilt between his shoulder-blades. A convulsive shudder hurls the blade far away, and Cortito staggers to the edge. Cara-Ancha regains his *estoque* and follows him. No haste, no flutter; with sparkling, ferret eyes the Spaniards watch him as he comes to close quarters once more. This time the thrust is truer. Down sinks Cortito on his knees; his magnificent head trembles dizzily from side to side. Slowly, slowly he leans, rolls over, and, with a piteous groan, expires.

An uproar of enthusiastic applause surges round the amphitheatre from all the degenerate mongrels there, in whose veins the brutal instincts of the Roman Empire and the savages it conquered are tempered to-day with nothing better than their own unutterably foul tobacco and absinthe. With childish, idiotic excitement, they fling down into the arena top-hats and billycocks, overcoats, halfpence, and packets of cigarettes. The *espada* walks round, smiling and bowing. The princely gifts of coppers and tobacco he retains, the articles of apparel he courteously and laboriously returns to their expectant owners; they merely wish to have them touched by the heroic artist in silk breeches and patent pumps. Meanwhile two teams of mules, gaily decked with red and yellow braid, and jingling with innumerable bells, are flogged at full speed into the ring and yoked to the dead animals. These they drag round for the human vultures to feast their eyes upon, and then disappear, leaving a horrible red track in their wake.

Have you had enough of this?

I know four of the spectators had more than enough. They sat there, sick and trembling with disgust, and, as leaving the place was impossible, they sat there miserably till the end. One feeling, passionate if not good, was uppermost, and that was a longing that the bull should kill one or more of his torturers, and so break up the show. Once this desire was mightily near being satisfied, for Surdito, a large and powerful animal, succeeded in knocking Cara-Ancha down and ripping his fine clothes open. But their chief was instantly extricated from his danger by the rest of the gang, and Surdito was done to death like the others. Perhaps the enthusiasm was a little wilder as they dragged him out, but that was all.

The sixth and last animal was Cabezon, who dashed into the ring with such resentful rage that he broke one horn clean off against the barricade. Instantly the whole ten thousand of the audience burst into loud cries, addressed to the president, and ten thousand handkerchiefs, some of which were white, waved wildly in the air. One thought at first they were demanding mercy for the maimed and almost defenceless beast. Mercy? From a Spanish rabble? Nothing of the sort. Simply, they wanted another bull, the *taureau de reserve*, after Cabezon should have been despatched. To his credit, the president regarded

their clamouring with silent disdain. I think he and the naval officers had had all they wanted, too. So the audience saw it out, and revenged themselves by waiting afterwards and hissing him at the exit. When it was over, and the last of the slaughtered horses (there were a dozen of them, *étripes*—delightful word—in all) had been dragged out, we escaped with the mob.

To say that we felt ashamed of having been there is to mildly understate the fact. If you want to feel the sting of low-down, crawling 'caddishness,' as schoolboys say, go to a bull-fight; and Heaven grant you may have to go to Spain for it. We were in Spain a few days later, at Fuenterrabia, a pretty little town on the border. The place was *en fête* for four days in honour of the patron saint. The mornings were divided by the natives between long services in the cathedral and letting off rockets in the streets; the afternoons were entirely devoted to bull-fights, four bulls being generously provided each day. Somehow we did not go. In the market-place were a group of tiny children playing the only game they knew. That was a mimic bull-fight. Every stage was faithfully reproduced. Only a few small boys and girls were not taking part in the game. They had managed to capture a live sparrow, and were enjoying the more fascinating pleasure of twisting off its legs and wings. I should think the patron saint must have felt both pleased and flattered by the spectacle. And then we came home to England and read solemn letters in the English newspapers, arguing that bull-fights are excellent sport, and not one whit more cruel than fox-hunting. If you think so, then by all means avoid fox-hunting. But do you think so? If you feel unable to decide, just go and see with your eyes the abominations I have endeavoured to describe. You will see nothing less cruel; there are even some things that an English pen cannot tackle, which I have been forced to omit.

Last January a party of us were visiting the splendid ruins of the Arènes at Nîmes. We tried to fancy ourselves ancient Romans as we walked up to the Amphitheatre stairs, about to witness a great lion-feed, with Christians for the main dish. It was not easy to call up much enthusiasm for such a show. Then we peered into the dank, gloomy prisons under the rows of seats, and tried to fancy the uncomfortable position of the Christians when the time came for the 'doors to open.' This was much easier.

The ruined tiers of masonry and the central space are now used regularly, during the season, for bull-fights. I wonder which of these uses will be considered in time to come the most thoroughly disgraceful of the two—the slaughter of the Christians or the torture of the animals? The Christian victims were at least offered their choice between a cruel death and conformity to the national creed by sacrificing to the emperor or to some other quaint deity. The dumb animals are not even offered a chance of a speedy death.

The junior member of the party was rather smarter than he meant to be when he remarked, with a sigh, 'Ah, well! I suppose there will never be any more lions *nor any more Christians* here again!'

Who knows? The time has already come when America has said to Spain, 'You shall not on any pretext whatever continue to torture human beings. Your lack of conscience is a disgrace to humanity, and we mean to make you better.'

This is a great jump in the progress of the moral sense of nations. The day may yet come for a greater, when the power of the Old World will care and dare to say, 'No European nation shall any longer encourage or countenance purposeless and degrading cruelty, even to animals.'

If Spain is paying in her present sorry plight the penalty bequeathed her by the Inquisition of an ingrained tendency to cruelty, the sooner the cancer is cut out down to the roots the better for her.

For France, at least, no pressure from without should be needed to make her purge herself of this blot upon her civilisation. The ridicule, if nothing else, which she deserves will some day suffice to rouse her to coerce her defiant minority into submission to the national conscience. Spain is the real stronghold of bull-fighting; and if it were stopped there, shame would give ridicule a lift in its task across the Pyrenees.

But Spain, with her loud talk of honour and her real sense of pride, has now been taken in hand like a vicious child. The whipping universally prescribed for such children has even now been administered.

The moral lesson which has necessitated it may surely with advantage and economy be made as wide as possible.

ON A MINIATURE OF A LADY.

A RONDEAU.

Her lovely face within a frame
Of golden hair is set. Her name?
I know not, neither do I care.
I only know that she is fair,
This much-bepatched and powdered dame.

Her laughing eyes are all aflame:
It must have been the artist's aim
To make, forsooth! beyond compare
Her lovely face.

Although she is unknown to fame,
Yet I can fancy, all the same,
She could command with charming air
The beaux who thronged her Sedan-chair,
All eager for their own to claim
Her lovely face.

SISSIE HUNTER.

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SIXTH SERIES.

BALNACRAIG.

ON the south side of a hill in the north of Scotland stands an old house, from which you look across to the forest of Birse and away to the great hills and braes of Mar, while green pastures and corn-fields stretch down to the broad valley of the Dee; and immediately behind the house rises a rocky crest clothed with Scotch firs and ash-trees of great age and size.

On this October afternoon, when the low sun and softly dappled sky bespeak an autumn day, there is something pensive in the look of the old house, standing apart in the shelter of the hillside, with the old trees casting their shadows on the roof and walls, and with the unmistakable look of having seen better days; and yet there are few fairer scenes than that which to-day lies before the old house of Balnacraig. The far hills in Braemar are veiled in sunny mist; the nearer flowing lines of the hills of Birse are broken by the dark-blue masses of fir woods; and below, the gleaming river lies like a silver ribbon, with a ceaseless murmur rising into the still air, like a low strain of solemn music.

There is nothing of autumn sadness to be seen or felt to-day, however, for everything seems steeped in sunshine. Last Sunday was 'stookie Sabbath,' and all the land is fair with golden grain; there are cheerful sounds of voices and signs of rejoicing labour everywhere, for harvesting is going on, and in the fields below men and strong-armed women in sun-bonnets and white 'wrappers' are 'leading' and getting up the corn. In the stackyard a loaded cart comes rattling over the stony road, with a clatter of horses' hoofs and the rustle of ripe sheaves.

A herd of cows stand patiently at the gate, and a couple of collie puppies with their sedate-looking mother greet the stranger with smiling, innocent faces and wagging tails, ignorant as yet of refractory cattle and bewildered sheep. Farther away, in a little croft in the woods, a solitary girl is reaping and singing to herself, reminding one of Wordsworth's 'Sweet Highland Girl;' and down below, nearer the river, there is a still more animated scene, for a threshing-machine has taken its stand in a full stackyard, and men and women are hard at work filling its capacious mouth with rustling sheaves as fast as they can lift them. Forks and rakes ply busily, aprons flutter in the wind, and now a great tub of water is being fast borne by two men from the spout in the rocky hillside, for the great panting machine is a thirsty creature, and needs a plentiful supply; and over and through it all rises the busy humming heard far and near in the still autumn air, and never ceasing for a moment. It is a scene of cheerful rural labour, pleasant to the eye and ear; for, notwithstanding its modern appliances and associations, a threshing-machine in a full stackyard, with its busy assistants and cheerful humming, is as picturesque and charming a sight as one can see on such a day as this, with surroundings such as these.

All this speaks of to-day, of its peaceful life and simple labour; and in the midst of it, but a little apart, stands the old house, in strong contrast, with a certain look of melancholy, and in every part seeming to belong to the times of long ago and another order of things. It has, however, no especial dignity of size or of architecture to recommend it to notice, and there seems little that savours of romance about it; a date over the door shows that it was built little more than a hundred and sixty years ago, and the initials below the date were no doubt the initials of the married pair who built and first inhabited the house. There is no sign of any earlier building; no remains of tower or keep, such as mark the age of so many Scotch houses of an earlier date. This was simply the house of a Scottish gentleman of good family, and probably of very moderate fortune—a member of the Jacobite family of Innes; and it would have no special interest but that it is so little changed since the days when Scotland was in the midst of her 'trouble,' and when the habits and domestic lives of families in the like condition must have been more or less affected by it.

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In 1735, about the time when the house of Balnacraig was built, the 'trouble' had lasted for over a hundred years, and at that time there seemed little prospect of quiet in the near future. Twenty years before, the standard of King James had been raised in Braemar, less than thirty miles away, and Balnacraig had been built but ten years when the fortunes of the young Chevalier were put to the test and lost at Culloden; and as the Inneses were zealous Jacobites and Roman Catholics, every member of the family must have held himself ready for defence.

Very soon after Culloden the house had a narrow escape of being burnt to the ground. It remained, however, in the family for many years; and then, passing away to strangers, it became a farmhouse, as it remains to-day.

Many members of the proscribed family sought a home or became wanderers in other lands, and some became, like many other members of Scottish families, remarkable abroad for qualities which had no scope at home.

We hear of a daughter of the house who for many years was abbess of the community at Haggerston; several of the sons became priests, notably one who held for many years an important position in the Scots College in Paris, and who was probably a man of taste and culture, as he brought to the Roman Catholic College of Blairs, near Aberdeen, the fine portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, known as one of the most valuable now existing.

This Henry Innes was remarkable in various ways; he was intimate with the family and adherents of the exiled Stuarts, and was in Paris sharing the dangers and vicissitudes of the clergy during the French Revolution of 1793.

He lived to return, however, and to end his days at Balnacraig, which had then become the dower-house of the family; the lands, together with the larger property adjoining, having passed into the possession of a member of the Farquharsons of Inverey, who took the name of Innes.

There are still living those who remember the last Inneses who lived at Balnacraig. The house even in those days of its altered fortunes showed that the inhabitants had been people of cultivated tastes and education. The rooms, though small and low, were full of French inlaid cabinets, books, and pictures. Above all, in the house there were many touching relics, held sacred not for their intrinsic value, but treasured as all that remained of a lost cause, and as witnesses of the ardent affection and loyalty inspired by a royal race in almost unprecedented misfortune; and as such, even in these days, so far removed from such ideas and passionate feeling, the sight of a worn pocket-book containing a miniature, a lock of hair, or even a faded flower, will make the 'tears rise in the heart,' though the cause has sunk into oblivion or remains only a theme for romance.

There are no such relics now in the house—only a rusty bell hanging in the quaint belfry, and the small arched windows of what once was the chapel tell of the days when mass was celebrated there. In the kitchen there is an old meal-girnel, which might be of any age, and a mighty iron pot hangs on the 'swee,' as those primitive contrivances are called which Scotch housewives still use for their cooking.

To the right and left are the old gardens and what might once have been a 'pleasaunce,' which are dignified by entrance-gates and stone piers with balls on the top, and these are continued round the enclosure at intervals. The garden, with sundial and turf walks, and walls on which grew, it is said, long ago, fine fruit — French apples and pears—mixed with a rambling growth of old-fashioned flowers; and the ample size of the whole seems to show that the owners, when they built their house a century and a half ago, thought something of the pleasures and refinements of life besides its mere necessities.

There is a curious hiding-place in the hill behind the house, hidden among the rocks and roots of trees, which might be taken for a fox's earth, but which leads to a subterranean passage going far into the hill, and ending in one of those curious underground circular chambers, built of rough stones, supposed to be Picts' houses; but in the days of the Inneses of Balnacraig this is more likely to have been made as a hiding-place for valuables, money, and plate, and perhaps dangerous papers, when a sudden surprise might have involved the loss of all they possessed. At any rate, some years ago a fine inlaid standing clock was found there, of French workmanship; and it stands in the house of the present owner of Balnacraig, three miles away, ticking away the time now, with its 'never—for ever' voice of warning, as it did long ago, before it was hidden by its owners for years, and then forgotten in the anxieties and alarms of the time.

In April 1746 the battle of Culloden was fought and lost; and Scotland was weeping the loss of many who had fallen in battle and on the scaffold, and of others who were flying the country, exiles for the rest of their days, or who, like the foxes, were hiding in dens and caves of the earth. The land shuddered under the iron heel of the Duke of Cumberland, who exercised his power with the utmost rigour and cruelty, burning and destroying the houses and farms of those suspected to have been disaffected, and punishing with death and imprisonment master and servant alike. Whether or not Innes of Balnacraig had actually been in arms against the king at St James's, he was known to be a strong and active Jacobite, and deep in their counsels; and as such he had fled into hiding to avoid being dealt with as many of his friends had been, perchance leaving his wife a widow and his children fatherless.

News soon came that the soldiers of the Duke were in the neighbourhood; and one summer morning the lady of Balnacraig saw the

red coats of a company of soldiers crossing the fields which lay between her house and the road to Aboyne, six miles away. Her heart had sunk when she heard of their approach from the north the day before; but she was a brave and clever woman, and resolved to do all she could to save her house and her husband's property.

The servant lasses had screamed and run away to hide their heads under the blankets on their bed in the attics when they heard of the soldiers coming, till they were bidden to come down to help their mistress in her trouble, for all hands were wanted; and then began the work on which the lady's heart was set. Such a slaying and plucking of hens, boiling and roasting of meat, and making of barley broth had never been seen before in the house of Balnacraig; and it continued far into the night, long after the terrified and excited children were asleep in their beds.

With the next midday came the soldiers—a company under a young captain, with two officers under him. It was very hot; the river below glittered in the sun; the corn, just turning into gold, basked in the heat; and far up the wide strath of the Dee lay the noonday mist, hiding the long ridge of Ben-y-bourd and Ben-A'an, and hardly revealing the dark rock of Craigdarroch which overhangs the pass of Ballater.

A halt was called when they reached the front of the house, and the captain, a young Englishman who had seen his first battle at Culloden, advanced to the door, bidding his men keep back, for there in the doorway stood a young woman alone—only her little daughter of ten clung to her skirt, trying hard to be as brave and calm as her mother.

'Madam,' said he, courteously uncovering, 'I am come for one James Innes, reported to be one of the disaffected against his Majesty King George. If he is in the house I must see him; and if he refuses, I must come in and search for him.'

Mrs Innes replied that he was not at Balnacraig; adding, with truth, that she knew not where he was, as he had been absent for some time. There was a pause, and then, calling up his two officers, the captain, in their presence, produced a paper, and read the indictment against the owner of the house, concluding with an order to bring him prisoner to Inverness, and to burn and destroy the house, as that of a rebel and traitor to the king's majesty and government.

There was a silence after these dreadful words, and then came the answer: 'You must do your bidding. I have none but womenkind and children in the house; and God help me and them, for if you drive us from here we have nowhere to hide our heads.'

Little Betty, when she saw her mother's tears, who had been so brave and busy till now, hid her head, and dared not look up.

One of the officers said a few words aside to the captain, and after a short conversation he spoke again.

'My men have had a long march this morning,' he said, 'and upon empty stomachs. We reached a farm some miles below, thinking to get a meal, and we found the house empty and the people fled, and they had not left a peck of meal nor a mouthful of whisky behind them. Every cow and sheep had been driven off, and there was nothing left but water out of the burn, for which my men have no fancy. At any rate, before we proceed to business, get us something to eat. I will keep the men on the green if you will bring out what you have, or we must come in and take it.'

Then the lady spoke again. 'Make your men sit down in the shade yonder,' she said, 'and I and my maids will bring out what we have; and come you and these gentlemen into the parlour, and take your meal there.'

'Meanwhile, by your leave, madam,' said the captain, 'I and my officers will come in—in case Mr Innes may not be gone so far from his house but that we may find him.' And in a few minutes their heavy steps were mounting the stair, opening and looking into the cupboards, and searching into every corner which would have hid a mouse. They found no one but the children, who had been shut up in the nursery, where one of the officers began to turn over the bedding and to thrust his bayonet into the mattresses, when the mother, with a scream, started forward and snatched up a one-year-old child fast asleep among the pillows, and Betty threw herself before the man with a loud cry.

And now the feast was ready, and the women were carrying out to the hungry men great iron pots of savoury broth, piles of bannocks, fresh and crisp, cans of new milk, and whisky in the large jars called in those days 'graybeards.' The soldiers, who had not fared too well in a country where every mouthful had been grudged them, sat down in the welcome shade, and the lasses, Kirsty and Beenie, were received with such rough but flattering welcome that ever after the day the soldiers came to Balnacraig was remembered as a white day in their lives.

Meanwhile, within the house, the officers were equally well regaled with boiled chickens and new-laid eggs, currant and gooseberry tarts and cream; and, with many a sigh from the housewife that her husband's good claret should be drunk by his enemies, cups were filled again and again and drained to pledge King George. And then, as good cheer and good wine raised their spirits and confused their politics, they toasted the lady of Balnacraig, and declared that, rebel though her husband was, she had given them of her best, and that her house should be safe from harm for the sake of her hospitality.

The sun had sunk below the western hills and the dew was falling before the soldiers departed from the house of Balnacraig; and as they marched in broken ranks down the hill, it was a hard matter for the most of them to

keep their legs; nevertheless, as they turned down the road which led to Aboyne, they gave a shout and another cheer to the lady and her household.

The children fell asleep that night in their beds talking of the soldiers. Their mother sat sad and alone in her disordered parlour, her courage departed and her spirits lowered, now that the danger had passed; but she had saved Balnacraig.

Betty, upstairs in the nursery, was telling how she had seen one of the soldiers empty the whisky-jar, and, in a frolic—for the whisky had flowed freely—had put his head into the 'gray-beard' that he might get the very last drop; and, in the midst of the shouts and laughter of his companions, how he had rolled down the hill with his head still in the jar.

The soldiers never came again to Balnacraig; and the house, which might have been left a blackened ruin, remains very much as it was then, though all the fine furniture and the cherished relics are gone, and the garden and pleasure-grounds are grown wild. There are people alive now who remember Miss Betty and Miss Jean, who lived in the old house till they died, and who told the story of King George's soldiers, and how their mother saved the house; and Miss Betty especially was never tired of telling how the soldier had rolled down the hill with his head in the jar that had held the whisky.

Miss Betty and Miss Jean have lain for many years with their kindred in the old burial-ground at Aboyne; but there stands the house, as we see it to-day, with the great trees sheltering it, which, in their youth, were witnesses of another order of things in the troubled days that followed upon the battle of Culloden. G. E. B.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER III.—RECOVERY.

IN a temperature of 120° in the shade, it required a strong constitution and very careful nursing to carry a patient through the slow and perilous course of an attack of typhoid fever. Young Hulme was fortunate in having both, and at the end of a month the sure but tedious process of convalescence set in.

He awoke from a sleep one evening with a clearer perception of his situation than he had yet enjoyed. Mrs Brady was quietly putting the room in order, and he watched her silently for several minutes, until she observed him looking at her.

'Ah,' she said, 'you are getting better now. That was a fine sleep you had.'

'I am very weak, and feel a lot of pain; but I know I must be better.'

After a pause he added faintly:

'How good you have been to me!'

'Nonsense,' said the woman. 'Now, you must keep quiet, you know. I will give you a little broth; then, maybe, you will go to sleep again.'

She administered the nourishment with a spoon, and when the patient said he would like more she shook her head.

'You must bear with your appetite for some days yet,' she remarked, 'for, now we have got you through the fever, it would never do to send you back into it again. Try and sleep.'

He closed his eyes, but sleep would not come just then. He was trying to give intelligible shape to a vision that was floating through his brain. He had a dim and grateful sense of a very soft and cool hand and a gentle face, but could not be certain that he had not been dreaming of his mother. Mrs Brady was all kindness and gentleness to him—but it was not Mrs Brady. Her hand and face were both very gentle indeed, but they were rough with hard work.

'Mrs Brady,' he said.

'Yes?'

'Any news of—of Jim?'

'Not yet. Why, he has only been a month away. It is too soon to hear from him. My man has been three months away at Hannan's.'

'Has there been—any person—except yourself nursing me?'

'Why, it isn't much I could find time to do for you, with my own house and family to look after. If it wasn't for Miss Lily I don't know where you would be.'

'Miss Lily?'

'Yes. Half-a-dozen times a day, and mostly all night, she has been here with you. I don't know how she has stood it, with her hard work at the bar as well.'

'God bless her!' he said in a whisper.

'Well you may say that,' observed Mrs Brady, who had overheard the words. 'Considering you are a stranger to her, she is the best girl I ever knew. But there!—when a man's sick and wants nursing, it's no matter whether he is a stranger or not.'

'Will she—will Miss Lily—come this evening?'

'She is sure to come—in an hour or so. Now try and sleep; she would be so glad to find you sleeping.'

Thus encouraged, he closed his eyes. He was soon in a light but refreshing sleep. Before he awoke the girl came, and sat by the bedside watching him. The fatigue and want of rest during the last four weeks had left their mark upon her face. Her eyes were not so bright,

and she was very pale; still, the beauty was not obliterated, but was rather refined and spiritualised by the traces of fatigue and the expression of solicitude. It is little wonder that sick men, when convalescent and conscious of the gentle care bestowed upon them with so much silent patience, fall in love sometimes with their nurses. At what other time is the almost angelic softness of a woman's nature so keenly felt?

When he opened his eyes and beheld the girl, his first expression of feeling was a long sigh.

'I am glad to see you so much better,' she said softly, leaning a little over him.

He put out his arm, and she let him take one of her hands in his and hold it gratefully for a minute.

'Ah, Miss Lily,' he whispered, 'you have been an angel to me in a strange land. I—I have been thinking of you this evening, not knowing it was you. Until Mrs Brady told me, I thought I had been dreaming about—about my mother. She is dead.'

The girl regarded him with eyes of tender pity, and gently released her hand. Then she glanced round the room. Mrs Brady had left nothing to be done there.

'Mrs Brady has given you some broth, I suppose?'

'Yes, Miss Lily.'

'Well, I will give you a little milk now. Then I must go; but I will return in an hour and stay with you.'

The girl gave him the milk, and made his pillow comfortable.

'Do you think you could sleep a little more?' she asked.

'I will try, Miss Lily. It is very hard upon you to come here, and very selfish of me to wish to see you again. But I can't help it—indeed I can't!'

She only laughed, and bade him try to sleep, promising to be back in an hour and bring her needlework with her. She kept her word; and for hours he lay looking at her plying her busy fingers in a corner of the room. She refused to talk to him or allow him to talk; and until he fell asleep late in the night he exchanged no word with his nurse save when, from time to time, she came to administer some small nourishment to him.

In the course of a week, however, Hulme had made so much progress towards recovery that the barmaid had less occasion to devote herself to him than she had been doing, and was able to take some rest. She did not come so often now, or remain so long when she came. Mrs Brady continued to do all that was necessary. The less frequent and shorter visits of the girl, although Hulme acknowledged that she sadly needed rest, were nevertheless a gradual withdrawal from his sight of a presence that made convalescence a happiness. She seldom remained more than a few minutes.

One evening, however, he made bold to ask her to sit with him for a while. With a little hesitation, she drew a chair to the bedside and sat down.

'I see so little of you now, Miss Lily,' he said; 'and after all your kindness to me, I feel it hard not to be able to get opportunity enough to tell you how grateful I shall always be. I shall never forget what I owe you.'

'But there are Mrs Brady and Jim,' she answered; 'you owe still more to them. Do not begin to thank me or I shall have to go away.'

'Very well,' he answered, with a smile; but he caught one of her hands unawares and put it to his lips. 'There—forgive me, Miss Lily; my heart is very full.'

The colour rose in the girl's face, and for some seconds she forgot to withdraw her hand from his, or refrained from doing so.

'Is there no news of Jim?' he asked.

'No; none at all. A man who has been prospecting in the same district returned a week ago, but saw or heard nothing of Jim. But then, there is nothing surprising in that; the bush is a lonely place.'

'Poor Jim! I wish I saw his face again.'

'So you shall. Prospecting, you know, is tedious work; but Jim will soon be back again, successful or not, because his provisions will run out.'

After a minute's pause she asked:

'What was the reason Jim took such a fancy to you?'

'He never told me. But I suspect, from a word he let drop one night, that he knew my mother when she was a girl.'

'Ah! You said she was dead.'

'Yes, Miss Lily.' He paused a while, and added: 'Father died over two years ago. He was a clergyman. After his death mother fretted a good deal, and her health became delicate. Then two scoundrels—her trustees—made away with all her money, and the shock broke her heart. She died the same day she received their letters.'

'Her trustees' letters?'

'There is a letter-case in the pocket of that coat hanging by the door. If you will give it to me, Miss Lily, I will show you the two letters that killed my mother. They will explain everything better than I can do it.'

The girl did as he desired, and he put into her hands the two letters. She turned very pale as she read them. After reading them a second time, she handed them back without a word.

'Miss Lily! Are you ill?' he exclaimed, noticing the sudden change in her looks.

'Not very well, I think; I have had to attend the bar a great part of the last three nights. I think I will go home and lie down. Good-bye!'

She gave him her hand and rose. He looked at her with pain and perplexity. She had never parted from him before in this manner. He did not know what to say; and before he could

utter a word she was gone, merely turning her head at the door with a parting smile.

Miss Lily came no more. She did, indeed, send more than one message of inquiry, but that was all. Mrs Brady could give Hulme no explanation beyond the reasonable but unsatisfactory one that he required the girl's ministrations no longer. He wished he were able to go down to the bar and see her; but this was out of the question for some weeks yet. At last he sent a short letter to her: 'Dear Miss LILY,—Will you not come to see me any more?—Yours, R. H.' The answer was: 'Dear Mr HULME,—I hear of your convalescence regularly. I am kept very, very busy. —Yours, LILY.'

'Yours, Lily.' What pleasure this simple and familiar conclusion would have given him had the rest of the little letter been different! She had evaded an answer to his inquiry; and, with a heavy heart, he interpreted the evasion as a negative. She would not come to see him again, and the reason was an impenetrable mystery to him.

This was not the only trouble which attended his recovery. When, at length, he was able to walk about a little, he avoided going near the bar where Miss Lily was employed, and where all the news of the place was retailed and discussed. But he heard enough to make him very anxious concerning Jim Solus. Nothing had been heard of Jim since he left Coolgardie. His stock of 'tucker' could never have lasted him so long, and there was nothing to be got in the bush except lizards and snakes. He would hardly try to sustain life on these things whilst within reach of settlements. He had not been heard of at 'Twenty-five Mile,' nor at 'Hannan's,' nor at any of the mining camps. Worst sign of all, the little country horse he had taken with him had been found in the bush, some miles out, dead of thirst, with a portion of the cart still yoked to it. Miners in Coolgardie, who knew the bush well and what these things portended, shook their heads and expressed their conviction that Jim Solus was dead.

If this was so, the situation of Hulme would be a sad one. With enfeebled health, which it would take him some months to recover, he would be capable of no exertion such as the conditions of the country demanded. He began to see how foolish he had been ever to come here. He had much better have remained in England. There, at least, he had a post worth keeping. Had Jim Solus lived, successful or not, Hulme felt sure of a friend experienced in all the ways of the country. He could not avoid sharing the conviction of those who were best able to judge, that poor Jim was dead. There was nothing uncommon in a miner dying of thirst in the bush. Jim only shared the fate of many others.

And Miss Lily, for some unknown reason, had also deserted him. He felt this loss all the more because, as a stranger, he had no claim upon her, and he owed her a deep debt for her unselfish devotion to him during his illness. He had heard that barmaids frequently performed these offices of mercy for sick miners. They would not expect to be bound in any way to their patients after the latter were recovered. Why should they? Hulme was afraid he had betrayed his heart too plainly to his young nurse, and so sent her away from him. What claim could such as he have upon the thoughts of any girl in the country?

Swallowing the bitter draught as best he could, he began to consider seriously what to do next. He was afraid there was no prospect for him in Western Australia. It would take him long to acquire strength and experience enough to hold out any hope of success. It was a blind mistake to have come here at all. Thank God, he had enough money in the bank to pay his passage back to England. Whether his prospects in England would be much better than they were here, there would be time enough to consider when he got back.

One evening Mrs Brady came to him in high spirits. Her 'man' had returned home, and had been fairly successful in his expedition to 'Hannan's.' He was coming over to see Hulme by-and-by, and was at present down at one of the bars, talking to the men there.

'I suppose he has heard nothing of Jim?'

'Ah, poor Jim! No; I'm afraid there will never be anything heard of Jim again.'

After sunset Brady came to see him—a strong, bushy-haired man, with a complexion sunburnt to the colour of bronze. In his rough and hearty way he congratulated the young man on his recovery, and gave expression to his deep satisfaction that his 'missus' had been able to be of use to him.

Hulme was expressing his gratitude to Mrs Brady when her husband interrupted him.

'Why, man, a job like that is as good as a holiday to her! She'll feel the better of it for a twelvemonth to come. It's a way with women —they're curious creatures, but tremenjus good! There's the barmaid, Miss Lily, too. That girl is a brick. She deserves a better man than the fellow that's going to have her.'

'Who?' cried poor Hulme, with a painful dropping of the heart.

'He's her father's partner. I suppose you weren't long enough about to know one or the other. They have struck a good claim, I believe, and are going to float it as a company—out in the same district poor Jim Solus went to.'

'Who are they? What are their names?'

'Don't you know Miss Lily's name?'

'No; I never heard her called anything except Miss Lily.'

Hulme recollected at the moment as curious, and probably unintended, the simple signature of 'Lily' appended to the note he had received from her.

'Her father's name is Warner. His partner, the

man who is to have Miss Lily, is called Revel. They say he is a lawyer.'

Hulme was almost stunned. With a gasp he repeated the names, 'Warner—Revel,' and stared blankly before him.

'Do you know them?' asked Brady, removing the pipe from his mouth.

Hulme did not answer for a minute.

'Yes—no; that is, I have never seen the men, but I know something about them.'

'Nothing good, I'll bet. They are a shady-looking pair. Since they came to Coolgardie they have been living on the earnings of Miss Lily, and whatever their wits obtained for them.'

'But how is it known that Revel is to have Miss Lily?'

'Everybody knows it. They are gone.'

'Gone!—Where?' cried Hulme, with a start.

'To England. As I told you, they are going to float their mine—"Revel's Find" they call it—and, of course, London is the place for that kind of business. They left Coolgardie early this morning for Perth.'

Brady was kind enough to go away soon after this. Hulme was in a kind of stupor of misery. Gone!—without a word of farewell. Gone, with the men who had killed his mother, to become the wife of one of them. Oh, Miss Lily!

He recalled now, with mixed emotions of bitterness and surprise, the change in the girl's countenance when she read the two letters he had shown her. How could she consent to be the wife of Revel after reading them? Her father was no better than Revel; but still he was her father. But there was no creditable, no plausible theory that would explain her giving herself voluntarily to the other villain. She might have been engaged to him already; but no girl of honour and spirit would keep such an engagement.

Her sudden dropping of Hulme's acquaintance, after discovering that her father and lover were the false trustees of the young man's mother, was not the least perplexing or painful part of her conduct. Was she ashamed of them, but still determined to stand by them? Hulme would never have believed it of her; but there was the fact. And now that they had got a gold-mine to dispose of in London, she had gone away with them, to marry Revel as soon as the property was sold.

Hulme, hardly knowing what he did, reeled down to the bar that night. In Miss Lily's place there was now another girl. She knew Hulme, and showed herself very glad to see him.

'So Miss Lily, I hear, is gone?'

'Oh yes, gone to England. They started this morning. But didn't you see her before she went?'

'No,' he said; 'I only heard of it half-an-hour ago.'

'Well, that's curious,' remarked the girl. 'After nursing you through your illness, the least she could have done was to go and bid you good-bye. I know I should have done it—or any other girl.'

'I hear she is to be married in England,' said Hulme, with a bitterness he could not conceal from the girl. 'Perhaps her mind was too full of that.'

'If she marries Revel she will be sorry for her bargain. I always thought she detested him,' said the girl.

'Maybe the gold-mine gilds him?'

'The men don't believe he came by the mine honestly. Why, he wasn't a fortnight away, and wouldn't have known a gold-mine from a potato-garden! And what has become of Jim Solus? If Lily is fool enough to marry that man, she's likely to have troubles before her.'

But Lily knew what he was already. She knew how he had ruined Hulme's mother and tried to throw the guilt on her father. And yet, knowing this—knowing, as she must have known (for the barmaids hear everything), that he was suspected of having obtained the gold claim by unfair if not foul means—she had gone home with the man, to marry him! Faugh! Hulme could not bear to think of it. He was sorry from his heart that he was under any obligation to her—that he had ever met her. And how could Warner and Revel have known the direction in which poor Jim had gone prospecting if she had not betrayed his confidence to them? Dicky Hulme's faith in woman was gone.

(To be continued.)

OUR INDIAN NATIVE CAVALRY.

VERY little is known to the public generally, or even to the majority of military men, regarding the organisation of our Indian native cavalry regiments, being, as they are (with the exception of the three regiments of Madras Lancers), raised on a system absolutely peculiar to the country, and a relic, so to speak, of native India before the arrival of the British Government.

It will come as a surprise to most people to learn that the native trooper not only feeds and clothes himself, but that his horse, saddlery, arms (with the exception of his carbine), and transport are not the property of Government, but his own, paid for out of his own pocket, and kept up at his own proper expense.

This system, known as the '*silladar* system,' of course originated with the rough old times, when every man of the fighting classes of India

was of necessity a soldier from his birth, armed and equipped to the best of his means, and, very much as are the tribesmen on the frontier with whom we have lately been fighting, ready to join in any disturbance which might, directly or indirectly, affect him.

When a man wishes to enlist in a *silladar* cavalry regiment, he must provide himself with a horse, saddlery, a lance (if his regiment are lancers), a sword, his uniform, and his transport; or else he must be employed as a rider by some other person who is the happy possessor of all these necessaries. In the former case he is called a *silladar*, or the owner of an *assami;* and in the latter case a *bargir*, and his employer his *silladar.*

A *silladar* draws pay for his *assami* and also for his own services. Thus, if a man owns two *assamis*, he draws two lots of horse pay and one lot of pay for himself, a corresponding amount to this last being paid to the man who rides his second horse—that is to say, to his *bargir.*

In some regiments, until comparatively recently, it was quite usual for one man to own ten or twelve *assamis*, or even an entire troop. More than this, it was not unusual for an *assami* to be left by will to a man's wife or infant child; in which case the executors employed a substitute (*awas kidmat*) to ride for the woman or child, thus enabling the owner to draw horse pay. This practice is still common in some native states.

Of late years the practice of employing *bargirs* has been discouraged, as it is thought advisable that every trooper should himself have some stake in the regiment; and only a sufficient number to ride the second chargers of the native officers are permitted to be engaged.

The upkeep of his own transport by the *silladar* is managed in this wise. All the horses in a regiment are told off in pairs, and to every pair is attached a *saise*, or groom, and a transport pony, with pack-saddle, line gear, &c., complete. Now, the owners of those two horses have not only to buy that pony and its belongings between them, but have in addition to feed it, keep up its equipment, and pay the *saise.* Hence an *assami* may be said to include half a pony and equipment—the upkeep of a servant and half the feed of a pony being reckoned among the liabilities of its *silladar.*

Theoretically, a man may join bringing his horse, &c., with him, provided his outfit meet with the approval of his commanding officer; and formerly, in the infancy of *silladar* cavalry, he generally did this. Modern ideas, however, require a better horse than the native would generally have facilities for obtaining, and also demand a certain amount of uniformity in saddlery, arms, and equipment.

Nowadays, therefore, by the institution of regimental funds, originally started by an advance from Government, all the items of a *silladar's* equipment can be purchased regimentally at a certain fixed price; and when a recruit joins he must pay the money equivalent of his *assami*, whatever it may be in his particular regiment.

Of course, it is desirable that a man should on joining pay the whole amount required of him, and start clear; but, in the case of a desirable man, it is usual to accept something less than the full *assami* price, advancing the remainder out of regimental funds at a small rate of interest, and recovering it by instalments from his monthly pay. Further, if an old soldier should require any new article of uniform, saddlery, line gear, &c., he goes to the regimental stores, where such articles are kept (having been purchased in large quantities at wholesale prices by the 'store fund,' and where a staff of tailors, saddlers, shoemakers, &c. are employed), and becomes a debtor to the regiment to the extent of his 'store bill;' which amount, unless he wishes to pay ready money, is recovered in the same way. To a great extent, then, the commanding officer of a *silladar* cavalry regiment is a banker or trader, and keeps, on behalf of his regiment, a debit and credit account with each one of his men individually.

There are many funds, but as a horse is the most important item of a cavalry soldier's equipment, the '*chundah* fund,' which provides for the purchase of remounts (or, in some regiments, for their breeding), may be said to be the most important.

The fund is of course started, in the first place, by a Government advance, enabling the original commanding officer of a new regiment to purchase a certain number of horses.

These horses are issued to men who join as they pay for them, the price fixed being the average amount at which remounts can be obtained.

When a man leaves his regiment he may take his horse, or indeed any of his property, with him, or may sell it back to the regiment at the price he gave for it; in the case of saddlery, equipment, &c., a small yearly deduction being made on the original price for wear-and-tear. As, however, horses die and become unserviceable, and it would be exceedingly hard on a man who lost his horse to have to procure a new one out of his own pocket, every man pays a monthly subscription to the '*chundah* fund' by way of insurance, on the receipt of which the regiment undertakes to replace his horse in case of anything happening to it, unless the accident is the result of his own carelessness. All cast horses become the property of the '*chundah* fund.' The 'pony *chundah* fund' provides the men with ponies in much the same way.

After the purchase of a horse, its feeding is the next most necessary item, so that the 'grass fund,' which is called by different names in different parts of India, may be reckoned as the next most important.

Government allows a tract of land to every regiment, the grass on which is supposed to be sufficient to supply the animals belonging to it; thus, only the cutting and carting has to be paid for by the men, and is taken from them in equal monthly instalments, the original lump sum having been found by the fund.

In most cases the land allotted to a regiment produces more grass than is absolutely necessary for its wants, in which case the commanding officer generally sells the surplus, thus minimising the ultimate charge against the men. In most cases the *silladar* buys his own grain in the open market.

The natural inference to be drawn from reading this account of the system, at all events by the uninitiated, is that the native cavalry soldier must be a man of means, in the first place, and must be uncommonly well paid to enable him to meet all the charges to which he is liable.

This is so far true insomuch that in order to become a *silladar* a man must have a certain amount of money at his disposal to pay for his *assami;* and in this one great advantage of the system lies, providing, as it does, that only a superior class of men are enlisted. Another advantage of the system, that it produces the cheapest cavalry in the world, is not at first apparent; but when one learns that the pay of a *silladar* (horse pay and all) when he joins is thirty-one rupees per month, or about £2 at the present rate of exchange, this will be more easily understood.

To make the above sum sufficient for the various expenses a man is bound to incur, and to leave enough for his private wants and those of his family, is, even in a country of small coins and infinitesimal charges, like India, by no means an easy matter; and the ability so to manage his funds that the men may be subjected to as small deductions as possible, and at the same time that his regiment may be sound financially, is not one of the least necessary qualifications of an officer commanding *silladar* cavalry.

Native commissioned and non-commissioned officers are in much better case, as their pay is materially increased, while their expenses are very little greater than those of the men; but even with the addition of good-conduct pay, which may add two or three rupees per month to a trooper's income, it is difficult for an uninitiated European to understand what advantage can possibly accrue to our native cavalry soldiers from serving the *Sirkar*, or Government.

The majority of regiments have a complement of nine British officers (not including the medical officer), there being four native officers per squadron, and a '*woordie* major,' or native adjutant.

The highest native commissioned rank is that of '*ressaldar* major.' *Ressaldars* and *ressaidars* come next, and the lowest grade are *jemadars*.

Of the non-commissioned grades the *koti duffadar* (corresponding to the squadron sergeant-major in British cavalry) is the highest; then come the *duffadars* or sergeants, and then the *lance-duffadars*. This last grade is merely an appointment, and carries with it no additional pay.

The native commissioned officers may either rise from the ranks or be granted direct commissions. Such commissions are often granted to men of standing who are likely to bring a following of recruits.

Taken as a whole, *silladar* cavalry, being, as it is, perfectly independent of transport, and ready to start on any march at a few hours' notice, is about the most perfect thing of the kind that can be imagined. In addition to this, the stake which every man has in the regiment is a great inducement to good behaviour. A good class are enlisted, and expense is saved to the State. The majority of the men who enlist are soldiers born, and it is only necessary to see one of our Indian cavalry regiments on parade to be convinced of the efficacy of the '*silladar* system.'

VINDICATION.

PART III.

THE steps were high and went sharply downward, a grim and dismal passage showing itself in the flickering candle-light to be low-roofed and narrow, and with an unwholesome slime hanging about its walls—the damp and mouldy odour, either from that or from the place to which it led, strong in my nostrils. But I saw that all was hung so thickly with cobwebs—a flimsy barrier of them straight across, save five or six steps below—that neither honest man nor murderer could have set foot in that place for many days.

I did not pause to consider what the presence I was aware of could have been. My thoughts were at that moment otherwise arrested.

I had held the candle, looking down, wondering to what secret hiding-place this hidden passage would presently lead my steps—and full of a vague hope and exaltation it would have been impossible to put into words—and my eye had fallen on something lying but a short distance from me. I went down a step to lift it. It lay at one side, close to the wall, and was of a small, square shape—all this strange confusion of events surging in my brain so that I knew

not what to look for next—and when I had it in my hand I saw it was a small metal box.

It was metal from the weight of it, encrusted with rust and blackness. How long it had lain, lost or forgotten, in that grisly place I did not pause to consider, being full of the hope of opening it; for I was not afraid to turn my back to the passage now, and take my new possession to the fire.

If it had had tongue to speak! I roughly scraped and rubbed it; and then, putting all my force into the effort, strove with finger and thumb to bring it apart. I might have spared my strength. It gave at the first touch, being only a plain box with lid; and I stood gazing on a small piece of wood that had dropped out of it and lay on the floor at my feet.

As I lifted it, and my eyes fell on figures roughly scratched on one side, a certain disappointment fell on me, for I could see no words of any kind. There appeared to be something on each side, cut with a knife or some sharp tool; but I could only suppose that each was some sort of measurement, and stare at it again and again. Four on each—rudely made, but amazingly legible—as if some calculation had been taken from the four points of the compass.

A light broke in upon me. The blood rushed to my brain. The writing I held in my hand was a guide.

I was certain of it now; I was on the track of treasure. And I should not have to seek farther, in every crack and corner of the place; here were, doubtless, the very measurements by which I should find it. The secret passage had been known only to Francis Prestyn, who had been lord of all that land. Might he not have escaped after having hidden it, dropping this box with the measurements he had prepared, lest his recollection should have lost aught when he came back again, in his haste to be gone?

There were four marks on one side. I would take that side first. I would try the walls, the floor, the very ceiling, it might be—everything the room contained. And now I rejoiced that I had brought tools with me, that I had all facility of measurement. I was in a strange, wild fever.

'Tis written there is none knows what is in the heart of man; and yet, if I had been forewarned, I could not have believed it possible. I own it, to my shame—with all this thought of treasure, something laid hold upon me—and I fear I thought but little of Francis Prestyn in that hour. The fever that they say is in the breast of each man living—yet I would have sworn it was not in mine—began to burn within me.

I was on the track of treasure. The wind shrieked it; I heard the echo of it in the blast ere each gust broke; the solitary place cried it aloud. I went to the window and looked out, drawing aside a curtain, with a sudden fear of watchers, a sordid dread of any soul sharing the secret with me. It was dark and moonless as before. I could hear an owl hoot in the ivy; and no other sound smote upon my ear, near or far, but the roaring of the hurricane.

I drew the curtain back again in unreasonable anger that I had lost so many hours, and took the measurement in my hands.

Where should I begin? Upon the wall which contained the sliding panel—for no other reason than that it did contain it, and that my eyes went all the time to its gaping stairway. I took the first measurement from top to bottom, again from bottom to top, the third from the more distant corner, the fourth from the shorter—and stood stupidly staring as one in a dream. For the measurement on that side of the wood I had happed on first was the measurement of the panel.

It was that, and that only. If I had had the wood in my hand earlier it would have led me straight to the place where I should have pressed; it would have laid bare to me the whole secret of it and of the hidden way. And now the one thought stared me in the face—where was the treasure?

Was it to be looked for in the room; or should I first see whither this stairway led, and know for myself that I had been right in my imaginings? That it led in some way into the outer air I had no moment's doubt in my mind; yet as I paused, asking myself the question, and looked down, candle in hand, at the gloom and darkness of it, I determined to descend.

The damp, unwholesome odour grew strong within my nostrils as I stepped into its narrowness. I passed through the wall of cobweb, setting my feet slowly on each step, remembering, with a strange sense of one walking in a dream, I had left another candle burning in the room above. Yet I was conscious of no fear, only of a strange chill. The remembrance came to me that, only a few short hours before, I had thought the room I had left behind the grimmest and most dismal place I had set eyes on. Now, with its leaping fire and with a short familiarity, the recollection of it as I trod this gloomy stairway was of a place of warmth and light.

And now the narrow passage I was in began to turn and curve. I followed the twistings of it, and I knew that I was soon treading in an opposite direction to that in which I had started. Yet the darkness, the mouldering odours, its narrowness and lowness of roofing, held no fear. I would have gone on had a fiend awaited me.

My foot strained at last to find another step. I was on level ground. There was such impenetrable blackness and darkness around that I held the candle high above my head, my eyes growing slowly accustomed to the gloom, my steps advancing foot by foot, sometimes stumbling, yet certain that I was descending no longer. And as the walls of a room became visible, it began to be borne in upon me that the stairway did

not lead to the outer air at all—that I was in a dungeon.

A black and dismal place, long and narrow. I gave it the name of dungeon in my own thoughts, because no other came to my mind at the moment, peering round at its damp-encrusted walls and down at its uneven stone floor, where a moment later I nearly stumbled over something in the darkness.

I threw the light upon it, straining my eyes to the utmost. My hands went out and touched it, and a riot was in my veins again, for, handling it on all sides, I knew it to be a box—a chest perhaps—a long, narrow receptacle of some kind. But I thrust my arms into it—and it was empty.

I could see clearer now, and held the candle down that I might look at its sides. It was of some black wood, curiously carven, and with a handle set at the end nearest me; no doubt there was another. I held the light over, and saw that it held nothing but one or two stones that lay in discoloured settings—pieces of glass I thought them at first—which might once have formed part of a necklace. I moved it a little to one side.

Loose upon the ground, close beside it, was a small, scattered heap—something dropped there, plainly, in the emptying of the treasure-box—for that this was the thing I sought I had now no doubt. There were coins—valueless, one might have thought at first, and copper-coloured, like a child's hoard of pence; but, dull and discoloured as they were, I had knowledge enough, as I raised one and turned it over and over, to see that I was stooping over gold.

I looked for more, carrying my light about the dismal place, and peering in every corner. There was earth on the stones in one place, and something lying near it that looked like a spade; but beyond the few jewels—for so I took them to be—in the box, and the scattered heap beside it, my eyes found nothing more. The treasure was hidden.

Why it had been emptied out from the chest I did not know, nor did I wait to think upon it. It was enough for one man, surely, that he had found its hiding-place; for that it was near me, soon to be within my very reach, there was no manner of doubt in my mind.

It was hidden in this dungeon, or, rather, small vault, a place occupying little space, yet of a considerable length, known only—that was clearer and clearer to my vision—to one acquainted with the secret of the sliding panel.

It was all plain at last, even as an open book. Francis Prestyn had known the secret of the panelled room. I saw that he had lain in it, intending to hide the treasure in the dungeon; that he had been awake and stirring when others were asleep, even as I.

I set the candle on the floor, taking the measure of the place foursquare with hands that were hot and cold alternately, for I knew my triumph was at hand.

The rotting odour of the place had no power to turn me faint. Inch by inch, foot by foot, I crawled round upon the floor, setting the candle near me, following the figures the long-dead man had made out on the other side of the wood. And it was even as I had hoped—nay, rather, as I had steadily believed from the moment I had set eyes upon this place—they led me slowly and surely to one spot. I stood up and stretched my arms, and uttered a cry that was lost in the roar of the wind. I had found the hiding-place of the treasure.

A thousand things crowded before my vision, even there in that dismal solitude. My memory went back; and, step by step, I saw the path that had led me hither. And the gale, screaming overhead, was a pæan of triumph. And my life before had led up to this—was for this only, and to this end. A fierce intoxication, a thirst of gain, a mad fever rioted in my veins.

I put the candle on the floor, and left it flickering there—in the place that was the centre of all to me—over the treasure that had drawn me from the Low Countries, and went up the narrow stairway, wanting nothing now but certain tools, knowing that I had within me the strength of three.

The fire burned redly now, but I did not pause to do more than seek what I needed and find it, being in a fever to retrace my way.

The tools were in my hands. I had left the glow and warmth behind, and groped my way down the narrow steps. And when I had accomplished the journey, when I set eyes upon my candle again, flaring in the darkness, throwing strange shadows on the stone that I had traced out inch by inch by the dead man's measurement, my heart was nigh to bursting.

This was the end of it, and to this purpose was I born. He had been the hider, I the finder. We were both of one name, one blood—almost one soul—and no foot but mine, I could see, had ever disturbed the silence of this place from that night.

And now the stone, worked at with a very giant's strength, was slowly loosening. I could have uttered that wild cry again, but feared lest, in spite of the wind, some one might hear me. I raised it inch by inch, moving the candle a hundred times—going round it on my knees—stooping over it, tools in hand; and at last, with a grip that might have had the strength of three in it, I wrenched it from its place, and did not even let my eyes look into the hollow till I had taken up the candle.

I heard the tempest shrieking like a lost soul as I looked down into the hiding-place.

There was no treasure there—but the skeleton

of a man, the flesh long mouldered from the bones; and, on what had once been the finger of a hand, a signet-ring.

. . . . . .

It was all before me—as if I, late vindicator of Francis Prestyn's honour, had known him followed and watched. I saw him dig the hiding-place for the treasure that he might preserve it for his king. I heard the dogging step of murder. I had it borne in upon me that the face of the man who looked out from the narrow stairway, waiting to strike him down, was that of the innkeeper—as if I had been a watcher by his side.

But it was the earlier figure that was last before my eyes.

It was the one I had seen in the room above, pacing the floor, looking into the drowsy fire. I saw him bending over the carvings on the wood, hopeful, eager, with eyes alight, making the measurements—for his grave.

QUEER METHODS OF KEEPING ACCOUNTS.

'THAT 'S the way I 've kept my accounts all my life, and my aunt before me,' said an illiterate grocer to a county-court judge recently, while holding up a slate upon which were chalk-marks which conjured up memories of our earliest school-days, with noughts and crosses. 'The circles are shillings, and a stroke is sixpence; when the money is paid I rub the marks out.' 'It looks,' remarked the judge, 'like an Egyptian inscription. And in this way you have kept your accounts on the door?' 'Yes,' promptly replied the litigant; 'and I have never before had a dispute over sixpence.' In giving judgment for the plaintiff, the judge remarked that people should deal at shops where accounts were kept in a more orthodox fashion, and then disputes would not arise.

But, in spite of twenty-seven years of compulsory education, accounts are still in many instances kept in a more or less original fashion.

Some years ago there lived in a Cornish fishing-village an old man who kept a general dealer's shop—the only shop in the place. He was quite illiterate, and kept his accounts in a most ingenious fashion. For every customer he obtained a square stick of deal about eighteen inches long, and on this stick he kept tally of the amounts due to him by means of various-shaped notches cut with a knife on the edges of the stick. When a customer settled the account the stick was burned. No one but the old man understood the meaning of the notches, or which stick belonged to any individual customer, with the result that at his death the outstanding accounts on the big bundle of sticks found under the counter could not be collected.

Another uneducated tradesman—a shoemaker—had a most elaborate method of keeping his 'books.' Against the wall of his workshop he had a large board erected, which he painted black. Into this board he used to drive hobnails, tacks, brass and steel rivets, and other nails used in his trade, to represent work done. For instance, the soling of a pair of boots would be represented by a small piece of leather tacked on to the board by means of a brass rivet; but if the boots were hobnailed, then a hobnail was used instead of the brass rivet. A steel rivet indicated a patch on the sole, and a patch on the upper was shown by the addition of a piece of thin leather. New boots were shown drawn in chalk, as were also the hieroglyphics representing the customers' names. Some peculiarity of manner, dress, or surroundings was chosen to indicate whose account it was. The parson's account was placed under the rough drawing of a church; the curate, who wore glasses, was represented by a sketch of them; a couple of circles, one blank and one with a dot in the centre, stood for the postman, who had lost an eye. A beer-barrel was the innkeeper's sign; the village pump did duty for the milkman; while the schoolmaster was personated by the drawing of a cane. The old man was a great wag, but he never had his accounts challenged, in spite of their quaintness.

Much amusement was caused in a west of England bankruptcy case recently, when, in response to the request for the production of his books, the debtor—an ironmonger—handed up a book marked 'Ledger,' in which, instead of the regulation numerals, were rough sketches of kettles, saucepans, frying-pans, lamps, and similar articles, together with figures shaped like wriggling snakes, and signs reminding one of a shorthand-writer's notes. 'I asked for your books of account, not for your copy of the inscription on Cleopatra's Needle, which I take this to be,' said the judge. 'Please your honour,' said the debtor, 'that *is* my account-book.' Although this man could both read and write, yet he kept his accounts in this fashion in order that his wife, who was a great drinker, should not know what the takings of the shop were. It took over a week for the bankrupt to unravel the mysteries of this book and dictate them to a clerk.

A washerwoman, who was employed by a country gentleman, used to keep her accounts on the blackened beam of her kitchen. A chalk-mark across the beam stood for a day's work, and one half-way across for half a day. Her account against the hall ran into several pounds before she ventured to ask for it, and the gentleman had to visit her cottage and inspect the

beam so as to satisfy himself as to the correctness of the amount.

An old lady in a small country town has kept for the last twenty years, and still keeps, her accounts in doggerel verse. For example (and the specimens given are actual extracts from her books), if Mrs Jones has half-a-pound of tea on 'tick,' it is entered thus:

Mrs Jones doth owe to me,
For half-a-pound of souchong tea,.....1s. 4d.

Or if Mr Smith buys a pound of sugar, two pounds of rice, and a Dutch cheese, the entry will be, under Smith's name:

A pound of moist sugar,
And two of best rice,
With four pounds of Dutch cheese,
Which I hope will be nice.....1s. 11½d.

And so on, all through the book. In some cases the verses express doubt as to the customer's intention or ability to pay for the goods ordered. Thus:

Lizzie Barber for her father
Had some flour to-day;
Some apples too, and toilet-soap,
But I don't believe he'll pay.....2s. 3d.
[This booking work will drive me mad
When I think of folk like they.]

The lines in brackets are very suggestive, if not exactly grammatical.

Such methods of keeping accounts as these often produce strange and comical predicaments. An old lady who kept her accounts in chalk on the back of her shop door, in a system known to only herself, fell ill. Her son came home to manage the shop until his mother got better, but he did not understand her method of 'booking.' The result was that every time a customer came to 'settle up,' the son had to unhinge the door and carry it up to his mother's bedroom, so that she might calculate the amount of the debt. He stood this for a day or two, and then gave the door a coat of paint, thus settling the accounts once and for all. The old lady declared, when she got down again, that by the action of her son she lost nearly a hundred pounds.

A tailor, who used to jot down his customers' indebtedness in lead-pencil on the whitewashed wall of his shop, was taken ill with smallpox, and was removed to the isolation hospital. On his recovery he found that the sanitary authorities had disinfected his house, and used lime-wash to such good purpose that all his accounts had disappeared. In this case, however, the authorities were forced to compensate the man, and it was generally considered that he saw his opportunity and seized it, judging by the amount he received.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

OUR DAILY BREAD.



MONG the multitude of topics considered at the Bristol meeting of the British Association, that which has possibly aroused the greatest interest is the presidential utterance with regard to the world's wheat-supply. If Sir William Crookes's figures and assumptions are correct, the world will find itself short of the necessary amount of wheat with which to feed its inhabitants within a very few years, and by the year 1931, so far as the staff of life is concerned, famine will stare us in the face. The remedy is to be found, not by increasing the area of wheat-growing soil, but by making the ground more productive than it at present is. In Denmark the yield of wheat is 41·8 bushels per acre, while in Australasia it is only about one-seventh of that amount—the average yield of all countries being about twelve and a half bushels per acre. If the yield for the whole world can be raised to twenty bushels, mankind can rest in the assurance of plenty for a long period of time. Experimental farming by Sir John Lawes and Sir Henry Gilbert has long ago conclusively proved that by scientific study of plant foods and their application to the soil the yield of a field can be increased a great deal more than an hundredfold. The chief of these foods is nitrogen, in the form of nitrate of soda; and Sir William Crookes points out that although this natural product is not inexhaustible, it can be manufactured by electrical process. By this process, supposing that the power of Niagara were employed in providing the necessary energy, enough nitrate of soda could be obtained to supply the world's wants at less cost than it can now be brought from Chili. There is also another source of nitrogen which at present we throw into the sea and waste: possibly long before the year 1931 some satisfactory means may have been discovered of so treating the sewage of our large towns that it can profitably be used for enriching the soil. The electrical production of nitrate for agricultural purposes was discussed in the article on 'Cordite' in this *Journal* for August 3, 1895.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD ONES.

For more than three hundred years a light has been shown at Tynemouth Castle for the guidance of mariners entering the river. At first it took the form of a wood or coal fire, and it was not until the present century that this blazing beacon was replaced by a battery of oil-lamps

with reflectors, which, until the other day, shed their light from a square tower which for long has been a conspicuous landmark. Owing to the need of defensive works on the spot, and seeing that other lights have been established in the neighbourhood, it was decided to do away with this old beacon, and to set up in its stead a modern lighthouse on an island about three and a half miles to the northward. This new lighthouse has now been finished, and as it is fitted with the latest improvements, it presents a great contrast to the beacon which it has superseded. The dioptric illuminating apparatus, a mass of glass and gun-metal weighing between three and four tons, floats in a bath of quicksilver, so that it can freely revolve with as little friction as possible; indeed, the touch of a finger is sufficient to make it turn in its bath two or three times. The light shows two powerful flashes at intervals of twenty seconds, and in clear weather will be visible for a distance of seventeen miles.

ILLUMINATED BUOYS.

Another form of beacon for mariners, of smaller dimensions but hardly less important, is the illuminated buoy. These floating lamp-holders, placed in an estuary where the available channel is often only a narrow one bounded by mud or sandbanks only a few feet below the surface of the water, are invaluable to shipping. Hitherto the illuminant chiefly employed has been compressed gas, necessitating a high-pressure reservoir and compressing machinery. Mr Wigham, whose name has long been known in connection with lighthouse apparatus, has introduced a mineral oil lamp which can be fitted to any existing buoy, and will burn for a long period at very small cost. The maintenance of one form of lamp can be kept up at a cost of one penny for twenty-four hours, and as no compressing machinery is required, this is the only expense, plus the original cost of the lamp. The approach to a port—such as that of Liverpool, for instance, where a ship has to enter through a long avenue of buoys—could by this invention be almost as well lighted as a city street.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

The 'Northern dawn,' or 'Merry dancers,' as they call it in the Shetland Islands and some other places, is a phenomenon which is very seldom seen in the south of England—so seldom, indeed, that when it does occur it is not recognised by the multitude, who attribute the appearance to 'search-lights' or some other mundane cause. On the 9th of September last the northern sky was lit up by an aurora which was plainly seen over the whole of southern England, and formed a most beautiful display. It was almost free from colour, but the light was strong enough to enable one to note the time by an ordinary watch. It is noteworthy that the display did not come altogether as a surprise, because for some days an unusually large sun-spot had been observed, and it is well known that bright auroræ very often make their appearance when these spots are passing the central meridian of the sun's disc. The spot in question was estimated to measure 15,000 miles in diameter, an area large enough to cover four globes the size of our earth. It could be plainly seen with the eye alone through a protective screen of smoked glass.

A CHEMICAL FIRE-EXTINGUISHER.

According to an American technical journal, aqua ammonia—i.e. the common liquid ammonia to be obtained at the oil-shops—forms a most efficient fire-extinguisher, and several instances are given of its power to arrest incipient conflagration. In one case a pile of cotton seed, several tons in weight, had caught fire, probably spontaneously—the centre of the mass resembling a solid body of live-coal. This was at once put out by the emptying upon the pile of half-a-gallon of ammonia. In another case the vapour from a tank of gasoline caught fire in a laundry, the room being filled with flame. The fire was at once annihilated by throwing into the room a bottle containing a gallon and a half of ammonia, procured from a chemist's shop which happily was situated next door. The chemist, in reporting the matter, stated that the effect was instantaneous, the flames giving place to torrents of black smoke, and in a moment every trace of fire was gone. The most surprising feature of the occurrence is that the tank of gasoline remained intact, although the vapour from it was the initial cause of the outbreak.

THE CONQUEST OF THE AIR.

A French journal recently published an illustrated description of a new flying-machine, designed by M. Ader and called the 'Avion.' This machine has been constructed under the auspices of, and with the help of subsidies from, the French War Department, and although it broke down at its first trial through the occurrence of an unexpected squall, it showed plainly before that catastrophe stopped its career that it had the power of rising from the ground. The huge machine has the appearance of a bat, and carries in front two propellers, which are worked by steam-engines of immense power but light weight. The wings are merely intended to support the apparatus in the air, and do not flap like those of a bird, but they are movable at the shoulder, in order that the centre of gravity of the machine can be modified as required. The entire machine is built up of bamboo fibre and steel wires, and the inventor claims that he has adopted a principle which has not been recognised by other aspirants in the same field. He has noted that in the wings of birds, of bats, and of insects the

spiral form is always found, and that nature in the structure of wings never departs from that principle, which he believes constitutes the basis of aërostation. The wrecked machine is now in order once more, and it is hoped that the French military authorities will once more sanction experiments which will decide whether it will fly or not.

ELECTRIC TRACTION.

London has now its second underground electric railway, and it represents a great improvement upon the first. The new line runs from the Mansion House to Waterloo Station, a mile and a half away on the south side of the Thames. The carriages are commodious and comfortable, and the whole of the line, which embraces two tunnels, one for the up and the other for the down traffic, is lighted by electric lamps sunk into the tunnel walls. The air of these tunnels is cool and perfectly pure, for each train draws with it a fresh supply; and, of course, there are no stifling products of combustion to deal with, as in the first underground railway, where steam locomotives are used. Other electric lines are in progress, so that in a short time London will be pierced by tunnels in every direction. In this way the constantly increasing difficulties owing to congested street traffic will at last find a remedy.

A NEW MATCH.

As the satisfactory outcome of experiments which have been in progress for some time past at the French government match factories at Pantin, the object of which has been to produce a lucifer-match without the employment of phosphorus, a match has been invented which it is believed will meet every requirement needed, while at the same time its manufacture, from the absence of phosphorus in its composition, will not induce that terrible necrosis of which we have lately heard so much in connection with our own factories. No information is given as to the price at which the new match can be placed on the market, and unfortunately cost has a great deal more to do with the adoption of any new thing than the consideration of any benefit which may accrue to makers or consumers; but we presume that the match will compete in price favourably with the old one. It is said to ignite with ease and certainty on being rubbed on any rough surface.

MOUNTAIN SICKNESS.

In a recent lecture by Dr Arthur Neve, in which he described his travels in Kashmir and little Tibet, some valuable information was given as to difficulty of breathing experienced by mountaineers at high altitudes. Dr Neve states that he found that if more than 8000 feet or 10,000 feet are traversed in a day, the traveller is almost sure to suffer from mountain sickness; but if the ascent is made with greater deliberation no inconvenience is experienced. His party therefore made it a rule to encamp on their way towards a mountain-top in order that they might get acclimatised, and they found that, although the mercurial pressure was getting comparatively low, their breathing maintained its usual rate. So thoroughly did Dr Neve get accustomed to the rarefied air that at a height considerably over 20,000 feet he was able to take eighty paces to the minute without feeling any untoward results from the exertion.

A REGISTER OF OLD LONDON.

Although our British metropolis has been greatly improved during the past half-century, both as regards sanitation and architectural beauty, the cost, in the loss of many picturesque features and buildings of historic interest, has been very great. Builders, speculators, vestries, and those who have to do with this exchange of new things for old rather pride themselves upon having no sentimental feeling about relics of past times and past phases of life, and these have too often been swept away without a regret. Happily this will be so no longer. Some years ago the late William Morris organised a society to protect ancient buildings, and in connection with this society a committee was appointed for the purpose of compiling a register of old things worth preserving, and beauty-spots liable to be defaced within an area comprising a large part of greater London. It may be a building, an open space, a beautiful tree, or even a signboard. The item, whatever it be, is catalogued, and its description is accompanied by careful plans, drawings, and photographs. More than this, the committee have obtained the recognition of the London County Council, and the outcome of this is that a permanent body has been appointed to make a register or list of buildings of historic or architectural interest. It is still more satisfactory to learn that by an act passed this session the Council has acquired power to purchase or provide for the maintenance of buildings or places which come under the same description.

ICE FOR DOMESTIC USE.

Although demand is supposed to stimulate supply, especially when that demand assumes the form of necessity, the want is not always met as readily as we should expect it to be. During the recent hot weather, for example, when men were struck down by heat apoplexy, there has been a constant demand for ice which has not been at all adequately responded to. The best hotels, of course, have their regular supply of ice, and some thousands of tons are brought to the metropolis, or manufactured there, every week. But what is wanted is a retail house-to-house supply of the article in small quantities and at

a moderate price, such as the inhabitants of some of the Continental towns and cities enjoy. Such a branch of trade attached to any of our large supply stores, or started as an independent industry, would speedily attain large proportions, and would pay well. At present a householder who requires a small quantity of ice does not know where to get it, unless as a favour he obtains it, rough and of doubtful quality, from the fishmonger. We suppose that we may thank the extreme variability of our climate for the circumstance that an industry of this kind has not long ago been established here.

WINDMILLS.

It will possibly surprise many persons to learn that windmills are coming into extended use, for it is not uncommon to see a structure of the kind in a ruinous state and destitute of sails. But that is true only of the old-fashioned wooden erection, the new mill, which is finding such favour, being an improved contrivance made of steel, and wheel-like in general appearance. The new mill is used chiefly for irrigation purposes, pumping water so that it may be either stored or at once distributed over the land according to requirements. Recent extended experiments show that although the wind is proverbially a fickle agent to depend upon, it will do a great deal of work in the course of a year; and as it is a free labourer, there is a great attraction in its employment. These experiments were made with a sixteen-foot geared windmill at the agricultural station of Wisconsin, the windmill or engine being attached to pumps of different size and pattern according to the strength of the breeze, and a tank which contained a measured quantity of water, which emptied itself every hour. The total quantity of water pumped in one year was sufficient to cover seventy-nine acres to a depth of one foot. During a large portion of the time the wind was not strong enough to turn the mill, and the time for which it was actually in motion works out at 14·32 hours per day. It will thus be seen that the agriculturist has here a valuable worker, but one who must be allowed to rest as often as he pleases to do so. The possibilities of this motive-power were considered in the article, 'The Wasted Wind,' published in our issue for March 19, 1898.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

The late Mr George Holloway, M.P. for Stroud, at one time a member of the parliamentary commission on 'Old-Age Pensions,' said that if the thing was to be done at all the thrifty members of the community must do it for themselves. Mr Holloway's scheme, as carried out at Stroud, has proved a valuable object-lesson to the community; and, as already described in the article on 'Old-Age Pensions' in *Journal* for August 20, 1898, has been adopted with some improvements at Tunbridge Wells. In 1896 the membership of this latter society was 1561, at the beginning of this year it had increased to 2500, and new centres are now and again being established. The objects are thoroughly utilitarian and praiseworthy, being the relief of members during sickness and infirmity, the provision of medical attendance and medicine, the securing of a sum of money to be paid during old age and for funeral expenses of a member's wife, as well as the assistance of distressed members. For the benefit of numerous inquirers, we may mention that the address of the chief secretary of the Tunbridge Wells society is Mr R. Kember, 69 Calverley Road, Tunbridge Wells.

SONG.

Fly not, summer—fly not yet,
Though the winter chilly
Touch with frosty finger-tips
Hollyhock and lily.

Butterflies sip nectar still
From the hearts of roses;
On the sunflower's golden disc
Still the bee reposes.

Fly not, summer-time of youth!
Fain we'd have thee linger,
Though grim Age may beckon us
With a trembling finger.

Yet—farewell, O sunny days
Bright with love and laughter;
Rainbows span the distant years,
Joys return—Hereafter.

M. L. Addey.

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SIXTH SERIES.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND:

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

By W. E. Cule.

CHAPTER I.

THE Bishop of Hexminster is at the present time the most popular prelate in the United Kingdom. His benignity, his sympathy, and his ability to put himself into another's place invariably gain for him the warm regard of his associates, while his kindness and consideration have made him adored by all his servants. He is, in fact, a model gentleman, a perfect bishop.

His popularity has not always been so great. A year or two ago his sympathies were not as warm as they are now. His judgments of other men were more severe; he was apt to be dogmatic on moral points. Yet very few of those who rejoice at the change are aware that it dates from his last visit to the Stallands, and that it is closely connected with the brief but mysterious disappearance of Lady Stalland's diamond.

It was the evening of his arrival, and he stood upon the hearthrug in the drawing-room. A little girl was sitting upon the rug almost at his feet. He had come downstairs after dressing for dinner, to find her the only occupant of the room, and had entered into conversation.

'And what are you doing, my dear?' he asked, after the first questions had been answered.

'I'm playing,' said the child seriously.

'That's very nice,' was the Bishop's smiling remark. 'But what are you playing?'

'I'm playing diamonds. Look at them.'

The Bishop looked. In the chubby pink hand extended to him he saw some half-dozen diamond-shaped pieces of glass. He did not examine them.

'They's not *weal* diamonds,' the child went on half-confidentially; 'but I'm making believe they are. That's just as good.'

'Indeed?' said the Bishop, with another smile.

'Yes, just as good. Do you ever make-believe at all, you'self?'

Again the Bishop smiled. 'I—I don't know,' he replied kindly. 'But I don't think I do.'

'Don't you ever make-believe you's a piwut? That's what Cousin Bertie mostly does. Or p'waps you like best to be a sleeping beauty, or a king, or a wobber?'

'Well, no. I haven't tried any of those,' he replied, with increased amusement.

'Why don't you, then?' said the lady of diamonds persistently. 'It's splendid to make-believe you's a piwut. I often does it, and I go and get lots of things from ev'wywhere. Piwuts and wobbers do, 'cause Bertie said so.'

'That's good fun,' said the Bishop. 'Do you put the things back afterwards?'

The dark curls shook merrily. 'Sometimes I forget,' was the whispered answer.

'That's good fun too,' declared the Bishop, most immorally; and then there was a pause in the conversation.

The 'diamonds' glittered brightly under the light from the window as they were tossed carelessly from one little hand to another. Then they were all thrown up together, falling with a soft *thud, thud, thud* upon the carpet. The pink hands promptly began to collect them, counting and recounting them once and again.

The Bishop watched smilingly. Then his eye fell upon something which lay glittering in the silky hair of a rug near that on which he stood. There was no mistaking the object. It was one of the 'diamonds.'

It must have rolled to that distance after the last throw. The counting was going on briskly. 'One, two, three, four, five, six. One, two, three.' The curly head was bent low. He moved softly until he was just within reach of the unnoticed prize. It was an impulse of mischief.

'One, two, three, four, five, six!' The Bishop stooped with remarkable celerity and stretched out

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his hand. He was back in an instant, and had only just resumed his old position when the little face was turned.

'Well,' he asked innocently, 'are they all there?'

'I 'll count again,' answered the child. 'But I think they 's all here. One, two, three, four, five'——

The Bishop actually chuckled. His chuckle was such an audible one that for a moment the counting was suspended, and the counter listened suspiciously. He immediately looked as grave and harmless as possible.

'I beg your pardon, my lord.'

It was a footman bearing a lamp. The Bishop moved, and the man placed his burden in a recess. He kept his head bent, but could not entirely conceal his features.

'Martin!' said the Bishop sharply.

The man looked up. There was something of shame in the movement.

'You here?' said the Bishop in a tone of displeased surprise. 'You here?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered the footman.

The man's face had flushed uncomfortably, and the Bishop had entirely lost his usually benign expression. This Martin was a man who had been dismissed his service three years ago for an act of dishonesty, and such a sudden meeting was decidedly awkward.

'Have you been here long?' he inquired at last.

'Ten months, my lord,' answered Martin.

The Bishop's next question was of a more delicate character. He took his eyes from the man's face and allowed them to rest upon the curly locks of the child at his feet. She was still counting steadily—'One, two, three, four, five, six!'

'Does your master—does Sir Edward know?'

Martin shook his head. 'No—no, my lord,' he stammered. 'He does not know.'

'Hem!' said the Bishop.

'The truth is, my lord,' the man continued eagerly—'the truth is that I—I've turned over a new leaf. Since I left your service there has been nothing—nothing at all wrong.'

'Hem!' said the Bishop again; and the child's murmur was heard once more—'Four, five, six—four, five, six!'

'And I hope, my lord,' concluded Martin, fear and shame distinct in his voice—'I hope that you will not—that you will not think it necessary to—to'——

He paused and waited anxiously. The Bishop's face had cleared, but it was not exactly pleasant in expression. His friends at that time often regretted that the severity of his views of other men's failings frequently compelled him to do a gracious deed ungraciously. It was the case now.

'Well, Martin,' he said, with visible stiffness, 'I am pleased to know that you have changed—that you have turned—and I trust that you will not fall again. Under the circumstances, of course, I shall not mention the past. Do your best to deserve my confidence. That will do now—that will do.'

'Thank you, my lord,' said the footman humbly; and he silently left the room.

For the time the Bishop forgot his companion in pleasant contemplation of his own leniency. He was awakened by a sudden question:

'Is Martin a wobber too? I never thought he was.'

'My child!' cried the Bishop. 'My dear child!'

'Well, that 's nothing,' said the child, rising and looking directly into his face. 'That 's nothing. Ev'wybody goes and plays wobber sometimes—ev'wybody.'

The Bishop was startled by this shocking pronouncement, and not a little dismayed by the language in which it was uttered. The encounter with Martin had quite driven from his mind all thought of what had occurred previously, so that the child's meaning was lost to him, and he took no heed of the peculiar look of intelligence in her dancing eyes; and at that moment a rustling of skirts on the stairs, mingled with a murmur of voices, interrupted their conversation. The little one gathered her belongings hastily together and ran out through the conservatory. He smiled at her abrupt departure, and prepared to welcome the first-comer in that easy manner which was one of the most familiar of his many personal gifts.

During dinner he sat next to his hostess, Lady Stalland. On his other side was Mrs Digby, an elderly lady who had secretly begged for the place because 'the dear Bishop's conversation was so improving.' Lady Stalland was quiet and charming, but Mrs Digby was neither, for she raked up every debatable question she could think of, in order to obtain, for future quotation, the Bishop's opinion upon it. One of her questions bore upon a notorious case of 'misappropriation' in the morning papers.

'It is a shocking affair,' said Mrs Digby, with unction. 'Don't you think so?'

'Very shocking,' answered the Bishop, without hesitation. 'Very shocking indeed!'

Lady Stalland took up the matter on the other side. She was inclined to reserve judgment.

'I do not know,' she said mildly. 'I think—I think we should wait to know all the circumstances. It may not be as bad as it seems.'

'Oh,' cried Mrs Digby, greatly fortified by the Bishop's opinion, 'I think the dear Bishop is quite right. He—the man—was using and keeping what did not belong to him. That is theft.'

She glanced at the Bishop for support.

'Yes,' he said, in that dogmatic manner which was so soon to disappear entirely. 'Yes, I think so, Mrs Digby. Circumstances must not be pleaded in excuse. We must face these facts firmly. That is theft.'

So the Bishop settled the question, and Lady

Stalland could say no more. It was then that Sir Edward addressed her from the other side.

'My dear,' he said quietly, 'what is wrong with your bracelet?'

Lady Stalland glanced at her arm. Her face paled, and a startled look came into her eyes.

The bracelet she wore was a heavy one of chased gold, and formed the setting for a remarkably large and beautiful diamond. But now the diamond was gone, and the socket in which it had rested was ugly in its emptiness.

'It must have fallen out,' said Sir Edward.

Lady Stalland instinctively pushed back her chair and shook the folds of her dress. The conversation at the foot of the table ceased for no apparent reason, and a silence fell. In a moment the loss was known to all, and the silence was broken by a chorus of suggestions.

'It may have been left upstairs,' said one voice questioningly.

Lady Stalland tried to recollect. 'No,' she said. 'It could not have fallen there, or I should have heard it. And I did not remove the bracelet while dressing. And, now I remember, I thought I heard something fall while I was sitting in the drawing-room this afternoon.'

'Ah!' cried Sir Edward. 'Then it must be there now.'

'Yes,' answered his wife. 'And I know exactly where it happened. I will go and look myself.'

She rose, smiling, and left the table. In the few minutes of her absence conversation flowed on in the new channel.

'Such a lovely stone,' whispered Mrs Digby to the Bishop. 'Sir Edward brought it from India. It was part of the plunder of Delhi, and is valued at'——

'How much?' inquired the Bishop in surprise.

'Ten thousand pounds,' repeated Mrs Digby a little more distinctly.

'Dear me!' the Bishop murmured. 'Dear me! It was not large either, if I recollect.'

The lady smiled. 'Large for a diamond,' she said almost reprovingly. 'But what is that footman looking at?'

The Bishop raised his eyes, and found that Martin, from behind a chair at the other side of the table, was gazing at him in a strange and peculiar manner. The look was averted instantly, and before he could even express his surprise at the incident Lady Stalland had returned.

There were signs of agitation in the very rustle of her skirts. Sir Edward's look was a question quickly answered.

'I have not found it,' she reported nervously. 'It is not where I thought; and I have searched the whole floor.'

Again a silence fell — a silence of constraint and discomfort. The baronet, however, affected to treat the matter lightly, though his face belied his words.

'It cannot be lost,' he said with quickness. 'There is no need for fear—no need at all. Let us go on in peace. We shall find it afterwards.'

Lady Stalland sat down and the dinner proceeded. Gradually the restraint passed away, though the conversation entirely failed to leave the channel into which it had been so suddenly thrown. It passed through many stories of mysterious disappearances and equally mysterious recoveries, returning at last to the present case.

'It has slipped into some unsuspected corner probably,' suggested Commander Digby. 'The danger is that it may have been, or may be, picked up by some one utterly ignorant of its nature and value.'

'Both facts will soon be known,' answered Sir Edward abruptly; 'even if they are not known already. But I believe that every member of the household does know them.'

A hard, clear voice spoke from the foot of the table, where Mr Dallis, an eminent member of the Bar, had been quietly attending to the duties before him.

'In that case,' he said, 'we need not be troubled. Ignorance here would be a serious danger; knowledge is the best security. The stone is certain to return.'

The Bishop was the next to speak. 'By the way,' he remarked thoughtfully, 'I believe I was the first to come downstairs this evening.'

'Very suspicious fact,' interrupted Mr Dallis gravely. 'A very suspicious fact.'

'And I certainly did not see anything of the diamond,' concluded the Bishop, smiling. 'Therefore I must plead "Not guilty."'

During the laughter which followed, the Bishop of Hexminster happened once more to catch sight of a face whose expression startled him considerably. It was Martin's face again, and the man's look was one of horror, amazement, and fear—the look of a person who can scarcely credit his own hearing, yet is dismayed beyond measure by what he has heard.

The smile died away from the Bishop's face as a dreadful suspicion occurred to him. He was not good at reading expressions, but he could not be mistaken this time. He took no further part in the talk, and there was portentous gravity in his countenance when the gentlemen left their wine to join the ladies in an anxious search for the still-missing diamond.

It was Martin who stood at the door as they passed out. The Bishop gazed into the man's face searchingly, seriously, full of suspicion, yet full of doubt. Then he spoke in a low tone:

'Follow me to the library.'

STORY-READING AND STORY-WRITING.

By Mrs MOLESWORTH.

> To serve . . .
> . . . The children I am here.
> It is the children's bread I break;
> He trusts me with it for their sake.
> JEAN INGELOW.

TO judge fairly, to appreciate fully great changes or developments, they require to be viewed in considerable extent. Day after day, month after month, year after year pass on, leaving us often unconscious of the slow but sure work they are accomplishing, till, perhaps suddenly, some accident or incident, often but trivial, leads us to look back ten years, twenty, half a century even, to realise the changes that have been evolving themselves; and in no department of human interests, it seems to me, is this more true than in that of literature of every kind.

It is only of a very modest, but nevertheless far from unimportant, branch of our national literature that I feel myself in any way competent to speak—that of fiction for children. Fully twenty years of 'story-telling' to the young have done more than furnish me with personal experience in this direction. They have led me to think much on the subject; to look back as well as forward; to estimate more or less accurately the past as well as the present position and influence of fiction on children's minds and characters.

Of course in the old days, and not such very remote 'old days' after all, the number of story-books was almost inconceivably smaller; nevertheless it is to be doubted if their influence was proportionately so. My own belief on the subject, culled from my childish memories, is opposed to this. On the contrary, I am strongly inclined to think that in those days my compeers and I 'took in' the stories we read as do but seldom the boys and girls of the present time. For we studied them—we 'inwardly digested' and assimilated them. The gilt-edged, blue or scarlet volumes which *we* thought so attractive, costing three or four times what a really well-got-up story-book costs nowadays—though the illustrations were, as a rule, atrocious, and the whole affair what would be considered vulgar and 'inartistic' in the extreme—were not only devoured with enthusiasm, but read over and over again as a matter of course, till the characters and scenes became a reality to us, actual factors in our own existence and experience. And this effect was increased and strengthened by another peculiarity arising from the limited number of our works of fiction. We—for I was one of a party of brothers and sisters at home—and our companions all read the same stories, and talked them over together much more exhaustively than is possible now, when 'publications for the young' are issued by hundreds and more yearly.

We were not perhaps such acute critics as the small people of the present day—indeed, strictly speaking, I do not think we presumed to criticise at all. We knew what books—still more, what personages described in them—we liked, and we knew which we *dis*liked, but I rarely remember speaking of any story as 'dull' or 'stupid' or 'not worth reading.' We had more deference, if not reverence, in some ways, and I think printed matter was one of the things that it did not occur to us to pass judgment upon. For, to begin with, as I have said, books cost so much. Well do I recollect the slow hoarding of weekly pence or sixpences before the necessary amount was attained for the purchase of some coveted volume. Once in particular I recollect a certain green-and-gold story-book in a shop-window, which I had set my heart upon, and my terror of some day finding it gone from its place (for somehow it never struck me that another copy could be procured) before I was rich enough to make it mine.

What were our, or my, favourites among the story-books of 'then'? Let me recall a few; indeed, I can recall several belonging to an older generation, and an older *still*—those not only of my mother, but of my *grandmother*. Some actually the self-same volumes treasured all those years ago by the then little hands, long since resting in the grave — their life-work over; some, copies or new editions procured with difficulty for us by my mother, and in certain cases, I fear, less appreciated by us than her perhaps too partial remembrance of the favourites of her own childhood (or of *her* mother's) had led her to expect. Among these the most prominent were *The Fairchild Family*, by Mrs Sherwood; one or two of Mrs Hofland's; *The Twin-Sisters*, published, I think, anonymously; *Ornaments Discovered*, also by an unnamed author; and last, but not least, a complete collection of Miss Edgeworth's books for the young.

These, as I have said, we read over and over again. I think, on the whole, *The Fairchild Family* interested me the most, though I was conscious even then of some inward revolt against the *forcedness* of the religious, and even moral, teaching it strove to impart. No such objection could be brought against the far abler work of Maria Edgeworth, but nevertheless I missed *something* in these stories—a lack of sentiment, possibly of sentimentality only! They seemed to me hard, but slightly, if at all, sympathising; though the stories contained in *The Parent's Assistant* and in *Moral Tales* were thoroughly

interesting, even appealing to the dramatic instinct inherent in all intelligent children.

Among the books of this epoch—that of my mother's childhood—there were, if I mistake not, but few fairy-tales. But by a generation farther back these seem to have been appreciated. There was one perfectly delicious fat little brown volume which we looked upon as an inexhaustible treasury of delight, handed down to us from the end of the last century. I cannot recall the exact title, and the book itself I have never seen again, but it contained *all* the dear old stories and some that are now forgotten, told in the true narrative style, minus moral aphorisms or 'lectures,' though it would have been a curiously stupid or unreflective child who did not glean from its pages the old, old, sturdy summing-up of the lessons of life—that, take things as a whole, goodness triumphs.

The story-books of my own day were, however, those whose influence was the greatest, whose interest was the most enthralling. *The Wide, Wide World* entranced me, especially the first part, where the little heroine's devotion to her mother is so pathetically described. It is difficult for me even now to read of Ellen's shopping expeditions without tears. I cannot endorse the criticism of present-day readers of this once favourite tale, that it is full of weak and unreal sentiment, the hero a prig of the first water, the heroine an impossible little personage. There may be a good deal of truth in this opinion; nevertheless I cannot bring myself to see it—woman-like, very probably, I cannot because I will not; and partly, too, because I remember with too much gratitude the many hours of intense enjoyment I owe to it. Yes, I think I loved it better than any other story-book!

Others which left a lastingly pleasing impression on me were Miss Sewell's earlier works—*Laneton Parsonage* in particular, perhaps because it was the first of them I read. Then came the delight of Miss Yonge's books, which seemed to me to open a new world of fiction, as indeed they did, especially, I think, the 'historical' ones. And the children of my day were very favoured as regards fairy-tales. Grimm and, still more, Hans Andersen were a library in themselves; and among less well-known books which I cannot but associate with the 'fairy-tale' department were Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, and a little later Kingsley's *Heroes*. There was an older book, too, a translation from the German, that I have never been able to procure in the complete original, *The Nutcracker of Nuremberg*, which the brother to whom it belonged and I myself found unspeakably fascinating. Charles Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* was one of our 'best-read' books, I remember, though it, of course, was originally of an earlier date.

After all, even as regards quantity, we were not so badly off! The wealth of the Waverley Novels too was, with the exception of one or two among them, open to us; and immense was the pleasure we extracted from them, though an episode in my earlier childhood I have never been allowed to forget. I was found one day dissolved in tears in one of my usual dens for reading—a tiny book-room in an uncle's country-house—on my knees before a sofa whereon lay *Peveril of the Peak;* and when cross-questioned as to the cause of my tears, I had to own that it was because I '*couldn't* understand the story; it got so muddled after the beginning. And *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman*, and even *Anne of Geierstein*, were so much nicer and easier.' I think this incident warned my elders and betters that the run of a library even to a baby such as I was—for I was only six years old—is not always the most judicious thing to allow.

But few children of the present generation, I fear, are attracted by the dear Waverleys. There are, in my humble opinion—though I advance it with some trepidation, being keenly conscious how the tables might be turned upon myself—there are far too many children's books nowadays. And in scores of nurseries and school-rooms, a book, once hurried through, practically ceases to exist save as an ornament on the shelves, or in exceptional circumstances, such as a hopelessly rainy day or illness confining the little people to the house, to be taken out of its nest with discontented condescension and run through again, because Fred or Dolly has 'nothing else to do.' Apropos of this, an anecdote I heard, or possibly read, the other day—in which latter case I apologise for repeating it—recurs to me. A little girl on a certain birthday—her tenth or twelfth—was presented by, I think, her godmother with a beautiful Bible. The child viewed the gift with complacency as regarded the binding and outward appearance of the book, but with a certain shadow of disappointment in her eyes which the donor was quick to perceive.

'I hope you like it, dear?' she said inquiringly.

'Oh yes,' was the reply. 'It's very nice. Thank you very much. It was only—*p'r'aps* I'd rather have had another book, *for I've read all this one already*'!

Are there two sides to this state of things? To the never re-reading a once-perused story-book, I mean. There are two—often more—sides to most questions in this world, and I doubt if the present case is an exception. It is not only the quantity but the quality of the present-day fiction for the young that is at fault. And in saying this I really refer to children's books, not to the sensational, unwholesome literature which, I am sorry to find, the carelessness of some parents or guardians allows boys and girls to read, especially in the serials with which our tables are overwhelmed. Few authors succeed in *really* interesting their young audience. Children

hurry through the books eagerly to get hold of the plot, of how 'it ends;' it is comparatively rarely that they grow to love or care for the characters of those they read about. Not, of course, that 'plot,' even a certain amount of excitement, is to be objected to by any means, but, as a rule, it should be subservient to the delineation, the almost unconsciously imbibed knowledge of the human beings of the drama. And in many cases this deficiency springs from the want of thorough sympathy with the undeveloped—or, rather, developing—mind of childhood on the part of the writer. There is a wild idea afloat that an embryo author may test his—or, far more frequently, *her*—powers if a *début* in writing is made by first doing so for the young.

'Some simple little story for children' is the phrase. And unluckily the 'simple little story,' not ill-written, with a good deal of smartness about it very likely, not seldom gets published and gets read, or scampered through, without the child reader's lasting interest being touched at all, and is then, as I have said, relegated to the bookshelves and forgotten. Does it deserve to be remembered?

Of course, these remarks are to be taken with certain reservations. They are not to be applied to stories distinctly of adventure, well thought out, often masterpieces of their kind, for which I have a hearty admiration as very wholesome reading for girls as well as for boys.

But real writing for children, modest as it sounds—and, as I am the very first to own, a small thing, a tiny achievement as it is among the magnificent triumphs of literature—is yet a *different* thing, almost a different art, from that of writing for adults. One has to place one's self in so many almost conflicting positions. It is necessary to become, in some sense, a child again, in the first place; to see through child-eyes; to hear with child-ears—above all, to feel with child-heart. Yet, at the back of all this, one must retain one's own older experience, wider grasp, and greater wisdom—greater knowledge of evil, alas! as well as, it is to be hoped, of good. For there is so much to be *avoided* in one's work for the young. All suggestion of many of the sadder facts of our complex human nature, which, though learnt they must be when the boy and girl become man and woman, it would be cruel as well as sinful to teach prematurely; all elements of suspiciousness, of distrustfulness of others—above all, of those whom our darlings naturally look up to and revere; all painting in too gloomy colours of this life, sorrow-burdened, even almost hopelessly tragic as it often seems to us—till, as the 'eventide' approaches, with a wonderful return to the faithful child-nature, we come to believe again in the 'light' as the reality—all these rocks and shoals of danger and injury must be steered clear of with perfect skill. For 'humbug' in any form is quickly detected by children; many points a child's story-teller must be content to evade, simply to leave untouched upon, never to tell untruths about.

And this leads me to mention what I am almost afraid may seem a 'fad,' so often have I had occasion to allude to it—namely, the distinction, the most important distinction, which should be drawn between writing *about* and writing *for* children. It is strange that parents or those who have the direction of children's reading should be so blind to this. In the preface to Miss Montgomery's beautiful *Misunderstood*, it is most clearly pointed out, and the very title of the book emphasises the intention with which it was written; yet I venture to say there is scarcely a child of a certain class in England into whose hands it has not been given! And I have actually heard people say it was 'morbid' and 'too melancholy' for children! It was never *meant* for them.

Other books, among them some of Mrs Ewing's exquisite and inimitable tales, seem to me open to the same warning. Children should not be saddened before their time, while yet, on the other hand, they should not be deceived. In this, as in most questions of the kind, there is a *via media*, which it is perhaps one of the special gifts of a writer for children to discover. We want to brace, not to discourage; to make our readers thoughtful, to eliminate self-conceit and self-satisfaction, without fostering any approach to morbid introspection. There are books—I could name several—especially books for boys, in which none of the characters are children, none of the scenes those of the nursery or school-room, which are better, more wholesome reading than others I could also name, peopled almost entirely by small personages, and dwelling principally on their sayings and doings.

Another quicksand to be avoided is the introduction, by way of heightening the interest and sensation of a story, of any *frightening* element. Unless one knows children intimately, or recalls minutely the experiences of one's own childish days, it would be difficult to believe how even a bright, healthy child may be the victim of nervous terrors. The most sensitive are often the most reserved; partly, perhaps, from a not by any means contemptible feeling of pride, partly from that curious reticence of children, of which—for it often fades as they grow older and could themselves explain it—the root is difficult to discover. For you find it even in the happiest families, where dread of their elders is non-existent, where sympathy is very far from an unknown quantity. Yet, again, a touch of mystery, inseparable from true poetic feeling, is sometimes—often, indeed—a great additional charm to even a very simple story, and surely a true element in all education. We are not all 'mind,' any more than we are all 'body.' The training of the spirit as well as of the intellect and heart will go on for good—

alas! sometimes for ill—as long as life lasts; and, to an awe-inspiring extent, we, parents or in any sense guides or teachers of the young, should accept our tremendous responsibilities.

But, besides all the qualifications I have touched upon, there remains one which I can only describe by the homely word 'knack' in writing for children. What is it? What does it consist in? I cannot define it. 'Sympathy' may have a good deal to do with it; but there is something more—something more nearly described by the analogy of an ear for music, or the true painter's marvellous appreciation of colour, than by any description or analysis. And as to this, to descend to still more homely language, 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating.' Test your audience—a most candid and honest one—and you will not long be at a loss as to whether story-writing for children is, or is not, a gift that you possess.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT.

CHAPTER IV.—A NEW FRIEND.

HAD Lily Warner given him one kind word of farewell, or shown herself in any way conscious of his existence, when she was leaving Coolgardie for England, the heart of Dicky Hulme would have been less full of bitterness. But, in truth, his heart was very bitter now against all the world; the memory of his mother, and of poor Jim Solus, and his gratitude to Mrs Brady, being the only softening influences that ever touched him.

As soon as he felt strong enough he shook the dust of the mining-camp from his feet for good, and started again for England. The voyage was without incident. But no wanderer ever turned homewards with a sadder heart. Homewards? He heard the passengers speaking of 'home,' and reckoning eagerly the distance run by the steamer since the day before, and calculating the date of their probable arrival in England. Their language only reminded him that now he had no 'home' to return to. Home was in the sad cemetery with his mother; and these melancholy thoughts, many a time by day and night, made him lean over the rail in some quiet part of the ship and drop tears into the sea as salt as its own water.

On arriving in London he found his money reduced to four pounds. He took a room in a coffee-house, where he could live cheaply. What to do next was a problem. There were, perhaps, two or three persons in London who might help him to some employment if he applied to them. But he had been very foolish to throw up his government appointment and waste his small resources in emigrating to Western Australia. He was ashamed to show himself to any person who had known him. His enterprise had been a most abject failure. Mortification was eating his heart away, and he resolved to starve in the streets rather than be recognised.

He was like enough to starve, as he realised after a few days of aimless wandering through the streets and vain attempts to obtain employment through the medium of newspaper advertisements. What a mockery these advertisements of 'situations vacant' seemed to be! His applications for posts he was well fitted to fill were left unnoticed. He did not know that his successive disappointments were no bitterer or more disheartening than those of many others whose applications for the same situations met with the same fate.

His life during the three or four weeks which he spent on this melancholy quest was not quite a monotony of dull misery. But the variations were not cheerful. He went out once in the dusk of the evening to have a look at his old home—the cottage in which his mother died. Had it been closed up and deserted the sight would have corresponded well with his morbid state of feeling. Alas! it was lighted up and pleasant with the happy family-life of new tenants, who knew nothing of those who had been there before them, or of the homeless youth who was gazing at their pleasant windows across the road. A visit to his mother's grave in the cemetery was more solacing. He trimmed the grass and flowers above her resting-place, and it eased him to indulge in a good flow of tears.

When he returned to London, and was sitting dejectedly in the coffee-room, the landlady, noticing his looks, and compassionating a situation which she guessed to be very forlorn, good-naturedly offered him a ticket of admission to a neighbouring theatre. For exhibiting the bills in her window and shop she was occasionally presented with these orders by the management.

'It will be better than sitting here or walking about,' she said kindly.

Hulme thanked her and accepted the order, which admitted him to a lower gallery or amphitheatre. He felt no great interest in the play, but it was a welcome distraction from his troubles. The curtain rose and the piece proceeded; but

instead of attending to what went on upon the stage, Hulme's eyes wandered with vacant interest over the audience in the stalls and boxes who were visible from where he sat.

He gave a painful start, and his gaze, for the rest of the performance, was riveted upon one point in the stalls. He would not have believed, an hour ago, that the sight of Lily Warner could ever again affect him as it did now. He saw her in the stalls, with Mark Revel sitting next to her. How intently he watched every motion she made! In evening-dress she certainly looked very lovely—her beauty seemed to him to shine around her. He noticed, with a species of negative satisfaction, that she never once turned her face to Revel, even when he spoke to her. She seemed to tolerate rather than enjoy his society. Between the acts, too, he invariably went out; on these occasions she appeared to notice neither his going nor his returning. At last, when the play was over, Revel assisted her with her wraps and led her out. Hulme was there, among the crowd, and saw Revel hand her into a brougham and drive away with her.

It made Hulme very indignant against himself to feel his passion for this girl return with tenfold force to increase the bitterness of a condition already sufficiently bitter. He could not help it. That girl's power over his life was supreme. Of course she had not a thought of him now, and for a nature with a strong element of pride in it the reflection was humiliating. He could keep out of her way, at least; or, if by accident he should meet her, he felt confident he could command a stony composure of countenance that she should not fail to understand. It was poor comfort; but it was all he had.

Next day Hulme had an experience that was curious. He went into the City. It was wet, and he took an inside seat in an omnibus. Opposite to him sat a prosperous-looking middle-aged man, with bright hazel eyes and grizzled beard and moustache—a good-natured looking gentleman, who possessed a cheerful eye for every person and object at which he chanced to look. What attracted Hulme's attention to him was a very remarkable resemblance in his features to poor Jim Solus. Could Jim's face have been cleared of the sunburnt tinge, and the dust of the goldfields which had been embedded in it, it would, Hulme fancied, have been just such a face as that of the pleasant gentleman in the omnibus. The resemblance, of course, was only one of those accidental likenesses often met with; but it was so striking that Hulme kept his eyes, as unobtrusively as he could, on the man's face all the way to the Bank.

The gentleman alighted here, and so did Hulme. But while they waited for a minute or so to cross the street to the Mansion House, the gentleman suddenly turned round and looked him full in the face.

'Are you in business in the City?' he abruptly asked.

'No,' was the surprised answer. 'I am not in business anywhere, I am sorry to say. I have only recently returned from Western Australia.'

'Ha? Didn't strike any gold, then?'

'I struck typhoid,' said Hulme, with a smile, 'and lost a good friend. That was the extent of my luck, and I thought it wiser to come home again while I had money enough to pay my passage. I am beginning to doubt the wisdom of the step, unpromising as the goldfields looked.'

'How do you happen to know me, then? Where have you seen me before?'

The inquiry struck Hulme as an odd one, but it was easily answered.

'I certainly have never seen you before, sir, to my knowledge.'

'Because you were looking at me in the omnibus as if you knew me.'

'It was only on account of your great resemblance to a poor friend of mine in Western Australia—the friend I mentioned just now.'

'The friend you lost? What was his name?'

'They used to call him Jim Solus. His name was James Gaverick.'

'James Gaverick?' said the gentleman thoughtfully. 'And your own name—what is it?'

Hulme told him.

'I knew James Gaverick. I should like to hear something about him. Are you engaged just now? Would you mind coming down King William Street with me to my little office?'

Hulme accompanied him willingly. No further word was spoken until they had climbed two flights of stairs and entered a small front room. It looked little like an office. The table at which the gentleman seated himself after hanging up his hat and coat had not so much as an ink-bottle upon it. The room was bare, save for the few articles of plain furniture it contained. Neither book nor paper was to be seen.

An aged clerk came in from another room, carrying a newspaper in one hand and some open letters in the other.

'Not just yet, Mike,' said the gentleman; 'you can read them to me presently. I want to talk to this young gentleman.'

The clerk withdrew, and then Hulme received a surprise.

'Jim Gaverick is the name of my brother, Mr Hulme—my twin brother; so you see you were right in your guess.'

'I guessed nothing at all. Certainly I never dreamt I saw poor Jim's brother.'

'Poor Jim!' said Mr Gaverick. 'I have heard of his fate, so you needn't tell me. Before he started on that expedition he wrote to me for the last time. He told me about you, too.'

'About me?'

'Yes. Jim had a reason of his own for attaching himself to you. Poor old Jim! I wish he had never gone to Australia. But wishing is no good.'

'I shall never, while I live, forget his kindness to me, Mr Gaverick. When I was down with typhoid he gave his own house to me, and engaged a doctor and nurses to take care of me, and left money to provide everything for me that should be wanted. Then he went away to the bush.'

'Poor old Jim!'

Mr Gaverick stretched his legs, put his hands in his pockets, and gazed vacantly at the opposite wall for the space of a couple of minutes.

'Mr Hulme,' he said at length, 'I am heartily glad I have met you. If you want a place, I have one to offer you. I do a good deal of business, but I can neither read nor write.'

Hulme looked at him with wonder.

'I can make a sort of signature that stands for my name—that's all. Old Mike out there—many a year Mike and I have trudged along together, but the poor fellow is getting feeble now, and needs rest—old Mike reads my letters to me every morning, and then reads the business parts of the newspaper. That's how we start the day; later on Mike takes my instructions and writes any letters we want to send away. When I go home in the evening, after dinner, my old housekeeper—she's getting too old, also, and her sight is failing—reads the rest of the newspaper to me, and maybe a story out of a book. I am an old bachelor, you see,' he added, just a little wistfully, 'because, of course, a man that can neither read nor write could never ask any one to marry him. His wife would be always ashamed of him.'

Hulme was far from thinking so, but he did not express his thought.

'Now, Mr Hulme, do you think you would care to be an ignorant old chap's factotum—to read to him of an evening now and then, and come here with him every morning, and so relieve poor old Mike of further work? If you didn't care to live in the house with me and old Peggy, why, I could get a more cheerful place for you somewhere handy.'

The proposition, needless to say, was eagerly and gratefully accepted by Dicky Hulme. The darkest hour is just before the dawn. His horizon had been very dark and disheartening that morning, and now—how bright it looked!

The old man called Mike, when told by his master of the new arrangement, shook hands with Hulme and chuckled like a schoolboy getting away for a long holiday. To think he should not have to come to the City in the morning any more, but read his paper at his leisure after breakfast and then proceed to work in his garden, was a vision of paradise to the old man. And his monthly pension would come to him as regularly as his monthly salary did now—it had all been arranged already. Old Mike was so tremendously happy that Mr Gaverick felt obliged to step out to his office and shake hands with him.

Mr Gaverick was not an inquisitive man, but, in response to the interest he took in Hulme, the latter told him, a few evenings after this, the history of his mother's ruin and of the pair of rascals who had caused it. Mr Gaverick was smoking a long clay pipe after dinner, and this occurred during an interval of reading the newspaper.

'I wonder,' observed Mr Gaverick, 'whether they have floated the mine yet. There's nothing about it in the paper?'

Hulme glanced over the columns of prospectuses, but saw nothing of it.

'We'll ask the lawyer to-morrow. He'll know. If they have, Dicky, I'll put you up to something.'

Mr Gaverick kept the matter in his mind, for when they went to the City next morning he called on his solicitor. Presently he came back with a paper in his hand.

'Here it is,' he said. 'Just read it out, Dicky, till we see what it is like.'

It was a copy of the prospectus of 'Revel's Find, Limited,' which had been issued nearly a month before. Hulme read the document with keen interest. The capital of the company was fixed at £120,000, and the purchase price was £90,000, payable as to £30,000 in cash, as much more in fully-paid shares, and the balance in cash or shares.

'Who are the directors?' Mr Gaverick asked.

'"Major-General Grant, chairman."'

'Ah! he's an old stager. Well?'

'"Colonel Jacob, C.B.,"' Hulme continued to read from the prospectus. 'Then come the vendors, "David Warner, Esquire," and "Mark Revel, Esquire," who are to join the board after allotment. I suppose, however, the allotment has been made before now, and the full board constituted. Do you know, Mr Gaverick, when I left Coolgardie there was a general opinion that they got this mine by foul-play of some sort? Revel was away less than a fortnight on a prospecting tour—the world knew he was utterly ignorant of the business—and he came back with this claim. My own private conviction has always been that he came upon the claim marked out by poor Jim.'

'Likely enough, likely enough,' was all the comment made by Mr Gaverick. 'I must get Braker'—this was his solicitor—'to find out how many shares the public have taken up in the concern. I want particularly to know.'

Then they went on with their daily business. Mr Gaverick was a tea merchant, and it was wonderful to Hulme how he was able to transact as much business as he did, and transact it

successfully, without being able to read or write. These deficiencies had trained the man's other faculties to a degree of vigour and acuteness that compensated for the entire absence of education.

Hulme's life was now a happy one, save for the reservation of bitterness that was eating like a canker at his heart. It was hard to see those two scoundrels prospering upon what he believed to be virtually stolen property. It was harder still to have been so deceived in Lily Warner. He could not help, amid all his rancour, thinking of her with tenderness and gratitude. He could not forget her patient devotion to him during his illness. Remembering these things, it was a mystery to him how she could have so suddenly ignored and forgotten him. Granting (as he suspected) that on his bed of sickness he had been weak enough to disclose to her his love, was there anything in that to give any girl offence? She might be sorry for him, but Lily's way was not the way in which a tender-hearted girl would show her sorrow for a misplaced affection. And she was going to become the wife of a man whom she must despise and detest, supposing her to possess any principle at all. It was all very hard to think about.

'Braker,' said Mr Gaverick that evening after dinner, 'tells me that the subscription of shares hangs fire a bit. They have got in fifteen thousand, and divided ten thousand between them. No doubt they will resort to some trick to make the shares go—the British investing public are such gullible asses!—but in the meantime, Dicky, do you go for them tooth and nail.'

'How, Mr Gaverick? What can I do to them?' the young man asked, opening his eyes wide with surprise.

'My boy, you are very innocent,' was the complacent answer. 'Just let Braker go at them, that's all. Do you imagine that fraudulent trustees can go scot-free?'

The light began to break upon Dicky Hulme. The idea of calling them to account for his mother's money had never occurred to him before. If he could do it!—the mere suggestion made him feel excited. There was intense sweetness to him in the thought of being able to bring the heartless defrauders of his mother—her virtual murderers—to book.

'We will instruct Braker to-morrow, Dicky. Let them look out for themselves!'

THE NEW TELEGRAPHY.

A GREAT deal has been heard recently of 'telegraphing without wires,' and of what has been rather loosely described as 'wireless telegraphy.' Experiments have been made in various directions, and under more or less responsible auspices, and the public has been a good deal exercised in its mind—or what it calls its mind—on the subject; while the press has written a good deal about it, without adding much to the general knowledge or enlightenment. It will surprise many people to be told, on no less reliable authority than that of Professor Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., that *there is no such thing as wireless telegraphy.* True, one can send signals for a distance of a yard or two without any wires; but in all the recent successful attempts to telegraph across space, whether by electric waves or by other means, wires are used. They do not, indeed, run from the sending station to the receiving station like ordinary telegraph-line wires, but are used as what are called 'base-lines,' or 'base-areas'—that is, they are laid down, or suspended, in the immediate neighbourhood of the sending and receiving apparatus. It is a familiar fact in telegraphy that either earth or water can be used as a return circuit for electric currents; so that if base-lines of proportionate length be laid down on either side of a river or arm of the sea, it is readily conceivable that signals could be conveyed across without the intervention of an electric cable. As a matter of fact, so long ago as 1882, Mr Preece, the electrician to the Post Office, conducted a series of researches upon the establishment of telegraphic communication between the Isle of Wight and the Hampshire coast without any connecting cable across the Solent. Large metal plates, to serve as electrodes, were immersed in the sea at the ends of the two base-lines. On the Hampshire coast the base-line extended from Portsmouth through Southampton to Hurst Castle, a length of twenty miles. On the island the base-line extended from Ryde through Newport to Sconce Point, and was about sixteen miles long. From Portsmouth to Ryde the breadth of the sea is six miles, while Hurst Castle is only about a mile from Sconce Point. Hence in this case the length of the base-lines considerably exceeded the average distance to be crossed. With this arrangement signals were passed in 'dot' and 'dash,' which could be read on the Morse system with ease; but telephonic speech was not possible, probably owing to inherent difficulties in the apparatus.

In 1893–94 Mr Preece established communication across the Kilbrannan Sound, between the isle of Arran and Kintyre, a distance of over four miles; and he also maintained telephonic speech across Loch Ness, a distance of a mile and a quarter.

In the experiments from Arran to Kintyre, parallel wires about three miles long were used as base-lines along the coast, while in some of the experiments two other base-lines were used, being insulated wires laid along each coast at a height of about five hundred feet above sea-level. A year earlier Mr Preece had made some striking experiments in the Bristol Channel, between Lavernock Point on the South Wales coast and the islands of the Flat Holm and the Steep Holm, the distances of which are, respectively, 3·1 and 5·35 miles. He received messages easily over the three miles separating the mainland from the Flat Holm; but at the Steep Holm, 5·35 miles away, though the signals were feebly perceptible, telegraphic conversation was impracticable, as the sound could not be differentiated into 'dots' and 'dashes.' Mr Preece came to the conclusion that with two base-lines, each ten miles long, he could with ease signal across a distance of ten miles. These experiments were made under what is called the 'conduction method' of signalling across space; and Professor Thompson points out that many experiments have been made under 'accidental circumstances,' all tending to prove the possibility of this mode of transmitting signals through the earth itself. The instruments in Greenwich Observatory, he tells us, are affected by the stray currents that escape into the earth from the badly insulated return circuit of the City and South London Electric Railway, four and a half miles away; while the whole of the railway telegraphs in the signal-boxes of the railways in South London were temporarily put out of order and rendered inoperative by one of the dynamos at an electric-lighting station at Deptford becoming connected to earth, the currents flowing in the earth being perceived in the telegraph instruments so far northwards as Leicester, and so far south as Paris. If, he concludes, this could occur as a mere accident, it is obvious that, with properly thought-out arrangements, signals could easly be sent from one part of the globe to another by conduction through earth or water.

What is called the 'induction method' is also used in connection with 'spacial' telegraphy. Here again Mr Preece is to the fore, and has told us of many cases in which telegraph or telephone messages that are being transmitted along some line have been heard, or rather overheard, in telephonic instruments in some totally disconnected and distant line. The greatest distance to which Mr Preece's experiments upon telegraph-lines have been carried is forty miles—namely, between the telegraph-lines that run across the Scottish border by the east and west coasts respectively. Sounds produced in the Newcastle and Jedburgh line were distinctly heard on the parallel line at Gretna, though there was no line connecting the two places. Here, however, since both lines used earth-returns, Dr Thompson thinks it probable that most of the effect was due to conduction, and not to true induction.

Yet another method of telegraphing across space is called the 'electric-wave method,' by means of which it is said that signals can be transmitted through *solid stone walls*—something even more remarkable than the Röntgen Rays! Professor Oliver Lodge has done much in this direction, and some experiments of his at Oxford in 1894 led to communication being made between the university museum and the adjacent building of the Clarendon Laboratory. It was in this department of research that the British Telegraph Department afforded facilities to Mr Marconi, a young Italian, who about two years ago brought to this country an invention of his in the form of a greatly improved 'receiver.' First on Salisbury Plain, and then across the Bristol Channel, he succeeded in transmitting Morse signals to greater distances than any one had previously attained; and he sent signals from Lavernock Point to Bream Down, about nine miles as the crow flies, over the open Channel. More recently Mr Marconi has also experimented from a ship lying off Kingstown, by transmitting news telegrams relating to the Royal St George's Club Regatta to the Dublin *Daily Express;* and he has also sent messages from the Prince of Wales on board the royal yacht off Cowes to the Queen at Osborne. Experiments have also been made at Dover under the auspices of the Postal Telegraph Department, but with what precise results has not yet been made public. One thing is certain, however—there is no such thing as 'telegraphing without wires;' and it is equally certain that the base-line, or base-area, surrounded by wires, is a fundamental necessity. Given this, however, and given adequate methods of throwing electric energy into the transmitting system, and sufficiently sensitive instruments to pick up and translate the signals, Professor Thompson is of opinion that it is possible to establish electric communication between England and America, and even with the Cape, India, or Australia, without the intervention of a submarine cable. So sanguine is he, indeed, that some eight years ago he offered to one of his financial friends in the City to undertake seriously to establish telegraphic communication with the Cape, provided £10,000 were forthcoming to establish the necessary 'basal' circuits in the two countries and the instrument for creating the currents! His offer was deemed 'too visionary' for acceptance; but he still holds that the thing is quite feasible, that the one thing necessary is the adequate base-lines or areas, and that 'all the rest is detail.'

What strikes the ordinary lay mind about the matter is, that there would be a good deal of 'mixing up' about telegraphy of this kind. The difficulty of the early discoverers of electricity was how to 'harness' this fleet steed, and it was only when they were able to *tie it to a wire*

that telegraphy became practicable and reliable. Prearranged experiments are one thing: practical everyday working is quite another. Sending out a signal into space is easy enough, but catching it on the other side of a river or an arm of the sea, *unless you are specially looking out for it*, is quite another matter. Then, what is to prevent some other fellow from playing the part of 'eavesdropper,' and picking up the message intended for you—some rival in trade, for example? We have heard of telegraph-wires being tapped, or 'milked,' and messages stolen as they were passing through; and it is conceivable that there would be a good deal of thieving of this kind in connection with 'spacial' telegraphy. It appears that Professor Oliver Lodge is engaged in experiments having for their object the creation of a certain sympathy between the sending and receiving apparatus, so that messages would always find their proper destination. This 'syntony,' as it is called, is brought about by 'tuning' the electrical oscillations to a corresponding 'tuning' of the receiving apparatus, so that they shall be both less sensitive to stray impulses and more sensitive to properly attuned waves—a very necessary condition, seeing the amount of 'stray' electricity there would generally be knocking about in connection with telegraphy across space. Obviously, there is a good deal to be done before this method of telegraphing can be made a commercial success. But even if its application be limited to communication between the shore and the light-ships, and between ship and ship, something of practical value will have been attained, not to mention the exchange of postal telegrams between Cardiff and Penarth across the harbour entrance, where a cable could not 'live,' owing to the constant dragging of ships' anchors and other tackle.

Oddly enough, the idea of this so-called 'new telegraphy' is a very old one. So long ago as 1842 Morse, the great American telegraph inventor, worked at the subject, and made experiments on the Susquehanna River, about a mile wide. He engaged Professor Gule to investigate the best conditions, and came to the conclusion that the base-lines should be three times as long as the distance to be crossed. Mr Dering, an English telegraph engineer, also worked at the subject. But perhaps the most definite results were achieved by James Bowman Lindsay, of Dundee, who, so long ago as 1831, conceived the idea of using water instead of wires to convey electric signals, and actually did so convey them across the Tay more than forty years ago. He even went so far as to express the opinion that signals might be so conveyed across the Atlantic; and in the printed proceedings of the British Association for 1859 his method of so doing is briefly described. Lindsay not only demonstrated the possibility of 'telegraphing without wires,' but he discovered the electric light, and publicly exhibited an electric lamp in Dundee in 1835. From a humble weaver he advanced to the position of science teacher. In the advertisement announcing the opening of his classes, which appeared in the *Dundee Advertiser* of 11th April 1834, the following remarkable passage occurs: 'Houses and towns will in a short time be lighted by electricity instead of gas, and heated by it instead of coals; and machinery will be wrought by it instead of steam, all at a trifling expense.' Verily, there is nothing new under the sun; or, as a French writer has it, 'There is nothing new but what has been forgotten.' But if the idea of telegraphing through space is not exactly new, it has acquired a new interest from the extremely lucid way in which it has been treated by Professor Silvanus P. Thompson, whose recent paper read to the Society of Arts is a model for scientific men generally.

CONDY SHEERAN'S COURTIN'.

By MAC., Author of *The Leadin' Road to Donegal; The Humours of Donegal*, &c.

CONDY was a plodding, practical man. And Condy was a bachelor. Off and on for twenty years before, neighbours who had an interest in him—and neighbours who had an interest in their own daughters—had been advising Condy to take a wife unto him. '*Musha*, Condy Sheeran, what's goin' to happen to ye, at all, at all—livin' there in that wee cabin yer *lee-alone*, with divil a sowl to look afther ye, or care for ye? Why, but ye rouse yerself up, man alive! an' look out for a sthrappin' young woman that 'ill put yer house to rights—an' yerself too; an' make a new man o' ye. There ye're doiterin' an' doiterin', in of the house, an' out of the house, an' about the house, an' delvin' an' diggin' early an' late, summer an' winther, on yer wee farm, an' where yer comfort comes in is more nor I know. Yer house is in an uproar [disordered state] lek the fair of Carmen; an' wan would think the clothes on yer back was thrown at ye. Ye're scratchin' an' scrapin', layin' by money for the sorra-only-knows-who to scatther. Rouse yerself, man alive! There's girls on all sides of ye that the cheeks of them would be betther nor a fire in yer kitchen, an' they'd jump at the offer of bein' Missis Sheeran, if ye only sent them the word be a fiddler.'

Condy, inwardly amused, ever patiently listened

to the kind advice his good neighbours were so generous in bestowing on him. But his poor mother (God be merciful to her!) ere she died left Condy a legacy of proverbs that for years had given him pause. 'Never you buy a pig in a poke, Condy *ahaisge*,' his mother used to say, far from intending any disrespect to the young ladies of Dhrimholme; 'an' there's many a dashin' girl makes a poor dhraggle-tailed woman.' 'Betther alone than in bad company, Condy,' she would also say. And—a variation of this last—'A lonely hearth an' paice is betther nor the best woman in the wurrl' an' verrins' (variance).

Still, the more experience Condy had of the lonely hearth and peace, the more frequently would the question force itself on him: 'But if I had a middlin' good woman an' no verrins?' And as he and the cat sat by the hearth on a long winter's night, looking into each other's eyes, Condy, with the limited amount of imagination at his command, used often to picture a homely, sensible woman crooning a song round the house as she busied herself doing the *timirishes* (little necessary household matters), while he, with well-washed and well-patched clothes, lay back in his chair in the corner, and, watching her, puffed his little black pipe in cheerful contentment. And at length, when, after mature deliberation, he considered he had reached years of discretion—he was then forty-five, having been born June was three years after *the dear summer*—he decided he might venture to trust his judgment in selecting one fitted to be a wife to his mother's son.

So, on a night when he had a fine junt of fir blazing in the fire, and the cat blinking and purring at him across the hearth, and his black pipe working spasmodically and not uncomplainingly, Condy went painstakingly through the catalogue of eligible females in the parish. He first weeded out those that were too young—'A slip of a girl undher thirty doesn't know her own mind,' he said; 'so I'll have nothin' to say to wan o' them.' Then he rejected the crotchety, cranky ones, and all who were reputed possessors of any sort of ill-temper, and next the slatternly ones. 'Me sawnies,' Condy said to himself, 'the list's gettin' mortial small;' and so it was. And when, finally, he had also put aside all who were 'too fond o' the sight of the black pandy [porringer] on the coals'—which was to say all who were too fond of tea—just one woman remained. She was Ellen McGroarty of Throwerstown. Ellen was a daughter of Long Neil, and she had been the heiress of the McGroarty property, consisting of two acres of clayland and two miles of bog and heather—an extensive if not very remunerative estate; besides pigs, cows, ducks, drakes, and other farm stock. Regarding Ellen's age, it need only be said that she, like Condy, had reached years of discretion.

Having settled one difficulty, another loomed up on Condy's horizon, and required another night's grave deliberation—How was he to ask the wife?

'Of course'—and Condy seemed to direct his discourse to the cat—'I'm not used to this sort of business, niver bein' in the habit of axin' weemen.' Condy didn't intend to be satirical at the cost of the young men of Dhrimholme, but unconsciously he was. 'An' I wish I had it well over me.'

The etiquette of marriage proposals as observed in Dhrimholme was a mystery to Condy, who had never gone on such an expedition. If there had been an intended father-in-law in the case Condy would have seen his way pretty clearly—even a mother-in-law might have been negotiated. But Ellen was, again like himself, *lee-alone*. Of course, Condy had heard over and over again the ridiculous way they settle those matters in the tale-books—two blessed idiots squeezing the breath out of one another, one gasping, 'Say, beloved star of my existence, will you be mine for ever?' and the other fool replying, 'Ye-ye-yes—yes, for ever and ever!' But he didn't give this silly method a moment's thought. He also saw that he might lift the latch and walk in to Ellen with 'God save all here; an' I want to know will ye *take* me, Ellen?' But little thought he gave that method. *How* he should do it was more than he knew; and he had half-begun to consider whether, after all, the advantages of having the best girl in the parish, with two acres of clayland and two miles of moorland, geese, pigs, and other farm stock to boot, would really outweigh the mental endeavour the asking of a wife would entail.

One thing, however, Condy did know; and that was, when any one went looking for a wife a bottle of whisky was an indispensable factor. So, with a prayer in his heart and a bottle of whisky in his pocket, Condy, on a beautiful moonlight night stepped over the moor to Ellen's. Ellen was carding wool in preparation for spinning as Condy, lifting the latch, thrust his head in at the door.

'God save ye, an' God bless the work!' he said.

'Save yerself kindly, an' thanky, Misther Sheeran,' Ellen, a little surprised, said. She laid down the cards, and drawing forward a chair, wiped it with her apron and set it in front of the fire. 'Come forrid, Misther Sheeran, an' take a glint o' the fire. *Illioga*, a thin, sharp night it is. My fire might be better, too, but, *musha*, it was a poor saison for thurf.'

'Oh, thanky, thanky, Ellen,' Condy said, settling for himself a seat right at the door, as if he anticipated having to make a clean run for it and chose the readiest position. 'I'll just do here.'

'Arrah, bother! come up with yerself when I

tell ye. *Musha*, but ye're warm on it. It would be enough a day the crows would be puttin' out their tongues to go an' to sit by that doore—it's about as shelthery as an iron gate. Come up with yerself when I tell ye!'

And as Condy took the proffered seat, Ellen's keen eye detected the neck of the bottle sticking out of Condy's pocket, and instantly a little light dawned on her.

So, as soon as she had put more turf and fir on the fire, and tidied up the hearth, she seated herself, and began the carding again very industriously, all the time running over the litany of woes attendant upon looking after a farm and farm-labourers, and cattle, and ducks and hens, and pigs—to all which Condy listened very attentively, and spoke not.

When Ellen had exhausted the topic, having advertised her dowry to her content, she made a politic pause. But Condy remained silent likewise. She ventured after a minute or two to steal a glance at him. He was putting his hand irresolutely into the pocket whence the bottle showed, and nervously drawing it back again. Ellen coughed; which startled Condy.

'Have ye—have ye—a—a egg-cup in the house?' he jerked out.

'A egg-cup? Yis, surely, Misther Sheeran'—with well-assumed surprise, and implying a politeness that forbade her to question her guest. 'Surely, Misther Sheeran, I've a egg-cup,' she repeated as she fished for one behind the plates on the dresser.

'I've—I've a small dhrop of nice whisky here,' Condy said, drawing forth the bottle, 'an' I thought ye mightn't object to helpin' me with just a thimbleful.'

'Well, thanky, an' long life to ye, Misther Sheeran; I can't have the bad manners to refuse ye—but let it be only a thimbleful. Och, that'll do, Misther Sheeran! Aisy, aisy! Faith, I'm afeared it's the tailyer's thimble—ha! ha!—that ye measure with. No, no! taste it yerself first. Och, the sorra a dhrap of it crosses me lips the night till ye dhrink the *crivan* [overflow] off it yerself. No, no, no; it's no use—I'll not br'ak me word. Taste it yerself first, Misther Sheeran, an' laive me the dawniest little dhrop in the bottom.'

Condy was sitting half-turned from the fire holding the flowing egg-cup towards her, and Ellen stood facing him in a protesting attitude.

'I tell ye there's nothin' in it,' he said. 'It wouldn't dhrownd a bum-clock. *Musha*, woman, but ye're conthrairy! Take it, I tell ye, an' throw it over; all's in it wouldn't br'ak a pledge.'

'An' I tell ye I won't, till ye dhrink at laist the two parts out of it. I'd be dhrunk if I took it, Condy Sheeran.'

'Dhrunk, *moryah!* There isn't as much in it as would wet yer thrapple. Well, here goes,' he said, giving up the argument in despair—'here goes, an' God bless us!'

'Amain!' Ellen fervently responded, 'an' God bless us again.'

'Ah, ye haven't taken as much out of it,' Ellen said as she took the egg-cup from Condy, who, with the sleeve of his coat was wiping his mouth and smacking his lips with satisfaction—'ye haven't taken as much out of it as I'd lift with three pins. Anyhow'—here she made a wry face at it—'here's luck an' prosperity to ye, Misther Sheeran, an' again God bless us.'

'Luck where it goes! Amain! an' thanky kindly,' Condy said.

Ellen just tasted it, made another wry face; tasted it again, and coughed distressfully; finally gulped a sup of it, and, with a suggestion of agony expressed in the lines of her face, laid the egg-cup on the table.

'Take it all, I tell ye! Finish it.'

'I can't, I tell ye! Agh, agh!'

'I tell ye, ye must finish it.'

'An' I—agh, agh!—tell ye I won't. Now take a sup yerself.'

'Och, niver a drop till you throw off that eyeful there in the cup.'

'Ye're aggeravatin'! I tell ye I can't. Show me that bottle.' And taking bottle and egg-cup in her hands, she poured out for Condy a cupful with a *crivan* truly on it. 'Now, dhrink that over.'

'Well, it's you that's aggeravatin' now, woman,' Condy said as he carefully caught from her hand the overflowing cup. 'Is it to dhrink that?' and he took the measure of it with a side squint.

'Ay, that—an' another if you say much. Toss it over, an' be quick about it.'

'Och, then, aisy with ye, an' give me time—here's "May the divil niver see wan of us!"'

'Amain! amain!'

In a twinkling the egg-cup was empty.

Condy coughed as he handed it back to Ellen; and corking the bottle, he, according to custom, placed it on the dresser, thus resigning his ownership in the remainder.

Ellen again resumed her work, and Condy turned and gazed intently in the fire. She knew she had rid him of much of the distressing nervousness which troubled him before, and was now content to await developments.

'*Musha!* it's a cowl' night, Ellen,' Condy said, as he spread his hands towards the blaze and shrugged his shoulders.

'Cowl' indeed,' Ellen said.

'But a snug, warm little house ye have,' carrying his eye round it.

'Yis, thanks be to God, warm enough, an' snug enough; but—but'——

'But what?'

'Och, just'—with a thoughtful sigh—'I mane to say it's a bit—don't ye know?—lonesome.'

Condy was at once convinced he was dealing with a woman who knew her business.

'Lonesome?' said he. 'Throth, I don't doubt ye. I have the same feel meself.'

'Now, see that!' Ellen said, looking up at him with sympathy. 'I'm jist sure ye feel lonesome in that barrack of a house, all to yerself.'

'Divilish much so.'

For a minute or two both remained in thought.

'I often think to meself,' Ellen then said, 'that it isn't right to be alone.'

'Many's the time Sam Duncan, the great scripturian, tells me the same words out of the Bible.'

'An' the Bible's right. For a man in purtikler, I don't know how he can live alone an' keep his temper, for all about him's going wrong.'

'You're right there. But no more can a woman, especially if she has a farm an' stock to look afther; it's enough to br'ak any woman's heart.'

'Do ye know, Misther Sheeran, ye have the makin's of a snug, warm little place of it there. An' it was only the other night—whetsomiver put ye intil me head—I was jist thinkin' of ye—thinkin' how comfortable an' happy ye'd be if ye had some sort of a woman body to look afther ye.'

'It's often,' Condy said, slowly shaking his head at the fire—'it's often I've thought the identical same thought meself.'

'Somewan of womankind,' Ellen went on—'an aunt or frien' who'd take a kindly intherest in ye, an' tidy up yer house an' yerself'—here Ellen glanced at Condy's dilapidated garments: Condy also glanced down at them and sighed—'an' make things look like a home it would be a pleasure to come intil.'

'Right ye are, in throth;' and Condy shook his head emphatically at the fir-blaze.

'We'll say it's a day coming on the winther, now,' Ellen in poetising strain went on, 'an' ye have been out the leelong day up to the knees in mud an' slush on the pratie-ridge an' in the pratie-sheugh, an' ye're comin' in dhirthy an' cowl' an' miserable an' benumbed, an' the heat burstin' from the doore as ye open it cheers the bones o' ye. There's a roarin' fine fire leapin' on the h'arth, an' over it hangs a pot of spuds laughin' through their jackets at ye as ye come in. An' the h'arth's nate an' tidy, an' the house shinin' like a new pin; an' there's a clane-wiped chair in the corner, an' yer pipe an' tibbacky in the h'arth-bole right beside. An' the cat curled up wan side the fire, an' the dog in the other, an' a woman—yer aunt or cousin—slitherin' roun' the house doin' this turn an' that wan an' the other, an' fillin' the wee kettle to have it boiled an' singin' on the fire, callin' on the grain o' tay for it to wet as soon as ye've filled the *far-lands* with nice mealy spuds. Condy Sheeran, I say again'—with the tone of one anticipating, but defying, contradiction—'I say again, it would be a comfort an' a delight to ye to have some clane, smart, and industhrious woman-body about the house that would have yer happiness at heart; an' I say it would cheer the heart in ye many a day ye otherwise bring a cowl' heart intil a cowl' an' miserable kitchen.'

Every point and every shade of the picture Ellen called up Condy saw vividly in the blaze; and for a minute, with the delights of it, he was too overcome to express himself.

'Thrue—thrue—thrue,' he at length said slowly and convincedly; 'it's every word thrue as gospel, Ellen McGroarty.'

'A cousin, or an aunt, or a frien', then, ye should have,' Ellen said as she teased the wool with vigour.

'But that's just what I can't have. Barrin' me Aunt Mary that's married on Seumain Throwers of the Long Alt—and *she* can't come—I haven't a frien' in the wurrl, barrin' in Amiriky again; an' them that goes till Amiriky,' Condy went on thoughtfully, 'ill not in a hurry come back till Irelan' an' hardships for nothin' betther nor to keep house for a poor, good-for-nothin' divil of a lonesome bachelor lake me.'

Ellen, politically ignoring his plea of no friends, went on: 'There's fifty things about a house a man can't do an' won't do.'

'Can't do and won't do—exactly.'

'An' the house, sooner or later, goes to rack an' ruin; and he may then thank God if he doesn't go to rack himself.'

'Thank God he may; it's gospel thruth, Ellen McGroarty. But, as I sayed, I have neither aunt nor frien' of womankin'.'

Ellen affected not to perceive the bait, and went off on a new tack, where it would be Condy's duty now to follow. 'For a woman's part, now, it is a different matther,' she said. 'There's meself, now, an' I'm livin' alone goin' on four years (it'll be four years *again'* Oul' New Year's Eve, the 11th January, since me poor father—rest his soul!—died)—goin' on four years, an' I find I can manage bravely.'

Condy gulped. In a minute, with an almost pitiful appeal in his tones, he said, 'Ah, but, now, it's not the thing for a woman either, no more nor a man.'

'Well no, no, I suppose it's not altogether the thing,' she said, conceding a strong point.

'No; it's no more right for a woman to be alone than for a man,' Condy said, feeling ground again.

'Well, I suppose, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks at it in *that* light'—*what* light Ellen meant wasn't exactly clear, for Condy did not seem to throw any dazzlingly new light on the subject by the particular brilliancy of his argument—

'when wan looks on it in *that* light, sartintly I suppose it isn't.'

'Sartintly it isn't,' Condy said with confidence; 'it's mortial lonesome.'

'Ay, lonesome it is;' and Ellen shook her head at the wool she carded.

'An' there's fifty things about a farm a woman can't do an' won't do,' Condy said, with ill-suppressed triumph, turning her own argument upon her.

'Well, yes,' as one who was forced to acknowledge defeat.

'An' a man's a mighty handy article to have knockin' aroun' a house,' said Condy.

'Yis, a man is; I give in to that.'

'Ye don't know when, or for what, ye need him.'

'Thrue for ye enough, Misther Sheeran.

'An' a woman's farm an' stock isn't cared for, or fed, or half looked afther—can't be—where there isn't a runt of a man.'

'Indeed, an' there's no lie in that,' Ellen acknowledged, with the tone of one on whom light was dawning.

'Then, Misther Sheeran,' she resumed, laughingly looking up at him, 'I suppose we'll have to give in wan of us is as bad off as the other?'

'That's just it,' Condy said. 'But'—after a slight pause—'it needn't be so.'

'Well,' Ellen said with clever stupidity, 'I have sartintly been thinkin' of hirin' a thorough good man—thinkin' of it for months back. A hired man is just the very thing I need.'

'A hired man,' Condy said, slightly losing heart again, 'isn't, afther all, the thing.'

'Well, sartintly, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks on it in *that* light'—for the mysterious light once more opportunely manifested itself to Ellen—'a hired man isn't the thing either. Still, I'm thinking, Misther Sheeran, I'd recommend you sthrongly to hire some good, steady, middlin' oul' woman; that's what you want when ye haven't any frien' of yer own to keep house for ye.'

'No, I'll not hire a woman. The fact is'—and he looked steadily at Ellen, who had her head bent unnecessarily low over her work—'I am in notions of marryin', if I could soot meself in a good woman, an' that she was willin'.'

'Oh now! Faith, an', Misther Sheeran, I think ye could soot yerself aisily in the parish. There's many a fine bouncin' girl would be happy to become Missis Sheeran if they only got the chance.'

'I want no bouncin' girls; I want a steady, respectable, sensible, daicent young woman, an' I'll have no other.'

'Well, I can't say but you're right enough there — if there's such to be foun' in the parish.'

'There is such, then.'

'Oh! Then, I'm sure, if ye find such a young woman, an' that she has sense, she'll think twicet, Misther Sheeran, afore she gives ye "No."'

'Thanky—thanky! An' *I* think, if I'm not takin' a liberty, that what *you* want is to marry a steady, sensible man, that'll take care of ye, an' of yer little farm an' belongin's.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' Ellen said, tossing her head and blushing. 'If ye say it in fun atself, Misther Sheeran, the same idea run in an' out o' me own head more nor wanst lately. But, Misther Sheeran'—here Ellen bent her head over the work again—'sensible, good men's scarce an' hard to be got these times.'

'An' Ellen, *a chara*, do ye think there's none such in the parish?'

'Och, indeed, there might be plenty; but *I* know very few such—barrin' yerself, Misther Sheeran.'

And a fortnight later Ellen was the wife of the one sensible man whom she knew in the parish.

HAPPY!

His youthful years had withered in the slum
Where he and his were bred.
He was a burden, and, though lips were dumb,
Hearts wished that he were dead.

And so wished he; for in his wearied soul
There was but one desire—
To slip away, to reach a strange, vague goal
Where time would cease to tire.

But on a day some one with grave, sweet face,
And tender, skilful hands,
Came to his side, and bore him from the place,
It seemed, to far-off lands.

Yet, after all, 'twas but a whirling hour
Out of the smoke-blind town
To where the sky shone with unblemished power
Over a fair, broad down.

And he, the cripple, whose sad Springs were more
Than one who watched him knew,
Had never seen so much green grass before,
Nor skies so big and blue.

He was so softly glad, so full of peace,
He laid him back and sighed,
And watched the deep sky and its floating fleece—
Dreaming that he had died.

J. J. Bell.

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BEHIND THE SCENES.

CONTRARY to the opinion of those who, knowing little of theatrical matters, are prejudiced against them, it is a most difficult matter for an outsider to find his way 'behind the scenes.' The stage-door is most carefully guarded against the entrance of unauthorised visitors, and one must have actual business to transact before the manager will vouchsafe the magic 'open sesame.' For this place of make-believe and illusion is so busy a spot that a loitering idler would be terribly in the way, and would run no little risk of being injured by the carpenters and scene-shifters who hurry about the limited space burdened with all sorts of things incidental to the building up of the scenery.

A toy theatre, such as is sold for the delight of youth, with its cardboard scenes, will give some idea of the general construction of the genuine article, for it has 'wings' at the sides, entrances between those wings, and borders, by which is indicated those slips of canvas painted to imitate sky, trees, rafters, or curtains, as the case may be, which are hung horizontally above the stage. But there all resemblance ceases, a real stage being a far more complicated contrivance than the toy model from which we have drawn a parallel. A modern stage and its appurtenances is indeed a wondrous piece of mechanism, far more full of intricacies for its size than is a watch, and certainly affording a greater variety of mechanical movements.

A large stage may be compared to a house with many floors; and if we were to measure it from its lowest depths to the roof, we should find few many-storied houses to equal it in height. First, there is the stage itself upon which the actors tread the boards. Below this is the mezzanine floor, which is crowded with windlasses and other apparatus for working the traps, and is intersected by movable 'bridges' for the ascent and descent of large pieces of scenery. Beneath, deep down in the ground, is the cellar. This underground world is often deeper than the stage itself is high, for it must have depth enough to engulf in its embrace an entire scene. Above the stage we find other floors: first, a couple of galleries, one on either side, technically known as 'the flies;' and, high above all, just below the roof of the building, is 'the gridiron,' from which pulleys for working the scenery and other apparatus depend. Those who regard the rigging of a ship as being intricate would be puzzled to find a term to apply to the mass of ropes which form a close network in the upper regions of a theatrical stage. The expression 'knowing the ropes' must have originated in a theatre rather than on shipboard; and to know them thoroughly needs familiarity from childhood. The work involved in rolling up the scenes or cloths is all done from the side galleries or flies; here, too, the 'borders' are changed when necessary, and the drop-scene or curtain hauled up and down by means of a windlass. It is also from this point of vantage that the beneficent beams of the limelight—now being superseded rapidly by electricity—are made to shine on the good fairies and other denizens of stage-land.

Just clear of the stage itself is the green-room, which may be regarded as the drawing-room of the establishment; rooms for the chorus, ballet, and the band; various dressing-rooms, upstairs and downstairs; the wardrobe room or rooms; and various other departments to which no particular attention need be directed. But there are one or two sections of a theatre which are worthy of more detailed notice. The scene-painting room is to an outsider full of interest; and few realise the amount of art-education necessary to those who have to design and carry out these huge pictures. Some ignorantly suppose that scene-painting is a synonym for daubing pigment on to canvas anyhow, and that such work is of the very roughest description. We need hardly say that this is by no means the case; in fact, the colours have to be put on in their right places as carefully as in the most highly finished miniature

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painting. It requires, indeed, much art feeling and training to judge of the ultimate effect of handling a brush upon such a scale and upon such a large area as is represented by one of these sheets of canvas. It may be remembered that some of our leading landscape painters—notably Clarkson Stanfield and David Roberts—graduated in the painting-rooms of London theatres.

In painting a canvas, or cloth, as it is called, the material is strained on a frame, and is 'primed' with a coating of glue and whiting. The frame is moved vertically up and down, as occasion may require, through a slit in the floor. In some painting-rooms, however, the frame remains motionless, while the painter and his assistants are moved up and down in front of it on a bridge, like that often used in painting the fronts of houses. The scene is first of all designed on cardboard, ruled across in squares; and the canvas being similarly squared, the design can be sketched in proportionately. The colours are ground in water, tempered with size, and lightened in tone by the addition of the same kind of whiting as that used for cleaning household plate, &c.

Another department of this world of illusion is the property-room, so called because there the various 'properties' or 'props' are constructed and stored for use. Props comprise all the portable articles required in a play. Guns and pistols —which too often fail to go off at the critical moment—are props; loaves of bread, fowls, fruit, all made of a rough *papier-mache*, are also props. We may also include those wondrous gilt goblets, only seen on the stage, which make such a non-metallic thud when they fall and bounce upon the boards, as among the achievements of the property-man. But it is at pantomime-time that that individual is at his busiest. Big masks and make-believe sausages and vegetables, without which no pantomime would be complete, are mingled with fairy wands, garlands of artificial flowers, basket-work frames for the accommodation of giants, and other articles too numerous to mention. How the right things are forthcoming at the right moment is one of those mysteries only known to property-men. Had one of these useful members of the theatrical world the ability and inclination to write a book, what an entertaining volume could he turn out!

A London or first-class provincial theatre would not perhaps furnish examples of those stage *contretemps* which are often more amusing to the onlookers than the play itself; but in minor country theatres the most absurd and incongruous make-shifts are often introduced on the score of a very necessary economy. For example, at one country theatre, we remember a 'prop' which figured in Act I. as a sofa. It was a flat piece of scenery about six feet in length, with scroll edges which represented feet. In Act II. this same prop was turned round, and hung upside-down by a cord round the hero's neck. It was painted on the side now presented to the audience like a boat; and as the actor grasped the heroine with one arm, he worked the boat up and down with the other while he proceeded across the stage behind a line of canvas representing a stormy sea. On this touching picture the curtain came down amid uproarious applause. Another occasion we call to mind, upon which a flat piece of scenery was used to represent a very solid object, when the resulting applause was of a more derisive nature. In this piece, a very full-flavoured melodrama, the heroine was in peril of her life by being placed by the villain across a railway track. On came an impossible locomotive, piloted at the back by a scene-shifter invisible to the audience, until by some mishap the engine fell flat on its face like a pancake, amid a roar of laughter from a delighted public. Such accidents as these never occur in a well-equipped theatre. Indeed, the complaint is sometimes made that the scenic illusion is so complete and beautiful that the attention of the audience is unduly distracted from the action of the play.

A curious part of stage illusion is that which may be comprehended under the term theatrical meteorology. Whatever may be the state of the weather outside, the stage-manager within can bring about rain and hail, wind, or a thunderstorm at will; and the illusion is so complete as to sometimes make nervous members of the audience insensibly shudder. Hail and rain are represented by a closed wooden cylinder about six feet long, which is obstructed inside by various cross-pieces, a quart of peas completing the arrangement. By turning this cylinder first one way up and then the other, the peas rattle through it with close imitation to the sound of heavy rain on a roof. The wind arrangement consists of a wheel of about two feet diameter, set in a frame like that of a grindstone. This wheel is furnished with ribs on its periphery somewhat like the floats of a waterwheel, and drawn tightly over these ribs is a piece of thick silk. When the wheel is turned the ribs rub against the silk, and by turning the handle first quickly and then slowly, a very good imitation of the soughing of the wind is produced. Lightning can easily be imitated by chemical or electrical means, and the usual mode of producing thunder is by shaking a large sheet of flexible iron plate. Some theatres, have, however, a far more elaborate and effective thunder arrangement, which is used as an auxiliary to the sheet of iron when a storm is supposed to reach its height. This consists of a number of cannon-balls held in a trough and allowed to fall at the right moment, and to run over a floor above the ceiling of the theatre. A snowstorm is brought about by a perforated revolving cylinder above the stage, charged with paper cuttings. Unfortunately these messengers of frost have a habit of resting on all

kinds of projections, and dislodging themselves in subsequent scenes when their presence is not desirable.

Such is a general description of a British theatre so far as its stage arrangements are concerned; and it is noteworthy that, except in minor details, the mechanism employed has not changed for the past two hundred years. This is not because the mechanical arrangements are the best which could be devised, but rather because managers have been content to let matters remain as they are, feeling that, so long as their patrons are satisfied, it would be idle to spend money upon improvements which, although advisable, are not indispensable. Besides, managers are not generally owners of theatres, but rent them for a season only, or perhaps for a term of years. It would under such circumstances be unfair to expect them to make improvements which would be costly and which they could make no claim for on expiration of their tenancy. Then, again, the traditions with regard to stage construction in this country have been handed down through many generations of stage-carpenters, who recognise a certain method of doing a certain thing, and would look askance at any novelty as not to be countenanced.

It is not so on the Continent, where stage construction has of late years experienced a complete revolution. In most of these establishments the manager is represented by a government department with public funds at its disposal. Hence we find that abroad thousands of pounds have been expended in stage mechanism, while we at home have been content with the old methods. Costly experiments have been made, with the result that radical changes have been wrought in the working of stage machinery. Wood has largely given place to iron, hempen ropes to steel wires, while manual labour is largely superseded by hydraulic engines and electric motors. The main idea in making these improvements is to save labour, by bringing under one central control every piece of mechanism connected with the stage; so that, instead of an army of men turning windlasses or hauling ropes at different points, one man by the touch of a button or a lever can bring about startling changes of scenery, and can even make parts of the stage assume new levels at will.

A notable feature of Continental stage mechanism is the use of hydraulic rams beneath different sections of the stage, by which parts of the floor can be raised, sunk, or inclined at any angle required. This method entirely does away with the clumsy old plan of building up set scenes by the aid of rostrums or raised temporary platforms. An hydraulic addition to the resources of the historic theatre at Drury Lane, London, of the nature just described, has recently been made. By its agency, in a recent representation of a scene in the Highlands, the characters walked up hill and down dale in the most natural manner. By the same means a river lock was represented, with a number of small boats and other craft gradually rising up as the water was supposed to be let into the enclosure. It should be mentioned that the necessary hydraulic machinery for this innovation was procured from Austria, as it could not be obtained here.

And this brings us to another point. The British stage-carpenter is what may be called a 'groovy' man; he has not been educated up to these new ways, and could not readily be made to believe in them. In Continental theatres, on the other hand, the stage-carpenter, as we know him here, has been extinguished by the stage-engineer, a man capable of designing machinery of an intricate character, and holding the same social position as an engineer or architect would with us. It is a new branch of the engineering profession, for which there was a want, and the supply was forthcoming. It will possibly be a long time before similar changes come about in this country. State-aided theatres over here have only reached the step of being talked about; should they ever become a reality, we may look for many improvements in mechanism 'behind the scenes.'

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER V.—'REVEL'S FIND.'

MR DAVID WARNER and his daughter occupied apartments in Davies Street, Berkeley Square, for the present; and Mr Mark Revel had chambers close by in Mount Street. They were thus in near communication with each other, and dined together every evening at the rooms in Davies Street.

As Mr Gaverick had learned, the shares of 'Revel's Find' had not been going off very well; but they were nearly all underwritten, so that the worthy promoters were not as yet particularly concerned about them. It was decided between them, however, that the business required a fillip, for the public had lately been badly bitten in one or two West Australian mines, and a feeling of confidence must be engendered.

Consequently, in the course of a few days the following report appeared in the financial newspapers in the City:

REVEL'S FIND.—Manager cables under date 10th instant: 'Have sunk shaft 200 feet on diagonal from north-east corner. At 45 feet have struck very rich lode running south-west. Convinced this is Whitehill lode. Have sent a ton of stone to be crushed at nearest battery.'

This had the desired effect, and a rush for shares set in before they could go to a premium, as they seemed very likely to do. The result of the crushing was anxiously awaited, and in a week it was known. The ton of ore yielded twenty-one ounces of gold. There were no longer shares to be had without paying a premium for them, and Warner and Revel were in high spirits.

'They'll go up and up, Revel,' said Warner that evening as they sat together smoking after dinner. Lily Warner was in the next room passing her time at a piano.

'It would be capital to realise at five pounds,' said the other. 'They will reach that price; the Whitehill lode undoubtedly runs through the property, and Whitehills are now seven and a half.'

'I think we had better have the rest of the purchase-money in shares. We should have thirty thousand each, and they will be worth a good deal more than cash.'

'I agree with you. But we must scatter them about amongst nominees before we begin to realise. The market is deucedly suspicious of vendors.'

'With good reason, Mark,' said the other, with a grin. 'A vendor is supposed to have faith enough in the property to hold on to his shares.'

'Oh, I have faith enough in it—I believe the gold is there. But I prefer cash in hand to dividends, no matter how big these may be. They are always tedious in coming, you know—and one never knows what may happen.'

'That's it, Mark—one never knows. For my part, I intend to unload a lot at three pounds, when they touch that price.'

'About half, say,' observed the other, thoughtfully. 'Yes; I have no doubt it's the best plan, Warner. Let us have another bottle of fizz upon it.'

The bottle of champagne was opened, and they sipped it in silence for some minutes. A glow of satisfaction shone in the face of each as they puffed the fragrant cigars and drank the excellent wine. All was going well with them, indeed. They had not yet received more than the ten thousand pounds already mentioned; but the money was safe in the hands of the company's bankers, and the drawing of it in due course was only a matter of form.

Lily Warner was touching the piano softly in the next room, and sometimes breaking into a low note of song. She sang only a few words at a time, sweetly enough to indicate the fine quality of her voice. Revel had for some time been listening attentively.

'I think, Warner,' he observed at length, 'I will get a good house somewhere out in Surrey. That part is convenient for reaching the City; and I think Lily would like it better than London.'

Warner said nothing.

'Just a moderate-sized house, you know, with a few acres of land, and stabling. I must consult Lily in the matter.'

Again Warner said nothing, but continued smoking in silence. Revel glanced at him with some surprise.

'What do you think of it, Warner?'

'Oh, the idea is a very good one, no doubt,' answered Warner, rousing himself. 'But, by the way, have you ever popped the question to Lily yet?'

'No,' said Revel, darkening. 'I have not thought it necessary. I thought the matter was quite understood between you and me.'

'You see,' observed Warner, 'the girl may have a will of her own in that business. Girls sometimes have. Mind, I don't say it's the case with Lily, or that she would oppose any arrangement I made for her. I don't think she would, in fact. But I thought it right to mention the matter. As a formality, at least, you must ask her consent.'

As they were speaking the tinkling of the piano had, unnoticed by them, ceased in the adjoining room. Lily Warner was, in fact, entering the dining-room when the subject of their conversation caught her ear, and she came to a dead stop, standing white and still as a statue in the doorway.

'Oh, if that's all, it's nothing,' said Revel, in reply to Warner. 'You have only to tell her the arrangement, and of course she will fall in with it.'

'The arrangement was, that we were to go halves in the proceeds of the sale. We are doing that. I am not so clear, Mark, as to what you understand in regard to Lily.'

'You promised I should have her, didn't you?'

'Did I promise, after sharing halves with you, to throw the girl in?'

'I certainly so understood. There were no conditions mentioned.'

Revel was getting angry, but by an effort kept himself under control.

'Business is business, Mark. In business there are no such things known as free gifts. To be quite plain with you, if Lily is to form part of your share of the enterprise, there must be a consideration.'

'Warner,' answered Revel through his teeth, 'I never thought you would play me false like this!'

'Nonsense, Mark'——

'You are playing me false!' cried Revel. 'You distinctly promised me in Coolgardie that I should have the girl. You reminded me that

you had offered her as a gift to me before—at Adelaide—when I was compelled to decline relieving you of her. You are playing me false if you now go back upon a clear agreement.'

'I am not doing so,' said the other, placidly puffing his cigar. 'There was no clear agreement, as you call it, in regard to the girl. I did promise that you should have her, as you seemed to want her; but I never meant you should have her for nothing. Isn't she worth something more than that, Mark?'

Revel shut his lips tightly, in an effort to control the passion aroused within him. Warner seemed content to wait for his answer. With a deep breath, Revel said at length, slowly:

'How much do you want for her?'

'Well, let us say ten thousand of your shares. That will leave you with twenty thousand still—a pretty good provision, too.'

'I'll give you five thousand.'

'Not enough, Mark.' After a pause Warner added: 'I tell you what, Mark. We won't quarrel over the thing. Let it be eight thousand, and the girl's yours.'

'Needs must,' answered the other bitterly. 'You have me on the hip, and can dictate your terms. Eight thousand let it be. You will see that Lily will be ready to consent?'

'Oh, I'll see to that, Mark. Now, fill your glass, and let us drink to the success of the arrangement.'

It was a pleasant conversation for Lily Warner to listen to. When they began to drink the wine she retreated quietly to the room she had come from, and sat down again at the piano, very pale. Her fingers absently touched the keys from time to time, but she sang no more.

Next morning, as she was seated at breakfast with her father, she noticed that he was much disturbed by a letter he had received, and had pushed away his plate. She was wondering whether it was an angry communication from Mark Revel—for she had noticed how angry he was the night before—when that individual burst into the room, looking very agitated.

'See here!' he exclaimed to Warner, without noticing the girl; 'that infernal cub is in London, after all! Look at this letter.'

'I needn't look at it, Mark. I have a similar one myself.'

Revel dropped on a chair, with his elbows resting on his knees and his head stooped.

'I made sure,' he said—'I made sure he was in South Africa or some such place. What bad luck has brought him home again?'

Lily Warner was listening very attentively. Perhaps she suspected what the matter was.

'That speculation is bootless, Mark. The question is, What's to be done?'

Revel was thinking. Clearly it was a hard problem.

'It will be an awkward business, Warner, if we are made criminally responsible. Fraudulent trusteeship is an ugly thing. And I know this fellow Braker; he will fasten to us with the tenacity of a bull-dog, and there will be no shaking him off with a compromise.'

'Which means, I suppose,' said Warner, with a sickly look, 'that we shall have to hand out three thousand a piece to that pestilent whelp?'

'More than that, probably. Or else face a judge and jury at the Old Bailey.'

Warner reflected for a few minutes. Both men became conscious, during this pause, of the presence of the girl at the breakfast-table, which, in their preoccupation, they had not noticed or thought of before.

'I tell you what, Mark,' observed Warner. 'Meet me at the office of the company at eleven. We'll talk further then.'

'We can drive in together, can't we?'

'Very well, Mark. I shall be ready in a few minutes.' He glanced at his daughter, who was now sufficiently aware of the nature of their disquietude. 'Lily, have you ever known or heard of any one named Hulme?'

'Yes,' she answered quietly, 'in Coolgardie. The young man I nursed in the fever was called Hulme.'

The two men stared at each other.

'Why did you never tell me that?' her father demanded.

'Why should I? I knew nothing about him, except that he was ill. I supposed you knew his name—if you cared to know. There was no mystery about him.'

Nothing more was said to her, and the two men walked down to the square for a cab.

'Well, Mark, we have been unlucky!' said Warner, drawing a deep respiration. 'To think of his being in Coolgardie, and down with typhoid! And here he is now in London, and the devil to pay!'

'The paying will have to be done, too—through the nose,' replied Revel, 'if we are to avoid worse.'

'We must try and get the rest of the cash from the board to-day.'

'What! To clear out, is it?'

'Hanged if I know!' was the uneasy answer.

'Better not attempt that, Warner. I would rather deal with any man in London than that Braker. He is as keen and relentless as a bloodhound. No; we must pay up whatever he will accept, and get out of it. After all, it will be only some three thousand each, and safety will be cheap at the price. I had better see Braker, I think, and have it out.'

The letters they had received were from Mr Braker, acting for Richard Hulme, and simply requesting to be informed of the name of a solicitor who would accept service of a summons requiring them to render an account of their trusteeship to the High Court. The communication was too ominous to be regarded lightly, and the worthies

who received it knew well what it meant. They had absconded from the country with the trust money. Revel was far from sure that Braker would lend himself to the compounding of a felony by assenting to a settlement. But he must see the lawyer all the same.

At the Bank he got out of the cab, to walk down to Mr Braker's office in King William Street. Warner drove on to the company's office in New Broad Street. There was to be a board meeting at twelve, and at that meeting they resolved to have a final settlement of the purchase of the mine. There were ample funds at the bank, and cheques and certificates could be written out in a few minutes. Revel promised to join Warner there after his interview with the solicitor.

Mr Braker was in his office. He was a thin, shaven, ascetic-looking man, with cold steely eyes and a determined mouth—a man one would hardly be encouraged to ask a concession or indulgence from. Such Revel knew him to be, and such he found him to be on the present occasion. Mr Braker was very polite but very decisive.

'I am afraid I cannot oblige you, Mr Revel, by accepting any settlement. My instructions are to bring you and Mr Warner into court.'

'We are ready to pay the money,' argued Revel. 'What more does your client want?'

'I cannot tell. I simply have my instructions.'

Then, fixing his cold eyes on Revel, he added after a moment:

'You are a solicitor, Mr Revel; I need not remind you of the gravity of the case. I need not ask you how you would feel your own responsibility if you were in my position. You are asking me to do a very serious thing by accepting repayment of the trust money. I cannot do it, sir.'

Revel began to feel terribly uneasy. If these proceedings were intended to be retributive, it was a dark prospect for Warner and him. It would mean the Old Bailey and Mr Justice Hawkins—a fearful lookout for wrong-doers.

'Where could I see your client?' he asked at length.

Mr Braker hesitated. But after some thought he gave Revel the address of Mr Gaverick's office.

Thither, with an anxious mind, Revel proceeded. He would offer any penalty to get out of this danger; but he was doubtful, after his interview with the solicitor, whether any offer would be accepted.

He found Hulme with Mr Gaverick. Glancing at the latter, Revel requested a private interview.

'This gentleman is my friend,' said Hulme. 'Anything you have to say to me may be said in his presence.'

'I have called about a letter which I, as well as Mr Warner, have received from your solicitor, about your mother's trust fund. We are prepared to settle the matter.'

'How?' asked Hulme.

'If you will agree to a compromise,' said Revel cautiously.

'No,' was the decided answer. 'You have rendered yourselves amenable to the criminal law, and you both deserve all it could give you. Either take your chance of a trial, or pay me in full the amount of my mother's fund—six thousand pounds—with the four per cent. interest for the last eighteen months.'

'I am afraid we are not able to do that,' said Revel. 'Anything reasonable we will try to do.'

'Then,' replied Hulme, 'I wish you good-morning. You must go and deal with Mr Braker.'

Revel was sullenly silent. Hulme sat down at the table opposite Mr Gaverick, and proceeded to open some letters. Revel moved slowly towards the door.

'I will go over to New Broad Street and consult Mr Warner. Then I will come back and make you the best offer we can.'

'Mr Mark Revel,' said the young man, 'you will return here before twelve o'clock—it is now within a quarter of eleven—with the full amount I named, in cash, or you will have to arrange with Mr Braker. That is my last word.'

Grinding his teeth, Revel descended to the street. He was not long absent. In three-quarters of an hour he reappeared with a bundle of bank-notes, which he counted down on the table. Hulme gave him a receipt for the money, which he took without a word, and walked out. He heard Mr Gaverick indulge in a hearty laugh as he descended the first steps of the stair. His face was livid with mortification.

Out of the five thousand he had received from the company, Revel had only a few sovereigns left in his pocket now. Warner, he knew, was no better off. But, at all events, they had still twenty thousand in cash to receive, as well as their fully-paid shares, and in an hour's time they meant to have both.

Revel was back in time for the board meeting. There was not much business to transact, beyond signing certificates for shareholders, a small pile of which the secretary had before him on the table. The directors, therefore, earned their fees by a quarter of an hour's conversation on current topics—there were three, besides Warner and Revel—and then the chairman and another signed their names to the certificates and affixed the company's seal to them.

'That's all, I think?' observed the chairman genially when the little business was finished.

'I think, General,' said Warner, 'the time has come for the board to settle with the vendors. The company is in ample funds now, and our scrip for shares may as well be made out at the same time. Both Revel and I are willing to take the

balance in shares. That will leave only twenty thousand to be paid in cash.'

'Of course,' added Revel, 'as to the balance of thirty thousand, although we would prefer to take it in shares, we are entirely in the hands of the board. If you prefer to pay in cash, well and good.'

'That is quite fair, quite right,' said the chairman. 'What shall the balance be, gentlemen—shares or cash?'

'I think,' answered one of his colleagues, 'we ought to defer to the wishes of the vendors. Let it be shares. We shall have the more cash left for working expenses, and these may yet be heavier than we anticipate.'

'Very good,' replied the chairman; 'I shall minute it shares. The secretary will make out the certificates; also the cheques for twenty thousand pounds.'

So the thing was as good as done, and Warner lay back in his chair, with his hands in his trousers-pockets, mentally calculating how much his shares would be worth when the price reached three pounds. Another favourable report respecting the lode would quickly run them up to that price. With the eight thousand shares to be transferred to him by Revel as the purchase-price of his daughter, Warner would be the holder of thirty-eight thousand. Twenty thousand of these sold at three pounds would provide him with a snug capital for a number of 'operations' which he contemplated. The rest would constitute a comfortable reserve. In picturing all this in his mind, he forgot for the time the three thousand he had been obliged to drop that morning to young Hulme.

Not so placid were the reflections of Revel. The loss of that money rankled in his breast. So did the prospective transfer of eight thousand shares to his future father-in law. If he could have ruined Warner with a stroke of his pen, how willingly he would have done it! But Warner was too clever for him—far too clever. He would have his revenge yet. As soon as he was married to Lily Warner he would devote himself, by every subtle and secret means in his power, to counteracting the schemes of his father-in-law. Warner could not fail to be vulnerable in many points, and Revel meant to keep a sharp lookout for these points, and deal a stab whenever the chance offered.

Let no one suppose he was in love with Lily Warner. He admired the girl as a most desirable chattel. She possessed style and beauty. His theory was that a business man with an attractive wife can turn her to valuable use in a variety of social ways conducive to his own advancement. Mark Revel knew what he was about in marrying Lily; but he had no love for her—he was incapable of such a sentiment.

The secretary filled in the cheques and the certificates, and laid them before the chairman. The latter was about to sign them, when the office-boy brought in a cable message.

'What is it?' the chairman quickly asked the secretary, as the latter opened it. They were all eager to know, all eager to learn of the further development of the rich lode that promised to make the fortunes of the mine.

The message contained only the single word, 'Hairhung.' It was necessary to get the code-book to translate it. This was soon done, and the secretary was noticed to draw a quick breath.

'What is it, Mr Boke?' demanded the chairman again.

'Only one word, sir—"Hairhung," which means, "The lode has pinched out."'

'Impossible!' cried Warner, leaping to his feet.

The secretary placed the message and the code-book before him, and he verified the translation. There was no error about it. The lode had pinched out. It had been a delusion.

For some minutes there was silence. The chairman was the first to speak. He pushed away from him the cheque-book and the certificates.

'Under the circumstances, I do not think we should be justified in signing these. I am sure the vendors would not expect us to do so.'

'But we do expect you to do so,' said Warner resolutely. 'Why not? We have sold you the property, and you are bound to pay us the agreed price. Is it because of one disappointment we are to be defrauded of our bargain?'

'Defrauded is a word I must request you to withdraw, Mr Warner,' said the chairman severely.

'I beg pardon, General. But, all the same, I insist upon our right to be paid. There is plenty of gold in the mine. Only one shaft has been sunk as yet.'

'I hope you are right, Mr Warner. But I adhere to my opinion that, until it is shown that there is gold, we ought not to part with the purchase-money. We are responsible to the shareholders.'

'I protest, Mr Chairman.'

'Let the board decide,' the chairman observed, turning to his colleagues. These gentlemen were distinctly of the same opinion. The chairman closed the agenda-book and rose.

'That closes the meeting, gentlemen. Let us hope our next one will be held under brighter auspices.'

The other directors also rose, took their hats and coats, and went away.

This was a black day for Warner and Revel. When they were passing through the outer office, a few minutes later, the secretary was at the telephone.

'They had that news in the market,' he said, hanging up the receiver, 'hours before we got it

here. The shares are down to five shillings already.'

They went down the stairs to the street in silence. No two men in London were in what is popularly called 'a tighter place.' They had not ten pounds between them. What on earth were they to do now? There was no doubt in the mind of either that the mine was worthless, and that they would never get another penny of the purchase-money. If that accursed cable message had only been delayed half-an-hour.

The night was wet and cold, and Hulme, going home late from a lecture at the Polytechnic, got out of the omnibus at Marble Arch to warm his feet with a walk the rest of the way. The rain had left off for an interval, but there was a biting cold wind. Whilst he stood a moment on the pavement to button up his overcoat, a young woman crept from the shadow of the gateway and timidly approached him. He stepped aside to get out of her way, and as he did so he heard his name softly pronounced. Turning quickly round, what was his amazement to see before him in the lamplight, pale and shivering, Lily Warner!

THE STRAW INDUSTRY.

To be described as a man of straw is somewhat unflattering, and, in a hard, matter-of-fact world, sufficient even to excite a certain amount of suspicion in the minds of men who, unlike Dick Swiveller, sometimes allow the wing of friendship to moult a feather.

There is, however, one spot of favoured earth where to be known as a man of straw is indeed a most honourable title, certain to command respect. This is in Luton, a clean, healthy town in South Bedfordshire, containing rather more than 32,000 inhabitants. Here in 'Strawopolis,' and a circlet of villages all within fifteen miles of Luton, is the district where the straw hats are made which adorn the heads of our sisters, and which give a sense of airy freedom to the masculine wearer as well.

Although Luton is the *entrepôt*, there are other places in the district which depend solely upon the staple industry of the town for their livelihood. The 'straw circle' embraces Sandy and Potton, in Bedfordshire, on the north-west, and Dunstable, containing a population of 4513, east of Luton, on the Great Northern Railway. Just inside Hertfordshire is St Albans (with a population of about 13,000), Redbourn, and Harpenden, perhaps less progressive than the other villages. The entire population engaged in the straw trade would not probably exceed 60,000; but the money earned by the straw-workers is well able to support them, with ordinary care, all through the year. This is a saving clause, for many unfortunately lose their heads when the gold comes tumbling in at the end of each season. The result often is that the wiles of the railway companies prove too much for the imprudent and thriftless; and the result of a long holiday at Yarmouth, Brighton, Blackpool, or South Wales is a barren purse during the late autumn months, when work is scarce.

Originally the whole of the plait was grown, designed, and fashioned in the United Kingdom; but of late the foreign importers have beaten their English rivals completely out of the field. The writer of this article was advised to buy an 'English rustic' for his own use by an expert; but when the establishment recommended was reached, the 'rustic Japanese' was so much more attractive that a hat of that kind was bought in preference. This has been the case in many instances that came to the writer's knowledge, for the Japanese excel both in material and exquisite design. The Chinese are clever, but unreliable on account of the amount of trickery to be contended against in dealing with them. A large trade is also done with France, Switzerland, and some parts of Italy. The most beautiful designs ever seen by the writer were imported from France. There were dozens of them in silk, ready to be copied in making up the plait, and certainly they gave evidence of marvellous inventive powers. There is a small amount of English plait used; but, although sound in quality, the price is too high and the designs wanting in ingenuity and prettiness. One of the most extraordinary things to a novice in connection with the manufacture of straw hats is the fact that straw in some cases is not used at all. The material is wood, so well got up and pliable that it is not discoverable unless pointed out by an expert. Then it can be seen at a glance that the material is merely a painted shaving.

The only other material used is felt, and generally but little of that. Women are mostly employed in the industry, but men do the blocking and felting. There is a considerable amount of dust arising from the work, but it is comparatively innocuous, having nothing deadly in its composition, like the dust breathed by file-makers and others who work where lead, steel, and zinc are in process of manufacture.

There are, however, many peculiarities in the straw trade which deserve mention. What most excited the interest of the writer was the system of the selling of plait—that is, the material in the rough in the first instance—by the manufacturers to the small maker. The manufacturers sell their own imported plait *at a profit* to the small maker, who then works it up into hats ready

for the buyers from London, Paris, or any other great centre. The small maker has in many instances to buy also or invent his own design. When he has completed a number of hats and worked all the plait up, he takes them to the manufacturer, who buys them again in a saleable shape. This is not all. Although the big manufacturer sold the petty maker the plait, he may, upon some pretext or other, refuse to buy the hats when manufactured, thus in some cases bringing ruin upon the maker. Of course in that case the hats may be offered for sale to other manufacturers; but as a rule these have their regular customers (who are also makers), and may refuse to buy unless they were the vendors of the raw plait to the maker in the first instance. This does not happen very often; but the cases in which this is done are sufficiently numerous to cause much anxiety to the petty manufacturer, who does not work in the factories as a mechanic on piece-work.

Luton is honeycombed with 'manufacturers.' Perhaps a man has his wife, two daughters, and a son to assist him. The son does the 'milling,' the strongest girl the 'machining,' the father the 'blocking,' and the mother and the other daughter finish off the hats by sewing in linings, ticketing, and so on. The father would probably have a brass plate upon his door which would have his name and the word 'manufacturer' engraved upon it.

Much of the foreign plait is already bleached and dyed before it is shipped for England; but when this is not the case there are bleachers and dyers already on the spot who carry out the necessary processes; and this branch of the trade is highly lucrative—in fact, the straw trade is a very lucrative industry altogether. The manufacturers of Luton do not, perhaps, acquire the fortunes achieved by the manufacturers of steel, cotton, and cannon. The wealthiest manufacturer in Luton or St Albans would not possess a fortune exceeding £60,000 perhaps, but the trade is universally lucrative. Failures are few, and these are generally brought about by incompetence or extravagance, or both. The average manufacturer makes his five hundred to a thousand a year easily—that is, without strain or any amount of mental worry. There are plenty of men who live by importing and selling plait alone, others bleach and dye, while the manufacturers make their own hats or sell plait to be made up in the way described. The rateable value of Luton, with its population of about 32,000, is over £125,000; and St Albans, with a population of 13,000, is rated at nearly £48,000.

Before the writer proceeded to Luton in a journalistic capacity, he was informed in a London club that the women engaged in the straw trade outnumbered the men by nearly ten to one. As this seems to be a general impression in London and many other places, it may be as well to say at once that it is entirely erroneous. Upon careful inquiry it would be found that even at the height of the busy season the women never outnumber the men in a greater proportion than three to one. Even then some allowance must be made for hundreds of girls who come to Luton to work in the factory rooms from Dunstable, Harpenden, and other outlying places, returning home to sleep every night. The average proportion employed all the year through would not be greater than two to one.

Some time ago a rumour got about that excited the ire and amazement of the feminine population. The disparity in the sexes in Luton has ever been at once a vexed question and a standing joke. Judge of the mingled laughter and horror which greeted the report that five thousand Japanese girls were coming to this country in order to combat the necessity of importing designed plait over so many thousands of miles of ocean. The idea certainly was plausible if it could have been carried out, and it caught on, some of the manufacturers themselves seriously discussing the project. Rumour reached such a height at last that many believed that not only were Japanese coming, but French, Swiss, and Chinese as well. These foreigners were to design and work up British-grown straw-plait artistically after the fashion of their native countries. Although this was seriously contemplated, the scheme proved unworkable for many reasons. Upon making inquiries the writer elicited that the matter never went beyond a proposal to subscribe £20,000 for purposes of experiment, and that the Japanese Consul-general had never been seriously approached upon the subject. A few enthusiasts predict that the scheme will be revived; but even if it is, in the humble opinion of the writer, it must inevitably fall to the ground.

The inhabitants are exceedingly hospitable, and certainly the girls engaged in the trade are well dressed, pretty, and modest in their behaviour. The town contains plenty of musical talent, and it boasts the possession of the famous Red Cross Silver Prize Band; but otherwise there are hardly attractions enough to keep the young people off the streets. Luton is rigidly Nonconformist in its tendencies, and the Council absolutely decline to license a theatre. There is a 'gaff' which gives entertainments upon approbation, but in no way can it claim the title and dignity of a theatre. Able lecturers attend periodically at the Plait Hall, and provincial theatrical companies appear occasionally at the Town Hall. The manufacturers are chiefly Baptists, Congregationalists, and Wesleyan Methodists, and the ministers use every effort to make their respective churches attractive. The bane of the young connected with the straw trade is the instinct of extravagance. Money in the season is earned easily, and it filters through the purses of the thriftless. Luton, however, is by no means isolated in this respect.

Like nearly everything else connected with the straw industry, the town is very clean. It is also drained upon the best scientific principles, and contains two public parks, a recreation-ground, a hospital, and a public library. The social clubs are much above the average, and strangers who have business in the town are generally loath to leave it. There is a sublime spirit of *camaraderie* among all classes. Poverty is to be found among those employed in the straw industry as in every trade, but on a smaller scale than in many towns of double the size of Luton. The impression left upon the mind of the visitor is altogether pleasant—an impression which goes to create a lasting belief that the straw industry is one of the most useful, lucrative, and healthy to be found in the United Kingdom.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND:

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER II.

THE library, as the Bishop had expected, was empty. Martin followed him almost at once, closed the door, and stood waiting.

It was then that his lordship saw the full difficulty of his task. His suspicions, after all, were not certainties, and he was on delicate ground. He decided to speak delicately.

'I wish to say a word about this diamond,' he began, after a long and uncomfortable pause—'the diamond which Lady Stalland has lost.'

Martin inclined his head. In the fading light his face was perfectly inscrutable.

'We may feel sure,' continued the Bishop—'we may feel sure that no one would take the stone deliberately and with full consideration of his action. Temptation is sometimes too strong for the best intentions; it is yielded to in a moment of sudden madness. The action is repented of as soon as it has been committed. Do you understand me?'

'I—I think so, my lord,' answered the footman in a husky voice.

'I trust that no person would be disposed to treat such a fall with too great severity,' the Bishop went on, choosing his words with painful consideration; 'but—but the duty of the culprit is clear. He will at once restore the lost article to its owner in the way which seems best to him, and he will leave the scene of his temptation for ever. You follow me, Martin?'

'Yes—oh yes, my lord,' answered the man again; and his voice was more husky than before.

The Bishop felt greatly relieved. True, the footman had not acknowledged his guilt, but he evidently understood. He would treat him very mercifully.

'That is well,' he said; 'that is well. And I think I may say—I feel sure—that if this is done not a word shall be said. The matter will go no further.'

'It will go no further, my lord,' said Martin. 'You have been so kind in the past that I am sure the matter will go no further.'

The man's voice was broken and unsteady. The library had grown darker during their conversation, and his face was turned aside, but his words were plain enough for any one. The Bishop gave a slight cough, and concluded:

'Then that will do, Martin. I think we quite understand each other. That will do.'

Martin left the room silently. For a while his former master stood alone, thinking of what had passed.

'Perhaps,' he mused—'perhaps I have been too easy, too merciful; but, after all, I could not be certain, and dared not make a mistake. If he has it, he must have picked it up just before he came upon me in the drawing-room. Now he will restore it and go away. It is a strange business—a very unpleasant business; but I have done my best to put it right.'

He felt so satisfied with his efforts that he heard with great composure, a little later on, that the lost jewel had not yet been found. This intelligence was brought by Sir Edward himself, who entered the library looking much upset.

'Every possible and probable spot has been searched over and over again,' he said. 'I am afraid that this is not a mere case of accident.'

'Indeed?' said the Bishop gravely.

'No. A stone of that size cannot lie long unnoticed. Its very brilliancy would be against that. I am afraid'——

'You are afraid?'——

'That this is a very serious matter,' said Sir Edward in a lower tone—'a very serious matter. The diamond was dropped in the drawing-room just before we went upstairs to dress for dinner. It must have been picked up after we had gone and before you came down.'

'My own conclusion,' thought the Bishop; and he nodded with increased gravity.

'Then,' continued his host slowly, with the air of one who knows the importance of his de-

cisions—'then the field of inquiry is limited. I quite appreciate the injury which might be caused by a false accusation; but—but I must act at once. Some of my servants are new and untried.'

'Hem!' said the Bishop. 'I understand—I fully understand.'

'But I must not go into this business myself,' added Sir Edward. 'It shall be given into skilled hands. There is a man on the detective staff at Hazleton who has done well in matters of this kind, and I could have him here by to-morrow. What is your opinion?'

The Bishop gave it his earnest consideration. He felt sure that by to-morrow the stone would be restored and the affair happily concluded; but he could not say so. It would satisfy the somewhat restless and excitable baronet if he were allowed to have his own way.

'There is no harm in it,' he decided aloud. 'Yes, on the whole, I think your course is a wise one. It is such a delicate matter—in your own household.'

Sir Edward moved to the writing-table. 'That is exactly the point,' he said. 'I feel so helpless, and this man will know exactly what to do. I will write at once.'

He rang for lights, and then wrote a hurried letter. In five minutes it was finished, sealed, and addressed, and given into the hands of a groom, with strict orders that it should be posted immediately.

'Now I feel more easy,' declared the master of the house. 'He will be here by Sunday evening at latest; and in the meantime we must keep our eyes open. Let us go into the drawing-room.'

The Bishop went, feeling pleasantly conscious that he had laid the train for a satisfactory sequel to this disturbing incident. His very merciful treatment of Martin, too, was an agreeable memory; and he joined the party in the drawing-room with a smiling and benign countenance. The restraint which had naturally fallen upon every one only served to emphasise his good spirits. He told his best stories in his very best manner, and his laugh was as free and hearty as that of Commander Digby himself.

When the hour came for retiring he passed up the great staircase with a light heart. It was his rule to retire early on a Saturday, and he had promised to conduct the service in the village church next morning. He would spend a pleasant, restful night, and would awake in good time to enjoy the first freshness of a summer Sabbath.

His room was on the first landing; but just as he reached the door he was surprised to hear a patter-patter of little feet in the corridor above. A moment later a small figure in white ran to the stair-rail, and an eager face, crowned with a tangle of short curls, looked over at him.

'Wobber!' cried a childish voice in a loud whisper; 'wobber!'

The Bishop gazed at the apparition in astonishment. There was mischief in that little face; but he thought there was also a certain amount of awe and admiration. While he wondered two hands seized the white-robed figure from behind, and he caught a glimpse of another face, flushed with annoyance.

'Oh, Miss Connie, for shame!' cried the nurse. 'Come back to bed at once.'

'It's the wobber,' protested Miss Connie, struggling in vain. 'I want to see the wobber.' And then the figures vanished together, amid subdued exclamations of entreaty and rebuke.

The Bishop entered his room and locked the door. 'The ways of children,' he said to himself, 'are very amusing—very amusing indeed. I wonder what she was thinking of.'

He had almost entirely forgotten his previous conversation with Miss Connie, and her words had no clear meaning for him. Like many others among our learned, he was rather absent-minded, and his memory was not to be trusted. He dismissed the matter with a smile, and prepared to disrobe himself in pleasant expectation of quiet slumber.

During this process he became aware that there was something small and hard in one of his vest-pockets. With some curiosity he took it between his finger and thumb and brought it to the light.

For a few moments he gazed at the object in simple wonder, turning it over and over. Then he laid it on the mantelshelf, and gazed at it again. The wonder in his face changed to a look of consternation.

The article before him was small, indeed, but its size had nothing to do with the matter. It glittered brightly in the rays of the gas-jet—glittered with a purity and brilliancy which even a child could not mistake. He took it up again, and turned it over once more. 'This,' he muttered, in a tone of sudden conviction—'this is Lady Stalland's diamond!'

Some convictions come as inspirations. This one followed from no train of thought, no mental process; but the mind was immediately satisfied with it. Afterwards came an illuminating flash of memory which seemed to make everything clear.

There were Sir Edward's words in the library—that the very brilliancy of the stone must have prevented it from lying long unnoticed. It was quite true—its glitter had attracted his own eye, and he had picked it up as one of the child's toys. If it had been one of her playthings she would have missed it at once.

And during all the searching and commotion the gem had been lying securely in an episcopal pocket. How ridiculous—how absurd! But at all events it was found now, and could be re-

stored in a moment. The Bishop began to put on again the garments he had removed, so that he might run downstairs. But before he had completed this work his face clouded over with dismay. He stopped to think.

In explanation of his further conduct it is only fair to remark here that our Bishop was extremely, nervously sensitive. Criticism of his public work had caused him many sleepless nights, and the slightest breath of blame had the power to give him pain. He suddenly called to mind what had passed during the evening, and saw that he stood in a peculiarly unfortunate position.

At the dinner-table he had expressly denied having seen the diamond. He had looked on at the general distress with sympathetic eyes; he had conversed with his host on the matter, and had even advised him to send for the police. Would any one believe—could he expect any one to believe—that he had been in possession of the missing article all the while without knowing it? Preposterous!

He might explain that he had forgotten—forgotten that he had found a ten-thousand-pound diamond ten minutes before! He might declare that he had mistaken it for a piece of glass, and they would smile. Who could mistake a stone of that lustre and beauty for anything else? People were so prone to think evil—even of bishops! They would glance at each other in a meaning way; they would rake up remembered cases of sudden temptation and quick repentance—the smirch of suspicion would remain upon his name for ever. A dampness broke out upon his brow, and he stared at that wretched diamond in growing horror.

There came a sound of footsteps and voices in the corridor. He started and listened guiltily, with a vague thought of police. Then he knew that the voices were those of his fellow-guests, retiring for the night.

He pulled himself together. In a few minutes his host would come upstairs also. He would wait until he reached the corridor, and then call him in. Sir Edward would understand, and the matter would go no further. He went hastily to the door and waited, listening, with his hand upon the key.

The time went slowly, but at last he heard voices once more. Sir Edward was coming upstairs now, probably with Lady Stalland. In two minutes all would be right again.

But then another dreadful question occurred to him. Would it all be right? Sir Edward was of a suspicious, hasty temperament. Only the Bishop knew that a detective had been sent for, and the master of the house would not fail to recall the fact. It might appear even more curious to him than to any one else. He might think that his talk of police had frightened the culprit into a surrender of his spoil. He might think—— Good heavens! he might think almost anything, and with excellent reason, too.

So the Bishop reflected in an agony of doubt and indecision. All his moral strength, his courage, his stability, seemed to have deserted him. He heard Sir Edward's footsteps approach—they reached his door—they were passing. His fingers trembled upon the key but did not turn it. It was too late!

The footsteps died away; a door was opened and closed at the end of the corridor. That sound came with a shock; it told him that he had failed—that he had fallen. The chance had gone.

'And I,' he groaned—'I am a villain! I—I have stolen the diamond!'

SOME CENTRAL AMERICAN INDIANS.

THE descendants of that mysterious race who occupied Mexico before the coming of the Aztecs (and who afterwards migrated into Yucatan and Central America, where traces of their civilisation are still to be seen in the form of temples, monoliths, and mounds) are still to be found along the valley of the Laconton River and in the central and southern portions of the peninsula of Yucatan. The Laconton Indians are probably in much the same condition as they were at the time of the conquest; they still sacrifice to their ancient gods, and iron has not as yet superseded flint in the manufacture of their weapons and implements. The eastern coast of Yucatan, though nominally Mexican territory, is occupied by a tribe of Indians known as the Santa Cruz, who many years ago threw off their allegiance to Mexico after massacring every Spaniard in their country upon whom they could lay hands. These Indians are savage and warlike, and do not allow any stranger to enter their country unless he has got special permission from the chief, and is conducted during his stay there by one of themselves.

They take great trouble in concealing their villages in the bush, even cutting out the tongues of their cocks to prevent enemies being guided to the village by the noise of their crowing. In travelling along the main tracks through the bush one will come across only a cluster of two or three huts at long intervals, and probably pass without noticing the narrow tracks which, if followed, lead to villages buried in the dense bush. The houses are constructed of upright beams, forked at the ends, on which are laid cross-pieces; the walls are built of pimento stems placed close together, and sometimes plastered over

with mud; the roof is thatched with palm-leaves, and the whole structure is bound together with *ti-ti*, a long, tough creeper which is very plentiful in the bush, and entirely supplies the place of rope and nails with the Indians.

Physically the Santa Cruz are rather a fine race, some of the women being really pretty, even according to European standards. The hair is long, black, and straight, the complexion light brown, the limbs muscular and well proportioned, and the extremities small and delicate.

The Indian's property consists of his hammock, a few calabashes and earthen pots, his machete (a heavy sword-like knife, which he uses indiscriminately for fighting, bush-clearing, and agricultural work), and a cotton suit. All these he can carry in his *macapal* (a netted bag slung over the back and attached to the forehead); and with his wife, and dogs trotting behind, he frequently moves from place to place, as a new house can be put up in the course of a few days, and every man is his own architect and builder. It is, in fact, quite common for whole villages to move in this way when they have exhausted all the neighbouring corn-growing lands, as the same piece of land will only produce one good crop of maize without manuring.

Their religion is a curious grafting of Christianity on to their ancient faith. They will on no account excavate in the numerous ancient mounds which abound in the country, and firmly believe that they see the small idols which are found in these walking about in the bush at night.

They will put their arms round the neck of a corpse, and whisper messages to it to be conveyed to their friends in the other world. If a chief is very ill, *pavos del monte*, or wild turkeys, are sacrificed, and the blood made into small cakes, which are partaken of by the whole village. In their principal village is a large cross, left by the Mexicans when they were massacred, and this they worship as a god, believing that it has the power of speech, and approaching it only with bare feet.

Their medical knowledge is very primitive, though they put up a simple fracture of one of the long bones very neatly, using a padding of cotton-wool all round the limb after bringing the fragments together; and over this are placed a number of small, round, straight sticks, the whole being bound round with blue-gum fibres. Bleeding they perform with a piece of sharpened bone, usually opening the temporal vein. This is a very common operation amongst them, nearly every one undergoing it at some time in his life. A very favourite remedy is a decoction made from the charred remains of animals, different animals being used for different diseases. A large kind of rat was in great request for whooping-cough. When suffering from malaria they will lie in their hammocks with a small fire underneath; or, lighting a fire on the earthen floor till it is very hot, they will lie on this, and after getting thoroughly heated, take a plunge into cold water.

The children are very much given to clay eating, which makes them pot-bellied and anæmic. I asked a little girl of eight or nine years how much clay she ate in a day, and she scraped about a couple of ounces from the mud-plastered side of the house as her daily allowance.

The women do by far the greater part of the work; they rise at three in the morning to grind the daily allowance of corn for the family. This is done on a large, flat rubbing-stone. A round stone rubber like a rolling-pin is used. The corn is placed on the flat stone, and the woman, standing behind, rolls it between the two stones, adding water from time to time till it is changed to a dough-like mass; pieces are taken from this as required, and made into flat, round cakes, which are baked on an earthen plate over the fire. These cakes are soapy in taste and very gritty, as a large part of the stone is ground off into the corn every time it is used. The maize, the evening before it is required for grinding, is put into a large earthen pot, with lime, and allowed to boil all night over the fire, to remove the outer husk and soften the grain. The women wear a single loose garment of cotton, woven by themselves, but square at the neck and without sleeves; sometimes they embroider coloured devices into these round the neck and over the breast. Both men and women wear sandals made from the hide of the danta or tapir.

The tribe is governed by a chief whose power is absolute; and they are very jealous of any outside interference, especially from the Spaniards. On one occasion the Mexican government attempted to cut a road through the bush from Peto to the Santa Cruz capital; five of the Indians went to see the work, and were well treated and had presents made to them by the Mexicans, but on returning to their village they were at once executed as traitors by order of the chief.

The usual mode of execution is curious. When the chief decides that a man has merited death he is not informed of his sentence, nor does he undergo any sort of trial, but some of the chief's soldiers are despatched to his house, who, taking him unawares, slaughter him at once by chopping him with their machetes.

A few years ago one of the under chiefs had come down to visit the village of Corofal, in British Honduras, and whilst there had bought a bottle of laudanum for the cure of toothache. When he returned to his village he was met by three messengers from the chief, Roman Pec, who informed him that he was at once to return with them, as the chief required him. Being well aware that this was equivalent to his death-sentence, he asked the soldiers' permission to retire for

a few moments to prepare for the journey. After some hesitation they gave him permission, when he went at once to his *macapal*, took out the bottle of laudanum, and swallowed the whole, and then started with the soldiers. Before they had gone very far the opium began to take effect, and notwithstanding the efforts of the soldiers to get him along by pricking him with their machetes, he was dead before they reached the chief.

Men and women alike are very fond of rum, and I have seen a pretty little Indian girl of seventeen or eighteen, who had come into the nearest English settlement, go straight off to the liquor store and purchase half-a-pint of overproof white rum; this she drank down in three or four gulps, and in a few minutes lay down in the *plaza* in a semi-comatose condition to sleep off the effects. The men when intoxicated get savage and quarrelsome, and any European who finds himself in a village when a demijohn of rum has been brought in had better retire as quickly as possible, for, no matter how friendly they may have been before, they are almost certain to attack him as soon as the rum begins to take effect.

THE LEARNING OF THE UNLEARNED.

I HAVE little or no hope of making the reader who glances leisurely over these lines some six months hence—always supposing that the kindness of a discriminating editor permits the eyes of any reader to fall upon them—I have, I repeat, little hope of making the possible reader comprehend, much less sympathise with, my present trials and difficulties in what seems at first sight a very simple matter—nothing more, in short, than the placing of a broody hen on the sitting of eggs by which my modest poultry-yard is annually replenished.

The possible reader who pursues me farther than the above unwieldy paragraph—so palpably 'pointless'—will doubtless suggest that, in default of practical knowledge, I should follow the excellent advice laid down by such masters of poultry lore and poultry literature as Messrs ——. Some half-dozen names occur to me here, and to select would be invidious. Alas! to their excellent manuals have I in this emergency applied in vain. I have gleaned much useful information from them on many points: on the choice of a desirable 'general purposes' fowl; on the treatment of sitting hens; on the rearing of chickens through all their little life from the shell to the pot. But on two important points are my instructors silent. They do not tell me how to induce my old and valued sitting hen to 'go broody' at the time when I require her services in this particular; nor how to ensure that the hens whose virtues I wish to perpetuate shall not cease laying just at the time when *their* services are required to produce the requisite 'sitting' of eggs. *Hinc illæ lacrimæ.*

This is not precisely the strain in which this paper was intended to commence; 'but 'twill serve.' I hesitate to neglect the inspiration that is born of passing events. Nor is this complaint of the contrariety of my feathered charges by any means as foreign to my title and matter as may at first sight be judged. Hazlitt exposed in a brilliant essay the 'Ignorance of the Learned,' acting perhaps rather the part of Saul among the prophets; so I—whether of the learned or of the ignorant it boots not to inquire—would raise my voice in the cause of the too often unchampioned ignorant. For a learning they have, though not of books. I warrant me some old village dame, whose reading begins and ends with the large letters of advertising posters, and whose penmanship is her 'mark,' would in my case have her laying hens and her broody hen ready to hand when wanted; while I——

'They think they know that things are so-and-so because they have read it in books; now I know how they are by actual experience,' said to me an octogenarian fresh from a dispute with his college-bred son and daughter. The old gentleman was himself by no means devoid of erudition; but he preferred to bring into the field against the too self-assertive youngsters the wisdom of life rather than the lore of letters. He probably saw, what is indeed all too visible, the tendency, ever increasing, to believe that all knowledge worth attainment can be sooner or later acquired from books; that for the educated there is a 'royal road' to that learning which the so-called ignorant attain by slow labour and attention; that they can, in short, learn facts through the medium of words, and never soil their fingers by actual contact with things.

This idea is instilled into many of us all too early. We receive as gifts the *Amateur Mechanic* and similar instructors; and we pore over the knowledge therein contained very much at our ease, and learn—in theory—many useful arts. And it is not until we are launched on the sea of practice that we find ourselves driven after all to consult the genuine craftsman in person—the carpenter or blacksmith, who *shows* us—he is not over good at talking—just those little points and details which go to make the successful whole. Lucky for us if we take the lesson to heart then and there, and are convinced that we cannot go comfortably through life upon theories, but require

a firm foundation on the solid bed-rock of experience. It is a day of handbooks and handbook knowledge; and handbooks are dangerous things. One is quite sure that the new boy described in *Vice Versâ*, who, while his fellows *played* football with more or less vigour, walked about the field diligently studying the 'Laws and Regulations of the Game of Football,' would never be of any use in a 'scrum' or run a clever 'touchdown!'

Childish fancies and imaginations are not always to be blushingly put aside by the full-grown worldling; chance may throw a gold coin into an infant's mud-pie. Few children of average reading but have heard of a shipwreck, a lonely island, and the subsequent fascinating experiences of the castaways; and few of any imagination but have wished themselves of the party and have pictured their own doings with never-ending delight. It possibly never strikes them, but it may with advantage strike us, how great a revolution might be worked in a little community by a realisation of this oft-told tale. Let us suppose, then, the shipwreck and the island, and a party of ten survivors: a bishop, a Q.C., a university don, a doctor, and a reporter—all learned men, you see, comparatively speaking, and their theoretical knowledge comprising a vast amount of ancient and modern lore; and the other five a carpenter, two agricultural labourers—'general workmen' they would be called in some parts of the country—a 'navvy,' and a railway porter.

I need not enlarge upon the result; the reader sees the point without my dwelling on it further. In this revolution of existence, when each one of these castaways would have to begin life again under conditions so different to those in which they had grown up, with what a very different gauge positions in life and values of rank would require to be judged! I do not say that there, among themselves, there would be any such immediate reversal of judgment, or that those five members of the 'working classes' would say at once to their fellow-unfortunates, 'You perceive, of course, that *we* are now the members of the community on whom the comfort and safety of all depend; please, therefore, in future, treat us accordingly, respect us accordingly, and address us accordingly;' though we may incline to hope that those five cultivated and refined men would see the justice of such a request before it was made, and would feel and act in accordance with it. The demand would, I repeat, in all likelihood never be made; for there is an innate modesty in the working man, however agitators may have done their best to drive it out of him, which leads him to believe in the theory of his 'betters.'

For, indeed, those five first-mentioned men, each no doubt with a college education at his back, would probably cut but poor figures in the everyday circumstances of the life they would be so suddenly required to lead. The doctor would perhaps feel most at his ease; there might be wounds and bruises sustained in getting ashore; there would always be the possibility of illness; he is one whom no member of the little party could ever feel to be *de trop*. Besides, a doctor has 'fingers,' in the sense in which a good driver is said to have 'hands;' the man who can guide a lancet and dress a wound might be depended on for other handiwork. The bishop too: we would hope that he would be welcome; that he would know how to make himself welcome and honoured even though his hand should be soft and his arm unused to that daily labour which would in all likelihood be so needful to life and comfort.

But for the don and the lawyer. Of what use would be their long-sought and hard-earned knowledge; the scholar's dead languages and the Q.C.'s wide legal experience—his cases and judgments and precedents? And that member of the fourth estate—the reporter—he who is supposed to know something of everything—by hearsay. Alas for him now! Better to have handled a spade than to have penned exhaustive agricultural articles. He has inspected many a factory and workshop. Can he make shift to sharpen an edged tool or to drive a rusty nail through leather? For these will be useful accomplishments.

This one-sidedness of knowledge and attainments is doubtless for many of us a necessary evil; but a crying evil it is, and one to be diligently avoided where possible. The more a man excels in head-knowledge, in the erudition of words, so much the more should he strive to preserve his equilibrium by a balance of solid mechanical skill. Let him pass at regular intervals to the carpenter's bench or to the forge; better still to the open air and the care of plants or animals, be it only to pottering with a few square yards of flower-border or a pair of bantams.

Plants and animals are better still I say, because, while the occupations of the workshop can be adjusted by rule and square, Nature has eccentricities of her own which the amateur will have to discover as he proceeds. Roughly speaking, books may perhaps be said to give us rules; Nature provides the exceptions. Take as an instance in point the poultry-yard; the reader, bearing in mind my present anxieties, will be lenient if I return still to this topic. Your 'manual' gives elaborate instructions as to the proper kind of roosting-perch and the best kind of nest, and cautions you about the exclusion of draughts from the fowl-house. Then comes experience and shows you that *your* hens happen to prefer a roost in the apple-tree, and, scouting your dearly bought or laboriously constructed nest-boxes, choose a broken hamper wherein to place their eggs.

Carlyle, his wholesome Scotch soul abhorrent

of dirt, took bass-broom and bucket from the weakly servant, and swilled and brushed the 'area' of the Cheyne Row home till he was satisfied with its appearance; and no one will doubt that not only the large-heartedness that prompted the action, but also the ability to turn his hand successfully to such a 'matter of the house,' was a part of his character for which he and the world were alike the better.

There are too many of us who have never taken hold of life save with gloved hands. We are too ignorant of the real *feel* of things—the naked touch. We expect to find a handle by which to grasp our daily tasks, and we are woefully nonplussed when it is absent. The unlettered man, the man of the masses, on the contrary, is more used to taking things as they are and making the best of them. As a consequence he has expedients and ways and means ready for sudden emergencies.

There is such a vast amount of important knowledge in this world which it seems utterly impossible, for no very apparent reason, to reduce to black and white. Take the art of cooking for an example. I have heard of some few good cookery-books; never of a really perfect and reliable one. All my friends to whom I have applied for statistics on the subject decline to place implicit trust in any of them. The flow of information seems apt to fail at critical junctures; the specification of quantities lapses into vagueness; the writer veils his—or her—meaning in such terms as 'a little,' 'sufficient,' and the like. So that it seems that, however one's culinary education may be 'finished' by means of these well-intentioned manuals, there is necessary a previous 'grounding' by experience and oral tradition.

Who has not admired the 'magic fingers' of the working classes?—the deft housemaid, who lays and lights in a few minutes the obstinate fire with which we have struggled for an hour and more; the little stable-lad who 'bits' in a twinkling the restive horse that has awed us with laid-back ears and fidgety heels. These are moments when the average man who is ignorant of all kinds of manual dexterity, whose livelihood lies in his pen or his tongue, feels himself—or should feel himself—humbled to the ground.

William Godwin is said to have divided men into two classes: those who had written a book and those who had not. Without going so far as to accept this distinction with a reversed estimate of his divisions, it does appear that better standards might be found. Perhaps already the high-water mark of public opinion as to the all-powerfulness of mere book-learning has been reached. There are not wanting army reformers who suggest that something more is required for the young officer than the ability to pass a difficult examination. The pendulum has swung perhaps to an opposite extreme as to the proper place of games in school life; but no doubt an ultimate mean will be found. Hazlitt's dictum that any one who, having passed the prescribed course of a classical education without being made a fool thereby, should congratulate himself on a narrow escape, may be an unpleasant way of placing more than a grain of truth before the learned world.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES:

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO.

Beside the Christmas fire
There passeth, as in dream,
All sight and sound that touched us,
All shadows on Life's stream
That rusheth now so swiftly
To the tideless ocean's flow.
Oh! the music of its ripple
In the days of long ago!

Beside the Christmas fire
Again we see the light
Of the old dear home, so distant,
And yet so near to-night.
And we were once those children
Who shouted in the snow,
And fed the robin-redbreasts
In the days of long ago.

Beside the Christmas fire
The shadows still pass on,
And childhood's happy valley
And careless heart are gone.
But oh! the hopes that beckon,
The beacon-lights that glow—
Swift foot and heart undaunted
In the days of long ago.

Beside the Christmas fire
We see the path divide;
One step—and no returning
For swelling of the tide.
One tryst—the great Hereafter—
That meeting-place must know,
All lightly as we missed it
In the days of long ago.

Beside the Christmas fire
If sometimes Life may seem
The shadow of a shadow
And a dream within a dream;
Hark to the Christmas anthem
Which comes across the snow!
It links fair life and endless
With the days of long ago.

MARY GORGES.

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SIXTH SERIES.

VOICE AND SPEECH.

SPEAKING is an art, and requires to be learnt. This is true of mere speaking or talking, which is begun to be learnt in infancy. It is true of conversation, which is less or more systematic talking. And it is true, with emphasis, of elocution, which comprises public speaking and recitation—the latter with or without book. It is with the two kindred arts, public speaking and recitation, that we are concerned in this article; and, incidentally, with conversation. The three of them require a similar training of the voice. It has been said that training for public speaking is unnecessary. All that the preacher, for example, has to do is to be natural. Natural, to be sure. But to be natural in a position so unnatural, so artificial, in fact, as addressing a public meeting needs the training of art. For all art is nature trained according to requirement.

The instrument of the speaker's art is the voice. But the voice is the organ of speech in a sense different from that in which the eye is the organ of sight, the ear the organ of hearing. Seeing is the primary and sole function of the eye, hearing of the ear. But the voice is produced by organs which own a function prior to speaking. The lungs, the windpipe, the throat, the mouth, the nose, have functions to discharge essential to life—breathing and feeding—before and over and above speaking. The voice is an extra use to which they are put—a use found out by man, subject to his will, and therefore liable to abuse. The eye and the ear are not subject to the control of our wills in the discharge of their functions. Training of the ear and eye is not manipulation of those organs. Their machinery is too delicate for us to meddle with. The training so called is rather a bringing of the mind to perceive what the ear and the eye are offering to our attention. But the voice, a secondary product of its organs, can be manipulated by us; can be deepened, strengthened, mellowed, sweetened; and it lends itself readily to such ameliorations.

And we might be apt to suppose that there would be universally, at least among the educated classes, an eager emulation in making the best of the voice. A good voice always secures consideration, confers distinction. Not to refer only to public speaking, in company, at table, in the drawing-room, we all look up when a voice of power, a voice low and sweet like that of one of the heroines of song, greets the ear. Shakespeare speaks of a good voice as an ornament fit even to deceive. Bassanio, commenting gravely on the caskets before he makes the choice which is to determine his fate of fortune or misfortune, says:

> The world is still deceived with ornament:
> In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
> But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
> Obscures the show of evil!

A doubtful recommendation, truly; but what good may it not do when it can even 'obscure' evil?

This being so, we should reasonably expect that a great deal of attention would be habitually bestowed on the voice. It is not so. A bad voice is the rule. The voices of most people are all out of order. A good voice is commonly considered, like personal beauty, to be a rare and exceptional gift of the special grace of Providence. And yet the character of the voice is a survival formed or malformed by our own care or negligence.

Cicero in his great work *De Oratore* makes Antonius, one of the maintainers of the learned dialogue, mention incidentally the lengthened, severe, and constant training of the voice undergone by the Greek tragedians, who, he says, as a preliminary training, 'declaim in a sitting position for several years,' and after they have entered the profession, 'every day, in a reclining position, exercise the voice by raising it tone by tone to the highest pitch; and then, in a sitting position, let it sink from the highest tone to the lowest.'

Macaulay tells us in the Life of William Pitt which he contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, that he (the younger Pitt) 'had been carefully trained from infancy in the art of managing his voice—

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a voice naturally clear and deep-toned. His father, whose oratory owed no small part of its effect to that art, had been a most skilful and judicious instructor.' The elder Pitt, the Great Commoner, as he was called, training the voice of his greater son is an historical picture of great educational significance.

If it is true that the invention of printing has mightily prevented the training of the voice in modern times, the fact only affirms that blessings may be diluted as well as disguised. But the press has not suppressed the stage; and better-trained voices would lessen the risk of its permanently weakening the influence of the pulpit. What more noble use to put a well-trained voice to than giving out God's mercy and truth?

There are many calls in our day for change in educational methods. More science and less time devoted to the Greek and Roman classics in our great schools; more geography and better methods of teaching it. Not to specify further, we think a claim could be maintained for the education of the voice—a claim social, æsthetical, ecclesiastical, political, not to say commercial—the urgency of which would render the maintenance of it a duty to society easily acknowledged. A well-trained voice sweetens the intercourse of social conversation—a great blessing to confer on society. Imitation, the bond of society, carries on its effort after unifying to the utmost in voice and speech. The articulation, tone, pronunciation of parents, pastors, teachers, and esteemed associates are imitable. It is a duty on their part to offer for imitation a voice that is good, in order that their fond imitators may, in the matter of voice and speech, abhor that which is evil. The Rev. J. P. Sandlands, in his admirable book, *The Voice and Public Speaking*, says: 'With such a language as ours—rich, full, powerful as it is—we ought to be a nation of orators. Here, as it appears to me, we indicate a line of conduct the pursuit of which will give ample scope for a vast amount of patriotism. I do not think that a greater good can be effected than by enforcing attention to these things. It means power.'

The elocution of many school children, probably because of the multiplicity of subjects by which their attention is absorbed, is often very defective. This has not escaped notice in high quarters, as a recent circular from the Education Department demands that the children in elementary schools shall be taught to read with 'intelligence and expression.' It is a step in the right direction. Even the amateur elocutionist may have a mission in elevating the taste of a section of the public, although his own training is sometimes carried on at the expense of his audience. Than the work of the finished elocutionist declaiming passages from good authors, with force, tenderness, and the true dramatic instinct, there are few greater or more profitable public entertainments. Shades of meaning are brought out and duly accentuated that were missed in the private reading. There is much perhaps in the enforced calmness and expectancy of the gathering to help the reader or reciter. How universal is the taste for such entertainment is shown by the appreciation of such books as Chambers's Elocution, edited by Mr R. C. H. Morison, with its valuable introduction on reading and public speaking, and its excellent selection of pieces for reading and recitation. For this same public a New Reciter, with a fresh selection of pieces, by the same editor, has just been prepared.

Let us assume it to be granted that the training of the voice is a duty; and now let us address ourselves to the kind of training required, and how it is to be carried on. The kind and method of training depend no doubt on the structure of the organ to be trained. But scientific knowledge of physiology and the anatomy of the voice has not been found to be of avail in the practical art of training the voice. It would be a strong thing to say that it was a waste of time to impart physiological and anatomical knowledge to students of the art of speaking. The acquirement of sound knowledge is never a waste of time. But in training the voice such knowledge is a detail that can be dispensed with while the best results are produced. A champion runner does not reach his athletic eminence by knowledge of the anatomy of his limbs.

The voice is produced by various organs which, as we have said, have functions of life to discharge before and above speaking. These are the lungs, the windpipe, the throat, the mouth. The lungs are the bellows of this wonderful organ, viewed as a wind instrument. For it is both a wind, a string, and a reed instrument. It is of the nature of all the sounding instruments, and is superior to each of them. We live by breathing, and we must breathe wisely to speak well. Speaking is a use of the lungs which human beings have found out. The breathing to live is of the same nature as the function of the eye or the ear. The breathing to speak has to be learnt if speaking is to be done well. To manage the breath properly is the first requirement of the art of speaking. To compress and condense the air in the lungs, and then to force it straight at the vocal organ in the throat is to manage the breath properly. It is an artificial process. There is deep breathing, called diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing; there is broad or wide breathing, called rib-breathing; and there is shallow breathing, called collar-bone breathing. The full explanation of breathing must be left for the instructor. Suffice it to say that deep breathing is the only possible breathing for true use of the voice. Sound must come without breath. Breath coming with the sound exhausts itself too soon, and it makes the sound harsh. You have only to try it to become conscious of how the tone is affected by it. Mr Sandlands tells us of a very good hint he got

on this point. Hold a lighted candle before your mouth while you are giving forth the sound. If the flame flickers there is breath with the sound. The flame will not flicker if there is only sound.

Stand at ease without restraint on throat, chest, or limbs while you are going through breathing gymnastics.

The next organ in order is the windpipe. It is merely mentioned in passing. For, though the windpipe and its tubes—the bronchial tubes—by which it coalesces with the lungs, are important factors in voice-production, we have next to no voluntary control over them. Such ailments as bronchitis and asthma remind us how much more habitually careful we ought to be of the windpipe and its nether tubes than any of us are while we are sound in healthy breathing. The best we can do for them to keep them in good vocal condition is to observe assiduously the habit of nostril breathing when not speaking.

Next in order upwards and outwards—that is, in the throat—is the distinctive organ of voice, the larynx, called by Behnke the voice-box. The larynx, while it is specially the organ of voice, is also, owing to its marvellous power of adjustment, peculiarly under the control of our wills. Voice, produced in the larynx and manipulated by the mouth and nose, reaches our ears as song or speech. It is with speech that we have to do in this article. Speech makes free and effective use of consonantal, aspirate, and guttural sounds which song will not tolerate. It does not require so free and open a passage for the breath as song; it is not confined to the notes of a scale. There is steadying of the vocal organ before we begin to sing which is not required for speech, and this explains why a stammerer in speech can sing without stammering. By steadying the vocal organ he prevents the stammer.

The larynx has been compared to a wind, a reed, and a stringed instrument. The comparison of it to a violin gave rise to the not very accurate phrase 'vocal cords,' as the name of the two cushions which are its most prominent features. But no string so short as those 'vocal cords' could produce a musical bass note. In fact, the comparison of the larynx to any instrument which produces only musical tones is inadequate, to begin with. There is no instrument but the larynx which produces both song and speech; and as those comparisons view the larynx merely as a producer of musical sounds, we have no further concern with them at present. Besides, the voice can be trained for speech, elocution, and oratory without a knowledge of the physiology of the larynx. We have the power of adjusting the larynx; of varying the tension of its cords, cushions, or ligaments, as they have been variously called. We can do these things without scientific technical knowledge of how they are done, without any knowledge at all of vocal physiology; and it is the work of the trainer of the voice to teach his pupils—or her pupils, we may be allowed to say—how to do them.

It must be kept distinctly in view that all the confused discussions about register—Mr Curwen's thick, thin, and small register, for example—have reference to the voice of song, not to the voice of speech. Mr Behnke says: 'A very babel of confusion exists on this important subject. . . . People talk of chest, medium, mixed, throat, falsetto, and head registers, and these terms being utterly unscientific—that is, being based on sensations and fancies instead of physiological facts—no one can give a clear and satisfactory definition of any one of them.' It is exactly those 'sensations and fancies' that the skilful trainer of the voice for speech takes full advantage of. Even from Mr Behnke's entirely musical point of view, the sensations and fancies can be profitably utilised—for training the song-voice, I mean. But Mr Sandlands, who treats of the voice merely as a speaking instrument, says: 'We often hear the expressions "head-voice," "chest-voice," "throat-voice," &c. . . . We must discard these terms.' Now, these are very instructive terms. There is no doubt that, as he says, 'we have but one organ of voice, and that is not in our head or chest, but in our throat.' But it should not be overlooked that when certain tones are produced in that one organ of voice, which is in the throat, we have a sensation in the head or chest, as the case may be, which invariably attends those particular tones. There is an affection, feeling, sensation, or fancy of which the trainer of the voice avails himself.

For speaking purposes we all have four voices, and they are distinguished by the locality of an attendant sensation.

There is the upper head-voice and the lower head-voice, the upper chest-voice and the lower chest-voice.

Now, in training the voice for speaking purposes, the first requisite is to get the ear to distinguish those four voices readily. The aim of the voice-trainer is to teach his pupils to have them at command as use requires in speech, reading, and reciting. It will readily be seen that the ear requires to be trained (simply by being made to listen) as we go on. In the rapid change from one 'voice' to another flexibility is necessary—flexibility of the larynx, as rapid enunciation requires flexibility of the tongue.

To touch on the endless points necessary in the perfect training of a voice would overstep the possible length of this article. One voice has one defect, one another; and so upon the knowledge and perception of the trainer the correction rests.

If some interest has been raised in this too much neglected subject we should feel glad, and hope that all will remember they possess this finest of all instruments in their own throat; and if they have not the voice of an orator, at least they can make life more endurable for those around them by the true use of their voice.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER VI.—THE GOLDEN LILY.

WARNER and Revel spent a very bad day. At the very moment when their scheme was on the point of success, the cup was dashed from their lips by sinister fortune, and they found themselves in a worse case than they had ever before been in.

It was late in the evening when they straggled back to Davies Street. They were both the worse for a good deal of drink—stupefied and depressed, rather than intoxicated. Brandy had no power to elevate them, even temporarily, above their troubles.

They flung themselves in two chairs in the dining-room in moody silence.

'Open a bottle of champagne, Warner,' said Revel after a while. 'That brandy makes my head ache. You have some left, haven't you?'

'Yes, there is some left. None of it is paid for, though.'

'It won't taste the worse for that.'

The bottle was opened, and each of them swallowed a tumblerful at a draught.

'I tell you what, Warner,' said Revel, a little revived by the wine; 'we must cable out to the manager to ask what he means. Matters may be mended yet. Who knows?'

'I doubt it. How much will a cable cost?'

Revel took a mining code-book and worked out a message.

'We can do it in three words,' he replied. 'With the address, that will make four—nineteen shillings. We can manage that, I suppose.'

'Very well. Nine-and-sixpence each,' said Warner sourly. It was now come to this, that an expenditure of nineteen shillings was so serious a matter that it was necessary to divide it. 'What are you going to say in three words?'

'This,' answered Revel, reading from the draft he had made. 'First, "What do you mean by your cable of this date?" Second, "Counteract at once by a more encouraging report." Third, "This is most urgent; telegraph immediately." That will do, won't it?'

'Very well; send it off. We shall have an answer to-morrow.'

Revel went out at once to despatch the cable, saying he would return. Warner sat for some time alone thinking over the situation. Unless some better news came from the mine all was up. This he perceived plainly; and he had little hope of better news. Not only had he no money, but he had a good many debts. That repayment of the trust money had been an accursed stroke of bad luck. If he only had the three thousand pounds he had been compelled to hand over to Hulme he could get away without difficulty. It was a hard problem to solve how he should get away now.

And there was his daughter. She would be no acquisition to Revel now. Revel would not have her. What could he do with her? He was in as bad a situation as Warner himself. He was not so much in debt, perhaps; but debts were no part of the trouble. They sat lightly on Warner's mind. Then, as he thought of his daughter, he remembered he had not seen her since coming in. She must be in the drawing-room, reading.

Now, the idea the man began to revolve in his mind was, what use he could make of the girl in the present emergency. In Coolgardie she had done well as a barmaid, but that was out of the question in London. Eight or ten shillings a week would be very little use to him. She possessed beauty, and could sing well. He wondered whether she could get on at the music halls. Handsome girls, with moderate talent, were sometimes paid large salaries. The idea took hold of him. He opened another bottle of champagne, and the fumes of the wine filled his brain with flattering visions. Could Lily dance? he wondered. If not, a few lessons would supply the deficiency. He thought that any music-hall manager, inspecting her face and figure, would consider it worth his while to take her in hand. That there was any degradation in the thing never entered the man's head. There was money in it—and money was the object.

He resolved he would say nothing to Revel about this. Revel might now go his own way—indeed, he would have to do so, and immediately; and Warner would exploit his daughter for his own exclusive benefit. She had obediently taken to the laborious occupation of a barmaid at Coolgardie. The more attractive profession of a music-hall artiste, with its high remuneration, its stimulating excitements, and agreeable dissipations, would, he felt convinced, fascinate her at once.

He concluded, filled with wine and well pleased with the prospect, that he would have a talk with her on the subject at once. It was as well to lose no time, and, in truth, there was no time to lose. They should have to clear out of these apartments without delay, leaving rent and bills unpaid, and lie low in some other quarter of London. And money was a pressing necessity.

He went to the drawing-room. To his surprise, his daughter was not there. He glanced around, with half-drunken eyes, thinking she might be nestling on a chair or couch in some

corner. But she was not. Then, as he approached the fireplace to touch the button of the electric bell, he saw a letter standing against the clock on the mantelpiece. It was addressed to himself, in Lily's handwriting.

'What the deuce have we now?' he asked himself, tearing it open and sitting down to read it. After a perusal of the letter Warner felt considerably soberer.

FATHER,—Going into the dining-room last evening, I was stopped at the door by a conversation between Mr Revel and yourself. From this I learned that you had offered me as a gift to Mr Revel at Adelaide, and that he had refused to take me. Then you and he made a compact at Coolgardie in connection with the mine, by which Mr Revel understood that I was to form a part of his share. This you repudiated, and agreed to sell me to him for eight thousand shares.

Father, I willingly submitted to the degradation of working as a barmaid at Coolgardie in order to provide you with the means of living. But you are entirely mistaken in me if you suppose I will submit to be sold to Mr Revel as a chattel. Under no conceivable circumstances would I consent to become the wife of a man of Mr Revel's known character. Similarly, under no circumstances will I ever consent to live with you as your daughter again. You have forfeited every claim to my duty. I now quit this place and you, taking nothing with me but what I am wearing. It will be useless for you to try to follow me. I will not come back to you again. LILIAN WARNER.

'By heaven,' was Warner's exclamation, 'I never imagined that was in her!'

He went slowly back to the other room, and resumed drinking. There was no doubt in his mind that the girl meant every word, and would adhere to her resolution. Whither she had gone he did not trouble to speculate. It was all one; she had renounced him. That was the central fact, that hit him like a sledge-hammer. He swallowed tumblerful after tumblerful of wine; but he might as well have been swallowing water. The wine was impotent over his stunned brain. All his castles in the air were strewn in the dust.

Revel came in, after despatching the cable.

'What's the matter, Warner?' he asked, looking at the other. 'Are you drunk?'

'No,' was the savage answer. 'You infernal idiot! you were not sober enough last evening to see the girl standing at the door, listening to our conversation about her.'

Revel started.

'Read that!' exclaimed Warner, throwing the letter to him. 'There's a pretty compliment in it for yourself.'

Revel read the letter with lowering face. He did not want the girl now, but he did not want to lose her while there was any hope. And he had still some hope. He felt that cut in her letter about himself; but the feeling it inspired in him was vindictive rather than indignant. If matters turned out favourably yet, he would force her to marry him; he would resort to any violence, any outrage, to compel her submission. Then she should pay for it!

'Where do you suppose she has gone?' he asked quietly.

'How should I know?'

After a pause Revel asked again, 'What is her age?'

'She is old enough to be her own mistress, if that's what you have in your mind. You may give her up, Revel. If she was here now, and you had a million to settle upon her, she would not have you.'

'I am not so sure,' said Revel, with a dark grin. 'Perhaps you will be of a different mind in twenty-four hours. I have sent that cable, and something tells me the mine will be all right yet.'

These two men not being agreeable company, we will leave them to spend their evening together, and pass on to the next day. No reply came to them from the manager of the mine. They waited feverishly until four o'clock, when their anxiety became so tense that they decided to drive into the City and ascertain if there was any news at the office.

The directors were sitting in the board-room. The silence with which the two vendors were received and the looks the directors wore were ominous.

'Any fresh news?' Warner inquired, with an effort at indifference.

'There have been several cables since yesterday,' the chairman replied, 'not only from the manager, but from independent sources. They all concur in stating that the mine is worthless. We have, consequently, stopped all work, and have resolved to call a meeting of shareholders to pass a resolution of liquidation.'

'For what date is the meeting called?'

'The twenty-fifth. We hope, Mr Warner, that you and Mr Revel will attend. No doubt you will see fit to refund the ten thousand pounds you have received on account of the purchase. No blame will or can be attached to you if you take this course.'

'Oh, we will certainly do that,' said Warner, laughing. 'Good-day to you, gentlemen.'

Of course they did not attend the meeting. Loud and angry calls for them were made by indignant shareholders, but the calls were in vain. The company went into liquidation. After all, owing to the refusal of the directors to complete the payment of the purchase consideration, the shareholders did not lose much. With the exception of the ten thousand pounds paid to Warner and Revel, and a few hundreds expended on the mine, their money all lay at the bank. Many of the original shareholders had sold their shares when the latter rose to a premium, and those who bought them had done so on the speculation of a further rise. No great sympathy, therefore, was evoked by their loss.

The handsome rooms in Davies Street and Mount Street were evacuated by their tenants under the shadow of night. The worthy pair did not separate, after all. They seemed to be necessary to each other. In a quiet southern suburb they planted themselves, under new names, and soon evolved a scheme of replenishing their impoverished exchequer. This was done by a system of swindling advertisements, requiring deposits for promised situations and other allurements—a very common form of fraud, but rarely an unsuccessful one. The business made a change of residence advisable from time to time; but it was going on pretty fairly, when one of the financial newspapers provided them with a sensation of a peculiarly painful and mortifying character.

It was Revel whose eye was first caught by the heading of the article. What it reminded him of need not be further explained when it is stated that the heading referred to was:

'THE GOLDEN LILY MINE.'

Revel, in the first flush of his surprise, had begun to read the article aloud to his companion. After a little he began to stammer and hesitate. Warner, perceiving this, snatched the paper from him, and read it through in silence with changing countenance. At the conclusion he drew a long breath and laid the newspaper upon his knee.

'By heaven,' he exclaimed, 'it's a terrible sell! But you are a greater rascal than ever I thought you were, Revel; and that's saying a good deal.'

'What would your virtuous principles have led you to do under the same circumstances, Warner?'

'I don't know,' replied the other absently. 'But you were cocksure that Jim Solus was dead.'

'And eaten. Yes; and so would you have been if you had seen him.'

'Perhaps so. Another instance of our accursed luck, which seems to dog us at every step. What have we done, Mark, to be so infernally unlucky?'

'Nothing that I know of,' was the innocent reply. 'But that thing'—he indicated the newspaper—'beats me hollow.'

'I never heard anything like it before,' said Warner, with a sigh. 'What an ignorant, incompetent idiot that mine manager was! If he had only known enough to make this discovery we should be rich men to-day.'

The story told in the newspaper, as telegraphed from Coolgardie, was as follows: Some months ago two adventurers, by name Warner and Revel, were hanging about Coolgardie. An old miner, James Gaverick, or Jim Solus, as he was called, had started on a prospecting expedition to a hitherto unexplored district on a line east of Twenty-five Mile. When Gaverick had been some weeks away Revel started after him. He found poor Gaverick, whose condenser had been broken, dying naked in the bush from thirst. Instead of trying to save the man's life, Revel searched his clothes, and found a map marked at a place about five miles off. Here he discovered a claim marked off by Jim Gaverick, and called the 'Golden Lily.' He tore off Jim's notice and substituted one of his own, altering the name to 'Revel's Find.' A lease was obtained, and a company floated in London. But the mine, after being worked for a time, was pronounced to be worthless. It was abandoned, and the company wound up.

But some miners, on their way through the bush from Hannan's Field to Murchison's, chanced to pass that way, and discovered poor Jim. They did what they could for him, got his clothes on, and put him in their cart. At Murchison's there was a doctor, and a barmaid nursed him. After a long time he came round, and returning to Coolgardie, learned what had happened in regard to his claim. He was disheartened considerably, too, by the fact that a recent arrival, a youth from England to whom he had become strongly attached, had gone back in the belief that his friend was dead.

For a month or so Gaverick hung about Coolgardie, until he received a letter from England that seemed to cheer him up. Then came the news that 'Revel's Find' was abandoned. Jim lost no time in taking possession of it again and obtaining a lease. And here came the sensational part of the story. After some fresh shaft-sinking and cross-cutting the 'Golden Lily' (as Gaverick once more christened the mine) was discovered to be rich in telluride, every sample taken out yielding over thirty ounces of gold to the ton. A rush had set in to stake off claims around the 'Golden Lily,' and hundreds of miners were already working on the field.

This was all pleasant matter for Warner and Revel to sleep upon!

'I never thought, Dicky,' said Mr Gaverick one day in the City office, 'to have anything to do with a gold-mine. But this one of Jim's is an exception. We must attend to it for him.'

'Poor, dear old Jim! Mr Gaverick, don't you think you could induce him to come home? If he doesn't I believe I shall be impelled to go out to Coolgardie to see him.'

'Wait a bit, Dicky. Don't be in a hurry to go to Coolgardie. If you were sick again there who would nurse you?'

The young man coloured.

'Jim will come home as soon as everything is in full blast at the mine. I know he will. Meantime I have been consulting some experienced men about floating the mine. We'll have a capable board of directors; no hacks will be on it. You might as well take the secretaryship, Dicky; Jim would be so pleased, you know.

I 'll go on the board myself, though I don't know much about these things.'

'I hope Jim will get a good price for the property, Mr Gaverick. It is well worth it.'

'They tell me he ought to get a hundred and twenty thousand, in cash and shares. There will be thirty thousand more for working capital—more than enough, they say, as the mine already pays its expenses, with only a few men working.'

When 'The Golden Lily, Limited,' was brought out, the fame of its wealth had already become so widespread that there was a rush for the shares. Foremost in the rush were the old shareholders of the defunct 'Revel's Find.' In a few days the shares were at a high premium. There was no delay about settling the purchase consideration in this case. As attorney for his brother, Mr Gaverick received fifty thousand pounds in cash and seventy thousand in shares.

One Saturday forenoon, bright with tempting sunshine that was drawing the thoughts of many a City worker to the pleasant country, Dicky Hulme, now secretary of the 'Golden Lily Company,' was putting away his books and papers for the week-end, when Mr Gaverick came in.

'Here, Dicky!' he exclaimed, holding out a piece of paper. 'Here's news for you. Old Jim is coming home!'

Hulme's heart leaped. He read the telegram with eager eyes:

'Everything going on splendidly at mine. Have sold seven thousand ounces of gold. Send no more money out for working expenses. Am sailing for home in a week.'

'Well, Mr Gaverick, it's the best news I have heard since the news of Jim being alive and well. I hope he will tell us the name of the ship. I'll go to meet him.'

'And what will you do to-day and to-morrow?' inquired Mr Gaverick, sitting down. 'I am myself going to Buckinghamshire to see my sister Molly. I haven't seen her now for three months; and she will want to hear about Jim. What do you intend to do?' he repeated. 'It would be losing a chance to stay in London this weather.'

Hulme had not thought upon the subject, and did not answer at once. Perhaps, too, he suspected what Mr Gaverick was driving at; for, in truth, although he fancied himself very deep and clever, Mr Gaverick was the most transparent of men.

'Come down to Buckinghamshire,' said Mr Gaverick, letting his voice drop a little. 'Dicky, you have never been there since—since the girl went. Is that right, now?'

'I don't know, Mr Gaverick,' was the answer, uneasily spoken. 'You see, she has some peculiar notion about me—I don't know what. I would have gone often enough if I were not under the impression that—she would rather I didn't.'

'The world is changing sadly. In my young days we would have asked a girl, straight, what she had in her mind. Not that I ever did, of course, not knowing how to read or write. I wasn't fit for such things. Jim, now,' he continued contemplatively—'Jim went to a night-school, and could read and write a bit. But not enough, not enough,' said he, shaking his head sadly.

'Was poor Jim in love, then?' the young man ventured to ask. He was deeply interested in the question, for he remembered Jim's counsel to himself in Coolgardie, and his thought at the time that Jim must have been left without the stimulus which he was recommending to Hulme.

'Yes, poor Jim was. But at a great distance, you will understand. She was as far above him as a star in the sky. She never knew it, of course. But that didn't prevent Jim giving his whole heart to her.'

'What a pity she did not know it! There is no better heart in the world than Jim's, Mr Gaverick.'

'That's true. All the same, it couldn't alter things. Jim would have killed himself rather than let her know it.'

'Surely the knowledge could never have offended her?'

'No—I think not; she was too gentle and good. It might have made her unhappy, though.'

'Yes, yes—I understand. Just like Jim! Is she alive now?'

'No,' said the old gentleman, looking very wistfully at Hulme; 'no, she is dead.'

The colour slowly mounted to Hulme's temples and faded away again. He turned his face away, for there were tears standing in his eyes. The secret flashed upon his consciousness, in connection with a chance word which Jim had once dropped in Coolgardie. It was Dicky Hulme's mother! Poor old Jim!

'I think you are a young ass, Mr Dicky,' said Mr Gaverick, altering his tone. 'Come down and see the girl. She is an honest lass, and if anything is the matter she will tell you for asking. I don't think there's anything the matter, except your own shyness. You are afraid of her.'

There was some truth in this—very ancient truth; for what youth ever was in love with a maiden but he was afraid of her—in awe of her? Maidenhood is a very potent and fear-inspiring influence.

Hulme smiled at the suggestion, feeling none the less the force of it. He felt, also, that it had been very ungracious of him never to have gone to see her; very unfair, perhaps, not to have given her an opportunity of explaining her mind to him. She could not be expected to do so unasked. And here was Jim coming home to England!

'Very well, Mr Gaverick. I will come with you.'

'That's all right,' said Mr Gaverick. 'Let us be off. I'll send a telegram ahead, if you write it out for me.'

SALMON-CANNING IN THE FAR WEST.

THE discovery of gold on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and more recently in Klondike, has had the effect of drawing attention to the much-neglected district of British Columbia. A few travellers who have crossed by the Canadian Pacific Railway to Vancouver have brought back accounts of its forests and scenery, and perhaps of its mineral wealth; but, as a general rule, but little has been written of this remote colony, isolated by great mountain ranges from the rest of Canada. One of the greatest industries of the country has been the capture and export of salmon. The valuable discovery of preserving perishable articles of food in hermetically sealed tins—or cans, as they are called in the West—has enabled the Columbians, from the abundance of their supplies, to send salmon to all parts of the world. Thirty years ago a British labourer probably never saw this choice fish, unless, possibly, in the fishmonger's shop, when he went into the town on market-day; now he may, for about sixpence, enjoy salmon at his dinner, and has almost ceased to regard it as a luxury.

Being on the west coast of North America a short time ago, I made a trip up the Columbia river for the express purpose of seeing all I could of the whole process, from the catching of the salmon to its being fastened down for export. On a well-found steamer the journey should be very enjoyable. One is sure to fall in with a number of fellow-passengers ready to impart information about the country, and he will not talk long with one of these Americans without hearing something worth remembering. They are all civil and obliging to the Britisher if approached in the right way. The only rudeness I met with while travelling in the States was from the coloured 'gentlemen.' The scenery is both grand and fine. High mountains rise on both sides, their spurs coming down to, and appearing to close in, the river in front and behind. Pines in some places grow so closely together that their tops seem to be struggling upwards for sun and air; while in others a solitary specimen will be seen clinging in desperation to the bare rock, from which there seems no possible nourishment to be drawn. The moss, lichen, and ferns on these grim rocks produce pleasing tints and various shades of colour. Here and there can be detected the columnar basalt, cropping out in its rigid formation so well known to those who have visited Staffa. Often one might, without any violent stretch of the imagination, mistake these regularly formed rocks for some mountain fastness or the remnants of a ruined castle.

Where the mountain-sides have been worn down and some stream has opened out a smiling glen, the Indians can be seen with nets and spears gathering their harvest from the water. For the fish caught now will form their chief article of diet during the long, cold winter months. Their forefathers, for hundreds of years before the pale-face appeared, having been dependent on this pursuit, they are, of course, adepts in the art of capturing fish. As he stands upon some prominent rock, the Indian's practised eye will quickly detect his quarry approaching; then, like lightning, he plunges in his spear and brings up the wriggling salmon to his feet. But more often they have their nets set in the well-known runs, and drag the fish in larger quantities to the bank. As travellers journey by the railway along the Fraser River, they may see rough posts and rails arranged in exposed spots, where the salmon are hung out to be dried in the sun before being stored away for winter use. Far more fish are taken than the Indian requires for his own consumption, so the surplus is carried to the cannery to be paid for by the ever-welcome dollar.

The factory owner, however, takes the fish more to give help to the struggling native than to supply his own requirements, for he has methods of his own by which he can bring in all that he requires, and often a great deal more. The chief of those methods is the salmon-wheel. This is set near the bank in a part of the stream especially favoured by the fish. It looks like an ordinary water-wheel, such as may be seen working in the Rhone just below Geneva. The lower part of the wheel being immersed a foot or two in the water, it is turned the same way as the stream flows. The fish coming up-stream are confined by a bank of stones stretching out into the river, and so compelled to run into the trap laid for them. Two or three wire nets are so fixed, at equal distances apart, that they lie across the wheel at its circumference, and these are gathered inwards towards the axle in the shape of a half-funnel. The consequence is, as the salmon rush up into the revolving wheel they are scooped out of the water and tumbled down towards its centre, as the mouth of the net rises, when they fall into a slanting trough, down which they slide into a chamber on the shore. Here they lie flapping and gasping till a cart comes every few hours and conveys them to the factory. As I stood over one of these wheels, for only a few minutes, I saw several salmon rush into the fatal trap and helplessly wriggle off to their doom. The owner told me he was then taking from four to six tons of salmon every day in that spot.

Of course, all these collecting-places cannot be near the factory, and few can be approached by carts; hence there is another way of conveying

the fish, when caught, to their destination. At some of the wheels, when the fish are gathered, a number are tied together and attached to an empty barrel, which acts as a float; they are then thrown into the river and allowed to drift down-stream. At headquarters there were two little steam-launches, one of which, the moment a barrel is spied, dashes off and hauls in the bunches of salmon. When a sufficient number have been taken up they are conveyed to the factory, and the second launch starts off on the same errand. Since as much as twenty-five tons of salmon have been taken in a day from one of the wheels in the Columbia River, it may be imagined that the launches have their work cut out for them. In fact, the fish sometimes arrive in such abundance that the wheels have to be stopped, as the factory cannot dispose of them fast enough.

The cannery I visited was so built on the river-bank that part stood over the water, which enabled boats to pass the fish at once direct into the receiving-room. Here they are thrown down in a heap, several feet in depth, upon the floor, men in huge thigh-boots wading amongst them and passing them on for the canning process. All the hands employed except two were Chinamen. Much as these Celestials are despised in the States, it is difficult to understand how they could be dispensed with. They are handy at almost anything. As domestic servants they are invaluable, one man being able and willing to do all the house-work, including the washing. As navvies their work cannot be excelled. In this factory their deft fingers are most useful, especially where labour is so scarce.

The first man who receives the salmon examines each carefully, and a fish that shows any sign of imperfection is at once rejected and dropped into the river below. The selected fish he then takes in hand, chops off head, tail, and fins, and passes them on to a second man, whose duty it is to split, cleanse, and wash them. For this purpose he has flowing through a trough before him a stream of water, which carries away at once all the offal and ensures the fish being thoroughly clean. The next man stands in front of a set of revolving knives, the length of the can apart, so that the fish being placed under the knives are cut into exactly the right lengths. The cut-up fillets are then passed on to men who cram them into the one-pound tins. The most important process, that of weighing, is entrusted to the two white men. Each can in turn is placed in the scales, and scraps of salmon are added where necessary to make up the right weight. A travelling band carries on the cans to a fresh lot of Chinamen, whose first duty is to solder them down; they are then immersed in trays of water, which are placed in large cylinders, to be heated up to boiling-point.

The process does not end here, for when fully heated the trays are brought out, and each can is pricked with a sharp-pointed hammer to let out the steam and heated air, and then soldered up, and a second time placed in the boiling cylinders. The canning being now complete, there only remains the enamelling and labelling of the tins. For convenience of export, boxes are made up, each holding four dozen cans. One may judge of the extent of this industry when it is stated that this factory sometimes has an output of a thousand boxes—that is, forty-eight thousand tins—a day.

An alarm has sometimes been raised that this enormous destruction of salmon will before long deplete the rivers. The alarm, however, is groundless, for the supply is apparently unlimited; the number of fish coming up year after year shows no sign of diminishing, but rather the reverse. The year I was there, it was said, would break the record. The Columbia is by no means the richest of these rivers. The Fraser is even better stocked, and in Alaska still greater harvests are gathered. Ten years ago, when the fisheries were said to be only in their infancy, the take of salmon from the Fraser was over eight million pounds' weight, and this was exclusive of what the Indians catch. When the fish are running up to spawn, they become so packed in the upper reaches that it is difficult to believe the reports that are in circulation; one is disposed to class them among Yankee exaggerations. Yet I believe there is some truth in the local saying that 'you can walk across the river on the fishes' backs,' if they would only bear you; for in their struggles up the shallows they thrust one another on to the banks, they lose their fins and tails in the scrimmage, and die in such numbers that the decaying fish cause a stench which is in places unpleasantly recognisable by the passengers on the Canadian Pacific Railway. For anglers the rivers are disappointing, as, it is said, the fish will not rise to the fly; they may, however, be caught by those who care for trolling. A gentleman told me that a friend of his had taken four thousand pounds' weight in six weeks by trailing a bait behind a boat on the Puget Sound. So the poor man who desires this cheap and tasty dish for his dinner may feel sure that the supply will not be exhausted for many a year to come.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND:

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER III.

ONE of the maids at Stalland House had a curious experience on the following morning. She was an old and trusted servant of the family, and it was her duty to attend to the drawing-room. On this occasion she was at work unusually early, having received strict commands from Lady Stalland to keep a careful lookout for the lost diamond, and to allow no other servant to assist her. For this reason she began the ordinary drudgery with a good spirit, and was toiling quietly but thoroughly, when she heard a footstep on the stairs. It was too early, she thought, for guests to be about, and the tread was a peculiarly cautious one, so she paused to listen. The footsteps came slowly nearer, but more cautiously than before; a moment later the door was pushed back, and the Bishop of Hexminster entered the room.

As she afterwards declared in the kitchen, 'it gave her quite a turn.' 'He came quiet-like, as if he didn't want any one to hear him,' she said, 'and he seemed all upset when he saw me in the room. And his face—why, it was as white as a sheet.'

'Had a bad night, perhaps,' suggested the cook. 'It was very warm.'

'He was thinking about his sermon, no doubt,' said the second footman. 'They say he preaches beautiful.'

This idea was considered a good one, and only Martin, who was leaning in grave silence against the dresser, failed to join in the chorus of agreement. The nurse, who had just come down, then contributed her share to the discussion.

'You should see how Miss Connie takes to him,' she began. 'He must be a good man, or children wouldn't fancy him so. Why, only last night she thought she heard him coming upstairs, and what did she do but slip out of her cot and run to the balusters. And what do you think she called him?'

'Something out of the way, I'll be bound,' said the cook. 'There never was such a child for queer ideas.'

'Well, she calls him "the wobber." She will have it that he's "the wobber." Such a name for a bishop, isn't it now?'

'Wobber? It must be "robber." I wonder what she means by that?' asked the cook.

The nurse had opened her lips to reply, when she became aware that Martin was looking at her with an expression which said, as plainly as possible, 'Silence!' No one else noticed it, but the meaning of the look was so clear that the nurse, who was engaged to Martin, and therefore knew him very well, closed her mouth with an almost audible snap, and wondered.

'Talking about robbers,' said the housemaid, who had cleaned the drawing-room, 'there's my lady's diamond not found yet. Sir Edward will soon be in a nice excitement.'

The vagaries of Miss Connie were immediately forgotten, and the new subject warmly taken up. Eventually it was decided that the diamond must be lying all the time in some very safe and simple spot, where it would soon be found. This decision was built upon absolute ignorance of the ways of diamonds in general; but even Martin seemed to support it.

Meanwhile the Bishop was walking in the garden. The night had neither calmed his mind nor restored his courage, for he had failed to sleep. He had, instead, spent the dark hours in feverish reviews of what had occurred; in alternating agonies of fear, self-reproach, doubt, and self-abasement. His brow seemed to have several new furrows in it, his eyes had lost their benignity, and his cheeks were unnaturally pale.

After long consideration he had decided upon a craven but simple course—the one he had so carefully suggested to Martin. He had descended the stairs with great caution, intending to deposit the gem in some spot in the drawing-room where it might be found easily, yet not too easily. It had given him a serious shock to find the room occupied, and he had retreated from the vicinity with guilty haste. He was already suffering all the tremors of the repentant, faint-hearted criminal.

Now, in the garden, the fresh air cheered him a little. Surely this difficulty must soon be at an end. Of course it must. Why, the diamond could be placed almost anywhere, and almost any one would find it. That would be a much easier, much better way of setting things right than if he went to Stalland with his story—such a cock-and-bull story as it seemed, too. For a moment he thought of dropping it in the centre of the path, where the gardener should find it when he came; but reflection forbade. The man might tread it under foot; he might prove to be as ignorant of diamonds as a bishop, mistake it for a piece of glass, and throw it away. Besides, even if it were found there and restored, would not questions arise as to how it came to the garden at all? He walked on, pondering and weighing the possibilities.

Some time later he returned to the house, and, to his relief, found the drawing-room empty.

Standing on the hearthrug in his old place, he carefully surveyed the scene of operations. Here was his chance.

The rugs would not do, for of course they had been thoroughly shaken and searched, as well as the chairs and cushions. At last, however, he decided to place his unhappy find near the hearth, under the shadow of the great fender. During the day it would surely be found. Why, he might even find it himself. Then he shuddered at his own growing duplicity.

He took the jewel from its place and stooped down by the fender. His hand was extended—the thing was almost done—when——

'Ah!' said a voice. 'That diamond, is it?'

The Bishop gasped and stood erect. Sir Edward Stalland had entered unnoticed.

'I am afraid it's of no use looking there,' he added, shaking his head. 'It is very kind of you to take such an interest, all the same. The thing's stolen without a doubt.'

The Bishop recovered his presence of mind. He had unconsciously 'palmed' the diamond at the first alarm, and felt amazed to find himself so expert a thief. But Sir Edward had seen nothing.

'Yes,' he answered lamely, burning his boats behind him as he spoke. 'Yes; it is undoubtedly stolen.'

There was no going back, no explaining, after that. Nor did he get another opportunity of being alone in the room, for Commander Digby came in just then, and did not go out again until breakfast was announced. Then every one seemed to be lingering about in the way, and the time passed uselessly until he was obliged to prepare for the walk to church.

The numbers who had gathered to hear the Bishop preach that morning were not entirely satisfied with the result. It was undoubtedly a good sermon, as a Bishop's must always be; but there was something lacking. There was a curious hesitation, a want of force and vigour. The clear voice was not so clear as usual; the sentences did not come so freely; the speaker was absent and constrained in manner. Then it was whispered that his lordship was unwell, a suggestion to which his troubled face gave full authority, and the general surprise was changed into general sympathy.

The guests from the house walked back across the fields in groups; but the Bishop did not take part in the easy talk that prevailed. He walked alone, deep in his own unhappy musings, until some one joined him uninvited.

'Wobber,' said a friendly voice, 'it's only me.'

The Bishop looked down into the sunny face of Miss Connie. He was considerably startled by the form of address.

'I think you's getting tired of being a wobber,' she went on, laughingly. 'Isn't you.'

He sighed heavily. His knowledge of children was small, and he lived under the mistaken impression that their words were not intended for the serious notice of older folk. This child was evidently still thinking of their idle talk on the previous evening. He suddenly remembered it.

Following up the same train of thought, she continued, half in persuasion now:

'When you's tired you can give up the game. Will you give it up now?'

'What game, my dear?' inquired the Bishop in all innocence.

'The wobber-game,' was the simple answer. 'You can give back the diamond you wobbed.'

That was a blow indeed. The Bishop almost gave a cry, and the child uttered a tiny scream. In his sudden agitation he had pressed her little hand with painful force.

With the blow came a revelation—a quick and complete understanding. She had seen him pick up the diamond; she was aware that he had it. Her form of address had been anything but meaningless, after all.

In a husky voice he asked for further light. Her clear, questioning gaze was positively painful.

'Have you told any one else, my dear? Does anybody know?'

The answer was prompt and reassuring. 'Nobody knows. I never tells till afterwards.'

The robber tried to comprehend the last enigmatical sentence, but it was too great a task for his bewildered mind. His accuser explained it herself.

'Tisn't fair to tell before the end of the game. Is it, wobber?'

The game? At first this seemed a singularly cold-blooded way of speaking, but clearer recollection made it plain. This little one, her life full of happy 'make-believes,' supposed that he was really playing at 'robbers,' and that his capture of the diamond was part of the game. He saw a gleam of hope. If the child's lips could be sealed for a while things would surely right themselves. Afterwards no one would heed her talk, and the danger would be past.

'You won't tell,' he said gently, and with a hypocritical smile. 'You won't tell anybody until—until to-morrow night. Promise!'

'I won't tell anybody until to-morrow night, wobber,' was the ready reply. 'Not until to-morrow night.'

'Then,' said the Bishop to himself, 'I shall, I hope, be far enough away;' and he actually congratulated himself upon his cleverness!

But the alarms of that day were by no means over. Miss Connie left his side before the house was reached in order to return to her nurse. Some of the party went indoors and others lingered on the lawn. The Bishop went directly to the drawing-room, only to find Commander Digby lazily lounging in the easiest chair. Baffled

and vexed, he then made his way to the farthest walks of the garden.

Careless of where he went, he came at last to a small wicket-gate and passed through, only dimly perceiving that he had entered the region of the kitchen-garden. After going some little distance, however, he was disturbed by the sound of voices in conversation.

They came from the other side of a thick privet-hedge. In another moment his footsteps must have been audible, but he paused there, intending to return. Then the first sentences that reached his ears fixed him to the spot as if spell-bound.

'It's the Bishop, Celia. He's got the diamond!'

The voice was that of Martin, the footman. In the silence which followed, the eavesdropper heard his own heart-beats.

'You *may* look surprised,' the voice went on in a subdued yet distinct tone, 'but it's true enough. I'm telling you, Celia, 'cause of little Miss Connie. She knows that he's got it, and so do I, and so do you now. But nobody else must know, so I want you to stop the little one from letting it out.'

Again a silence, during which the Bishop stood as if turned into marble. Then Martin continued:

'It was last night, when I took the lamp into the drawing-room. The Bishop was there, with Miss Connie on the rug in front of him. Just as I got in he noticed something on the floor—something bright and shiny. When Miss Connie wasn't looking, as he thought, he made a dart for that bright, shiny thing, and picked it up. You can guess what it was?'

'The diamond!' murmured the other voice in a tone of awe. It was the voice of a woman.

'Yes, the diamond. It was done in a flash, but I saw it plainly. No doubt Miss Connie saw it too, though she didn't pretend to; and that's why she calls him a robber, as you said this morning. You'll have to stop that, Celia. It would be awful if anybody else heard her and noticed.'

'But what did he do it for?' was the horrified question. 'He—a bishop, too!'

'What did he do it for?' answered Martin, so quietly that the unsuspected listener scarcely heard. 'Why, because he was mad—nothing else. He's the honestest man in the world; but when he picked up that diamond he was mad. He was mad at dinner, too, when he told them all that he hadn't seen it; but directly afterwards he saw my eye on him, and came straight to himself. "Martin," he says when they got up, "come to me in the library," 'cause he knew then that I had seen everything. And when we got to the library he was as sane as ever. "It's about Lady Stalland's diamond, Martin," he says, solemn as a judge. "You know that nobody would have taken it deliberately, seeing what he was doing. Temptation is sometimes too strong for the best intentions; it comes like a sudden madness." And then he goes on: "The person who has taken this diamond," he says, "has repented, and will at once restore it to its owner in some way or other, and leave the scene for ever. And I am sure, Martin, that no one will say a word about it." It was awful, Celia, to hear the likes of him begging mercy of the likes of me, and a great lump got into my throat. "No, my lord," says I; "I'm sure of that." "Then that will do," he answers, thankful-like. "We quite understand each other, Martin—that will do." And then the interview was over.'

'What a dreadful thing!' said the voice of Celia, whom the Bishop rightly supposed to be the nurse. 'What a dreadful thing! A real bishop, too!'

Those who have known what it is to be condemned by the distorted evidence of their own words will sympathise with the Bishop. Martin's easy but earnest story was such a hideously true version of what had taken place that he could scarcely believe his ears. The difference, of course, lay in the point of view from which the story was told; but before he could arrange his scattered recollections the footman began once more:

'Of course it will be all as right as ninepence by to-morrow. The diamond will be found, and all that, and it won't matter much whatever Miss Connie says. But till it *is* found, you'll have to see that she says nothing about the Bishop to any one. Why, Celia, I'd rather have stolen the thing myself than let any one think that he did.'

There was a brief pause. 'I wouldn't, then,' said Miss Celia decidedly. 'We being engaged, I wouldn't.'

A short laugh from Martin was succeeded by a peculiar but unmistakable sound which caused the Bishop to blush even in the midst of his shame and dismay. Then the footman resumed the ordinary use of his lips.

'You don't know, Celia, how good he is, and how well he treated me when I was at the Palace. I only wish I was back there again. Mad he may be sometimes, but the Bible says that learning a lot is apt to make folks mad, and that's the way with him. Other times, I can tell you, he's an out-and-out gentleman. But perhaps we'd better get in now. Lunch will be almost ready.'

The last words broke the spell under which the listener had been rooted to his place behind the privet-hedge. While Martin and his companion were taking an affectionate leave of each other he retreated along the path with swift but silent steps, escaped through the wicket into the shrubberies, and sought a garden seat. There he

sank down in a state of mind which cannot be described.

'Good heavens!' he murmured after a few moments' deep mental agony. 'Good heavens! I wonder what will happen next.'

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT happened next was a simple consequence of what had gone before; but it was not the less alarming on that account. It took place during the same evening.

The whole day had been unspeakably miserable for the Bishop. Throughout the afternoon he had remained indoors, seeking an opportunity of carrying out his plan. He had lingered in the drawing-room in vain, for Commander Digby had lingered there too with strange and terrifying persistence, only going away at last to give place to others. He had wandered from the drawing-room to the library, from the library to the smoking-room, from the smoking-room to the garden, and back again, like an uneasy spirit. And still the wicked diamond nestled warmly in its place, mocking his efforts and rejoicing in his distress.

He could not throw it away. That would be robbery indeed, and would effectually prevent him from ever putting things right. Commander Digby and the Fates seemed to be all working against his first plan, for every room in the house had some one in it, while the darkest and emptiest corridors appeared, to his guilty conscience, armed with eyes. He surrendered that plan at last, and adopted another.

'I must take the awful thing home with me,' he decided feebly. 'If necessary, I can explain things to Martin and secure his silence. Then, when I get home, I can write to Stalland and return the stone. I could explain on paper more easily—much more easily; perhaps make a splendid jest of the whole affair. Yes, that will be the best way.'

So he descended his Avernus, treading with fatal ease lower slopes than he had ever thought to tread. But half-an-hour afterwards it seemed that his plotting and scheming must still be vain.

He was crossing the hall on one of his aimless pilgrimages, when a caller came to the door. Martin had disappeared during the afternoon, and it was the second footman who ushered the stranger in and took his name to Sir Edward in the library.

He was a man of plain, irreproachable appearance; but his rather expressionless face was not improved by a pair of eyes which were small and of a peculiarly hard blue. The Bishop glanced at him in passing, paused, and looked again. The new-comer smiled.

'Fitchett?' exclaimed the Bishop.

'Yes, my lord,' answered the caller.

There was a pause. 'This is a surprise,' said the Bishop. 'Are you in this district?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered Mr Fitchett in a lower tone. 'I am the head of the detective staff at Hazleton.'

Then the Bishop remembered. 'Ah,' he said unsteadily. 'Of course — I had forgotten. Sir Edward sent for you last night.'

'Yes, my lord,' said the officer meekly.

At that moment the second footman returned. 'Sir Edward,' he said, 'would see the gentleman at once.' The Bishop nodded and moved towards the door. Detective Inspector Fitchett, formerly of Hexminster, but now of Hazleton, followed the second footman.

The Bishop crossed the lawn and strolled down the drive with his thoughts in a tumult. He had received another shock, and this had shattered his last plan into ruin.

He did not possess any special gift of prophecy, but he saw as clearly as possible the events which must follow this latest development. The arrival of a police officer, of course, was no surprise, though he had somehow failed to consider it seriously; but that the Fates should have sent this particular man was the greatest calamity that could have occurred. For Mr Fitchett had been at Hexminster at the time of that unhappy little affair of Martin's. He was known to be a shrewd, astute officer, all eyes and ears, and he must have heard of it. Finding Martin at Stalland House, he would jump in an instant to one natural conclusion. Martin would be watched, arrested on suspicion, charged; he would be forced to tell all he knew in order to clear himself, and then—chaos! The Bishop shuddered.

He took the diamond from its hiding-place, and gazed at it with eyes of loathing and despair. Its value in thousands was nothing to him. How gladly would he have signed a cheque for the full amount, or for any amount, if by doing so he might have released himself from this painful and dangerous dilemma! How cheerfully would he have hurled the sparkling stone into the mazes of the shrubbery if that would have enabled him to sleep once more in peace! But he must keep it now, though its possession must inevitably bring him to confusion. What a conspiracy of circumstances it was!

Circumstances! He smiled bitterly as he remembered a remark of his own only yesterday at dinner to Mrs Digby. He had sternly set his foot upon the suggestion that circumstances should be considered in the case of another—yes, another criminal; and the irony of fate had decreed that he should have uttered those foolish words while Lady Stalland's diamond lay snugly in his pocket. How the gods must have laughed at that moment!

He walked on, passing the lodge gates and

taking the road that led away from the village of Stalling. The sun had gone down half-an-hour before, and the dusk of a summer evening was stealing on. Without him all was peaceful and tranquil; within there was a conflict of fear, self-censure, self-contempt. He went on for an hour, and then, warned by the approaching darkness, retraced his steps.

Instead of going directly up the drive to the house he turned into the shrubbery, intending to take that way as a more pleasant one. By this movement he came suddenly face to face with a person who was lingering among the laurels.

The Bishop was naturally startled by the unexpected appearance. Nor was he relieved to find Mr Fitchett before him.

'Ah,' he said, with assumed carelessness. 'Taking the air, I suppose?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered the detective, to whom the encounter was equally unwelcome. 'It is a beautiful night.'

The Bishop made an abrupt yet bold resolve. The germ of the idea had occurred to him during his walk, but it had not taken definite shape. Now it seemed to form itself, and here was the chance to execute it.

'Yes,' he assented. 'But, by the way, I was just thinking of you, Mr Fitchett. I should like to have a few words with you.'

'Certainly, my lord,' said the officer, with great readiness. 'I am entirely at your service.'

He turned immediately, and they went on together. After a few moments' consideration the Bishop began, in an easy and casual manner:

'What I wish to say is concerned with your business here. Perhaps you are aware, Mr Fitchett, that Sir Edward Stalland has in his service a man named Martin, who was formerly at the Palace. Probably you have seen him here?'

'I know that there is a man of that name in the house, my lord,' answered the inspector, with great caution. 'But I have not seen him. Sir Edward furnished me with a list of all the servants.'

'Of course,' said the Bishop, 'of course. But you will recognise this man when you see him. You will also remember, I dare say, that he was discharged from my service for being untrustworthy.'

The inspector could not understand such a bland confidence as this. His small blue eyes became harder and more intent, his face more expressionless than ever. What was it leading to?

'The reason why I mention this,' continued the Bishop, 'is simple enough. Finding Martin here, and knowing of that past incident, you may be disposed, and very naturally, to regard him with suspicion. Now, I happen to know that since he left my service this man has become a better man. I believe him to be now thoroughly honest, thoroughly reliable.'

'Once a thief always a thief,' said the inspector, with conviction; but he said it mentally and not orally, while his manner to the Bishop was as humbly courteous as before.

'I have so great confidence in him,' his lordship resumed, 'that I feel positive of his innocence in this affair of the lost diamond. In fact, I shall have no hesitation whatever in asking him to return to his old place at the Palace.'

'Your lordship is very good,' Mr Fitchett murmured admiringly; but his head was bent and his hard eyes almost closed. With him a drooping of the eyelids signified concentration of thought.

'Not at all,' said the Bishop, 'not at all. But I do not think that a man's single fault should be allowed to pursue him and spoil his life if a word in season can prevent it. There, you have my opinion, Mr Fitchett, whatever it may be worth.'

'Thank you, my lord,' said the inspector very smoothly. 'It is extremely good of you to take this trouble Ha! there is some one coming!'

They had paused, standing near a group of laurels at the border of the carriage-road. What Mr Fitchett had heard was a sound of footsteps on the crisp gravel, and in another moment a man passed by in the dusk. It was Martin.

They were silent until he had disappeared. Mr Fitchett, who had come into the shrubbery for the simple purpose of getting a quiet view of the footman whenever he should return, then concluded his remark:

'It is very good of you to take the trouble, my lord. I certainly shall not forget what you have said.'

'Thank you,' said the Bishop, well satisfied. 'I think it was my duty to say what I have said. Good-night.'

'Good-night, my lord,' answered the inspector; and the Bishop went quietly on to the house. He was well pleased with himself once more, and felt a little easier in his mind. Martin was surely safe now for a time at least, and before that time had expired he would have made everything right. By to-morrow evening he would be at home, writing that letter to Stalland.

The inspector did not follow the Bishop at once. He stood among the laurels for some time, recalling the conversation which had just ended, and trying to discover how it bore upon the case. In about five minutes he had fitted it nicely into the framework of his theories.

'Martin, my friend,' he said to himself, 'you are a little smarter than I thought. You have managed to get round our good Bishop, and got him to make things easy for you. It was a good idea—a very good one indeed!'

The inspector's conclusion was a very natural one. On his arrival at Stalland House, Sir Edward

had informed him thoroughly as to all the circumstances of the case. In addition to this he had perhaps unconsciously communicated to him his own suspicions, which lay in the direction of Martin. The detective perceived that they were not without reason; and when he had learnt that the footman was an old acquaintance with a clouded record, he adopted them without hesitation.

'This Martin,' he had asked carelessly, 'where did he come from last?'

'From the Countess of Jerbourg's,' answered Sir Edward. 'We did not inquire as to his previous place.'

Mr Fitchett had made a mental note there. Footmen are apt to boast of their previous situations; but Martin had evidently been silent with regard to his place at Hexminster. A palace is nothing to be ashamed of, either.

'He is not in the house now,' Sir Edward continued. 'I thought it well that he should not know of your arrival, and therefore sent him out.'

The inspector had approved of this movement as a good one, greatly to the baronet's satisfaction. There was, of course, the danger that Martin might find some opportunity of parting with the diamond before he returned, but it was not a serious danger. One would scarcely be likely to dispose of a ten-thousand-pound jewel on a Sunday evening in a quiet country place.

'It's hidden, I expect, somewhere about the house,' thought Mr Fitchett, basing his decision upon a long experience. 'At any rate, I must get a look at this man at once. If he's the one I fancy, well, things are likely to get straight very soon.'

After clearing up every point which seemed in the slightest degree hazy, he had inquired the probable time of Martin's return, and had decided to get a quiet look at him from the shrubbery as he came in. Then had followed his meeting with the Bishop, and its interesting results.

It was Mr Fitchett's opinion that clergymen and ministers were among the most gullible of all earth's creatures, and he did not doubt that the Bishop was like the others of his cloth. He regarded him now with a great deal of contempt, a little admiration, a fair amount of pity.

'You are a good man, my lord,' he murmured, with a curious smile, as he made his way back to the house buildings—'you are a good man, but you are very soft. As for you, friend Martin, your game is up. You managed the Bishop right enough, but you never thought of Fitchett. Wait until the morning, and you'll see him!'

With these pleasant reflections the inspector amused himself until he had reached a small French window, which had been left open for his use. Five minutes later he was enjoying an excellent cigar in Sir Edward's study, and completing his plans for the morrow.

AN INVESTMENT FOR OLD AGE.

AMONG the hoard of worldly maxims on the lips of the old, none are more frequently uttered than exhortations to thrift and economy. 'It is the duty of all persons to economise their means,' says Dr Smiles. 'Thrift not only works for to-day, but also provides for the morrow.' Excellent maxims truly, but why do our sage advisers confine them to the use or abuse of money? Is there no other provision to be made for old age beyond caring for the needs of the body? The fable of the ant and grasshopper usually brought forward as an awful example to the pleasure-lover may be read in another way. To the ant, who has spent his summer in continuous labour, winter presents itself as a season merely of rest and enjoyment. He has a snug home and plenty to eat; that is the sum total of his possessions. No pleasant memories, no friendly intercourse, brighten his days, while his reception of the grasshopper reveals a most unamiable temper. The grasshopper truly is in sad plight enough, but he can say of his life that, if it were short, it was merry. Looking back and enjoying his happy recollections, he may forget the miseries of the present, and be reconciled to his speedy departure from so unfriendly a clime.

What about the human ants? They do not spend more than is absolutely necessary; they carefully put by every penny saved for the future; and as men usually reap what they sow, they find themselves in old age with a snug competence. So far so good; but that is not enough. The money has been fairly and honestly earned; they have every right to fully enjoy it. But do they? In order to obtain this fortune they have worked hard all their days, have denied themselves relaxation, amusement, friendships. Now, in retiring from business, they have nothing within themselves to fall back upon. Such men are to be found everywhere. Too old to start any fresh interest, they wander about the streets and frequent the clubs aimlessly. They have always been too busy to take any part in public or religious work, and now it is too late to begin. They have never read anything beyond the daily paper, and never have had time to pursue a hobby. What shall such men do with their money? They can live in grand houses with costly living, but even so they can hardly be said to enjoy themselves. They have lost

the art of living, or, worse still, have never acquired it.

There is another sort of provision to be made for old age, and another kind of economy to be practised. The man who at the beginning of life resolves to earn more than he spends does well; he who puts by for the future is acting wisely; but this is only the foundation of wisdom. He must so spend his money that each year he may enlarge his experience and lay up a store of beautiful memories.

It is of no use to say, 'When I am rich I will travel; when I retire from business I will study this science;' because the desire will have perished before that happy day arrives.

How can we accumulate pleasant memories? Largely by travel; and the kind of travel will depend on the length of the purse and the amount of leisure. Happily, however, the enjoyment to be derived does not depend on either. One man will explore his own neighbourhood with more profit than another will derive from running over Europe. Thrift is exercised by managing best the available resources; by choosing just those expeditions that will store up pleasure for the future. Every year that does not add to our knowledge of beautiful scenery and famous buildings is a lost year. Beside these let us place the witnessing great ceremonies and becoming acquainted with notable people. Twenty years hence how we shall regret not having witnessed the Jubilee procession! Even now how great the satisfaction of being able to say, 'When I heard John Bright speak,' or 'When I shook hands with Lord Beaconsfield.'

Let us consider the domain of pleasure. Our model man never wastes his money on amusement; he has never heard Patti sing nor enjoyed a Wagner opera. He 'reads his Shakespeare at home,' and so has never seen Irving impersonate the Jew, or Robertson play Hamlet. But we intend to con our Shakespeare in old age, with its pages illumined by remembrances of great actors and actresses. If deafness comes upon us, we shall still be able to recall the music of the past.

These are delights for the eye and ear; but there are others. The world of books requires an article to itself. Here too, as in the world of pleasure, let us have a care that we are laying up stores for the future; let not our reading or amusement be for the moment only. The choice is so varied, the risk of misuse so great, that we must ask ourselves constantly, 'Will this make for pleasure in old age? Is it a thrifty investment of time?' One great charm of books is that, in late life, when travel is impossible and amusements pall, they may still be enjoyed and loved.

This leads to another point. The busy man intent on saving money has no time for friendship; for be it observed that to keep friends is no easy matter; we may make friends quickly enough, but to retain them requires time, self-denial—nay, even money. But there is no better investment to be made; nothing among an old man's possessions can be more valuable than the friends of his youth. Dr Johnson said that the man was a fool who did not cultivate his friends. It is this cultivation that is the point. It is a troublesome thing, not to be undertaken by the busy man, for above all things it requires leisure. But it is worth doing nevertheless.

The day will come when we shall hope to leave business, to enjoy an easy leisure; to retire with some strength of mind and body. How are we to fill the time? Not only with books and friends and pleasant memories. Is there no work begun in earlier life that can still be carried on? Hobbies there are of all kinds, and singular is the man who does not own one; but beyond these is there nothing? Have we taken some share in the business of our town? Have we interested ourselves in some philanthropic or religious work? Our part, perhaps, has been small, but still our interest has been real. Now, in later life, with abundant leisure and larger experience, we can take a larger share. The wise schoolmaster carefully lays the foundations of sciences that cannot be mastered in school life, knowing that, once the preliminary difficulties are conquered, the subject can be taken up later and pursued with advantage. So let it be with us: in active life start the beginnings of business that may interest and employ later years, realising that it is easier to carry on work than to begin it afresh.

Then as each year ends, when we have made up the balance-sheet of gains and losses, and ascertained our monetary position, let us also sum up the moral and intellectual gains of the past twelve months. He only is prepared rightly for old age who takes account of these things as well as of his bank-book.

GREETING.

Many years have sped
Since first I saw your orange covers;
And with them youth and strength have fled,
Old friends are gone, and youthful lovers.

But, even as in days gone by
You came to bless my scanty leisure,
Still in your pages I descry
A welling fount of quiet pleasure.

Go on, old Friend; and as of yore
You bid us company with sages,
Walk with them still, as heretofore,
And may no evil mar your pages.

And when Death's deep forgetfulness
Has closed for me all earthly pleasure,
May *Chambers* still remain to bless—
Those who come after—in full measure.

M. L. S.

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VIRGINIA: ITS RISE AND FALL.

A SPORTING COLONY IN WALTER RALEIGH'S OLD DOMAINS.

By Geraldine Vane.

VIRGINIA has always, since its earliest days of colonisation, been regarded as the home of the Englishman. For some occult reason, nine out of every ten Englishmen on landing in the 'new country' will, sooner or later, drift to the Anglified portion of this state. Many retain the idea that Virginia is still a portion of England, that the inhabitants are still English, and that everything partakes largely of the habits and customs of the old country—that, in fact, we will be reminded of home at every turn. If their hopes have deceived them, they have only themselves and Thackeray's novels to blame; the fault is probably due to their ignorance of geography. They had not, perhaps, realised its vast area, the old state being larger than Scotland, and the new state nearly as large. The two states have a glorious climate and a glorious country, fertile in most districts, rewarding labour by producing everything that grows; it is rich in minerals, wonderfully watered, beautiful and picturesque to a degree.

The two states, East and West Virginia, separated from each other during the War of Secession, had never very much in common. The new state, West Virginia, owing to its high, mountainous nature, being less suited to the employment of the negro than its eastern sister, was populated by a race of simple mountaineers, who, in bygone days, resented any intrusion of their cousins the slave-owners, living contentedly in their beautiful wilds, devoting their time to the raising of cattle on the excellent pastures which the limestone slopes of their mountains afforded them, and producing from the fertile soil every necessary their simple lives required.

I penetrated these mountains, with a couple of friends, in search of sport, undeterred by the wild tales recounted of the ferocious and blood-thirsty race living on their heights. So mountainous and rugged is the huge tract of country known as West Virginia that development, as understood in these days, has barely touched it. One railway runs through the centre of the state; another circles its western borders. The vast space between, separated from Old Virginia on the east by the main chain of the Alleghanies, is a mighty wilderness, scantily squatted on, rather than settled, by a pastoral race, descendants, for the most part, of those Irish Presbyterians whom our despotic rulers drove some 120 or 130 years ago from the country, of which they were the cream and backbone, to form in turn the cream and backbone of Washington's army in 1776. These wilds are a very paradise for sportsmen who can afford the time to penetrate the forests, which teem with deer, bear, and the panther, besides wild turkeys and ruffed grouse, which latter, being in no wise shy, drummed around us as we fished. We fished for four days; but for the first time in my life I tired of this sport. The trout never left off rising. After a few hours' fishing such an enormous number of silvery, plump, splendid little fellows lay around us that we were at last obliged to throw them back into the river alive, having no means of shipping them home, being ninety-five miles from the nearest rail.

In all my travels I have never come across prettier water, prettier fish, or more enchanting scenery. We fished a stream of considerable size, a precise reproduction of a Scottish trout-stream, being just too wide in most places to cover without wading. Wooded hills rustling in the freshness of spring rose gently from either bank, leaving strips of green meadow between, where cows and sheep cropped the early grass. A considerable amount of timber straggled down to the banks,

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leaving between them a margin of dry rocks or silvery sand, which rendered walking easy and wading not often necessary.

The eastern state of Virginia, scented with the flavour and romance Thackeray's novels have attached to it, differs in every way from its late co-estate. The soil is less fertile than in Western Virginia, having been exhausted by repeated crops of tobacco; the ruined residents, victims of the Civil War, being unable to afford to manure it as was requisite, yet yearly taking all they could get from its soil. The attraction this state has held out to English colonists dates back to a far earlier period than that treated of by Thackeray. Sir Walter Raleigh's expedition discovered Virginia's shores, taking possession in 1584.

The first colony, settled there under the charter of a London company in 1607, consisted of a few gentlemen of fortune—people having no occupation and no family. In their service twelve labourers and a few mechanics emigrated. They settled in Jamestown, on the James River, buying from the Indians, who were then friendly disposed towards them, such land and provisions as they required. But this little colony received no encouragement during its early settlement. Malaria and all the diseases accompanying a damp climate swept off half of the settlers, and the miserable remnant had just decided to abandon the colony when Lord Delaware arrived, bringing with him a large quantity of supplies and more emigrants. One of these married an Indian squaw, Pocahontas, daughter of the chief of one of the principal tribes, thereby securing their friendship.

Ten years later ninety young women were sent out from England, being sold to the planters respectively for 100 lb. of tobacco. A hundred convicts were also shipped out to supply labour, and a Dutch trader imported twenty negroes, being the first batch imported of the slaves who eventually became so indissolubly connected with the state. The little colony increased in numbers, reaching in 1622 to 4000; and fifty years later, in spite of numerous wars and massacres, this number swelled to 40,000—6000 of these being English convicts and 2000 black slaves. The now prosperous little colony boasted at the same time of twenty churches. Their staple industry was the cultivation of the tobacco-plant, which was produced in such enormous quantities that they were obliged at length to burn half the crop on account of the tremendous fall in price this overplus occasioned.

The practice of smoking this plant dates back to unknown antiquity amongst the American Indians. Columbus found the habit prevalent in the West Indies, where the natives smoked rolls of it wrapped in a maize-leaf.

When first introduced into Europe it was cultivated in Spain as an ornamental plant—the Spaniards eventually being the pioneer European nation in its cultivation to any large extent, commencing about 1530 to grow it in the island of San Domingo; the Portuguese followed their example some forty years later; and these two nations controlled the entire trade for many years.

Fortunes were speedily realised in tobacco, and Virginia as a planting country came to be looked upon by us as Ceylon and India have been in recent years—as a colony offering advantageous openings to our sons, ne'er-do-wells or otherwise.

The principal seat of the tobacco trade carried on between Virginia and the home country was situated in Glasgow, becoming one of the most important carried on within the walls of the 'Cross,' or, as it is called nowadays, the 'Exchange.' Glasgow merchants realised enormous profits by lending to the planters small sums to enable them to work their crops, receiving in consideration the right to buy these crops at a fixed price, independent of the fluctuations of the home-market. In this way tobacco proved a most paying concern, building up fortunes the evidence of which is still to be seen in the ruins of colossal mansions on the James River; Virginia proving to our island a veritable El Dorado for about a hundred and sixty years, until she broke away from the mother-country. At the termination of the war which established her independence she *kindly* consented to continue sending us, as hitherto, her staple trade. The trade prospered, intermingling with the trade in humans (which we bequeathed to our errant subjects), until years later, when the great Civil War ended in the freedom of the slave and the ruin of the planter. None survived the general devastation; and although the Virginians made a prolonged and brave stand, they saw the Yanks (whose very name is loathed and hated to this day throughout Virginia) demolishing, with the help of their paid German and Irish friends, their beloved homesteads, first carefully appropriating from among the household treasures any convertible articles of value, and then shipping the pianos and silver, &c., off to New York, where they found a ready market for their 'booty.'

This generation who fought the Yanks, the fine old typical race of 'F.F.V.s' (first families of Virginia), the American aristocracy, now fast disappearing, have still no use for those 'mean Yanks.' They tell you still, 'You had best make a bonfire of the whole crowd.' Years have not effaced the bitterness and rancour they feel towards them—bitterness which might perhaps have been lessened had prosperity returned to their homes; but, robbed of their slaves, and having no means to obtain the necessary labour in order to cultivate their plantations, they appear to have lost all energy, and instead of rousing up and entering into new enterprise, they sank down in the midst of their ruined estates, surrounded by their ex-slaves, many of whom still clung to

them, looking to them for support, leading an aimless, hand-to-mouth sort of existence, and lamenting their bygone glory and prosperity.

The sons of these ruined veterans are, as they grow up, fast realising that fortunes will not seek them out. Gradually they are abandoning their unfruitful estates and seeking positions in the cities, many who bear time-honoured names of 'F.F.V.s' now serving behind the counter in 'stores' or on the railways.

Thus, in the freeing of the slaves, the great tobacco industry of Virginia, although carried on now to a certain extent, received a blow from which it has never recovered, the plant losing in quality as the ground grew poorer. The whole aspect of the country has changed; the negro is gradually beginning to assert his independence, attempting to prove his equality with the white man. Generations must, however, rise and fall ere he can accomplish this object. Time must be allowed him to cultivate his woolly brains up to the required standard of perfection necessary to compete with the brain and resource of the white man, who has passed through such countless ages of training.

When all the old slave-owners were ruined and the masters could not feed the freed slaves, they were driven forth, the majority going unwillingly, and many among them bringing their earnings to help their old masters' families. Even now the children of those ex-slaves still cling to the children of their fathers' masters.

A hard-riding, hard-drinking colony are the English for the most part now, and a considerable fund of romance might be woven out of the numerous eccentricities indulged in by some of the many curious and amusing characters who keep their surrounding neighbourhood lively.

Many of the young fellows eventually take to 'keeping a store,' often speedily amassing a fortune out of what usually proves to be a very paying concern. Others have taken to dairy-farming and wine-growing, planting vineyards on the latest improved French methods; but this latter industry has proved in most cases but a sickly trade. John Bull is to be found in every district of Virginia; but Charlotteville and its neighbourhood is most densely populated by Englishmen. This town boasts of the oldest ''varsity,' and is the seat of the principal learning and culture of the state.

Perhaps it is due to the vagaries of the many curious specimens, representatives of our country, that we are not, or indeed, I might say, never have been, favourites with our Virginian cousins. It is curious to note in the pages of history that this, the oldest of the thirteen original states, notwithstanding the fact that its people are more essentially English by descent, having less mongrel blood in their veins than the inhabitants of any other American state, has nevertheless been ever foremost on all possible occasions to rise against the old country. From her emanated the idea of independence; she urged the other states to join with her in a declaration to that effect; and in recent years the animosity again cropped out, their legislature being the loudest in their clamour against us over the Venezuelan question.

This old domain proudly claims among her sons most of the finest men America can boast of—men who have carved their names indelibly in the pages of its history. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were Virginians; and when will General Lee be forgotten—that fine old courtier and veteran, who practically controlled the whole operations of the Civil War, in his hopeless stand against such overwhelming numbers sent from the North to crush him? Nor must Stonewall Jackson's name be omitted. Four out of the first five presidents were Virginians. Indeed, until within recent years she has ever been foremost in the politics and legislature of the States, boasting of the aristocracy of the country, the 'F.F.V.s' (now fast decaying) holding their heads as high as any of our baronial families in the old country.

The romance of bygone days of prosperity clings about the old state, placing it at once apart from the others, which are essentially 'new' in every detail. It teems with places of interest. For beautiful scenery the Shenandoah Valley is unrivalled. It is described by General Spottiswood as 'God's land,' and dotted over it are still to be seen the remains of picturesque old piles, relics of former prosperity.

The sulphur springs situated on the slopes of the western mountains are a great feature in the social life of the Virginian, and, indeed, of the American. Large parties from the various towns take shelter in the cool shades of the mountains during the hot summer months, living around the 'springs' in the tiny châlets (not unlike the Swiss châlets) dotted about. Each party often consists of thirty or forty, who keep to their own little clique entirely, and spend their days in picnicking and their evenings in dancing, having, as they term it, a 'real good time.'

Another beautiful spot is the neighbourhood of that curious phenomenon the Natural Bridge. A tiny rivulet now runs beneath this huge excavation, which will always be a mystery. Perhaps the friction of countless ages has gradually hollowed out its passage, sinking deeper, and crumbling away the earth obstructing its way, leaving overhead the huge mass of rocky soil, which forms a bridge, from which looking over, down on the stream below, human beings at its edge appear in size like various insects, so small are they.

In spite of its numerous vicissitudes, Virginia will one day regain its old prestige and figure once more among the foremost of the states. The beauty of its scenery and the healthy nature of its

climate is attracting many wealthy Northerners to come and settle among its glades, bringing with them their inseparable spirit of push and advance. As years go by they will not rest content until they see the state in which they have fixed their home incomparable, and until they and their children in their turn form the aristocracy—the new aristocracy—of Virginia.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER VII.—A COUNTRY VISIT.

'WHAT in the world is the matter, Miss Lily?' Hulme asked, mechanically dropping into the old form of address. 'Is there anything I can do for you?'

This was when Lily Warner came out of the shadow of the gateway that night and timidly accosted him at the Marble Arch. Hulme was dumfounded by her appearance.

'Oh yes!' she answered, moving closer to him, and looking very white and piteous. 'Oh, Mr Hulme, I have left my father—I never can live with him again—and I don't know where to go, and I have no money!'

'Good heavens!' exclaimed the young man. For a moment he reflected; then, glancing at the girl's white face and her delicate frame shrinking with the cold, he hailed a hansom-cab. His decision was taken immediately.

She got into the cab with him without hesitation or question. Hulme himself was so preoccupied with the extraordinary situation that it did not occur to him how implicitly she trusted in him. In fact, the cab had gone some distance before the circumstance was presented to his mind. She inquired gently:

'Where are you taking me to, Mr Hulme?'

'Oh,' he answered quickly, 'you have not forgotten Jim Solus, I suppose?'

'Poor Jim!' said the girl. It was 'Poor Jim!' with all of them who had known him. 'No, Mr Hulme. How could I forget Jim?'

'I live with Jim's brother—his twin brother—just such another good-hearted man as Jim himself. I am taking you to his house, Miss Lily. I know he will be glad to receive you, and take care of you, if only for Jim's sake; but he will do it for your own sake, too, Miss Lily. Mr Gaverick is an old bachelor; but Betty, the housekeeper, will do everything for you.'

'And you live with Mr Gaverick?'

'Yes; I am employed by him, and he wished me to live in his house.'

The girl was silent after this, and answered only by monosyllables to one or two remarks made by Hulme. He suddenly remembered himself, and felt the colour in his face, which of course the girl could not see.

'I will get a room in the neighbourhood for myself, Miss Lily—there will be no trouble at all about that; and you shall have mine in Mr Gaverick's house. We are there now,' he added as the cab drew up.

Hulme handed her from the cab, and opened the door with a latchkey. There was light in the dining-room, and he knew Mr Gaverick was sitting there. Without a moment's hesitation he opened the door and led Lily Warner, who shrank back a little, into the room.

The old gentleman laid down his pipe and stood up, with questioning surprise in his face.

'This is Miss Lily, Mr Gaverick,' said Hulme at once, leading the girl forward. 'She has been compelled to leave her father, and I have found her by accident. I will leave her with you to tell her story. I—I know you will protect her.'

The young man left the room and closed the door. He went upstairs to pack a bag and remove all masculine traces from his room.

Mr Gaverick looked at the girl at first in speechless surprise. He knew her history very well, and what she had done, at Jim's request, for young Hulme in his illness. The pleading timidity of her eyes and the gentle beauty of her pale face melted his surprise into tenderness and pity, and he took her small, cold hands in his own, and placed her in a comfortable chair before the fire. The kindness of a stranger—and he was so like old Jim!—overwhelmed the homeless girl, and she burst into tears.

'Now, now!' said Mr Gaverick hastily. 'Now, now, my dear little lassie, you mustn't do that. Dicky was right to bring you here; the lad's heart is in the right place, and his head is right too. Now, now! You must eat and drink something at once. Not a word till you have done so. Here, Betty'—the old woman had answered the bell—'here is a young lady, tired and cold. Have you anything nice and warm to give her? I'll warrant you have—there isn't your equal in London at a pinch. Now make haste, Betty; and make some tea, too.'

Betty disappeared, and was back in a few minutes laying a snowy tablecloth. Meantime Mr Gaverick poured out a glass of wine and made Lily drink it. It was not long before a warm and tempting repast was upon the table. In truth, the girl was very hungry, having eaten nothing since breakfast, and the face of Mr Gaverick shone with satisfaction as he watched how she enjoyed the meal.

When the cloth was removed and Betty left

the tea on a corner of the table, Lily Warner was composed enough to relate unreservedly to Mr Gaverick her reasons for leaving the protection of her father. He heard her in silence to the end.

'Poor child, poor child!' he then said. 'Surely no one could blame you. You did what was right. But, good heavens, my dear little lassie! what would you have done if you had not met Dicky Hulme?'

She hung her head. That was a hard question to answer. She might have sunk on some doorstep and died of the cold.

Just then Hulme reappeared, with his overcoat on and his hat in his hand.

'I am going round to Mrs Sinclair,' he said, colouring. 'I know she has a bedroom to let. Betty has put mine in order for Miss Lily, and lit a fire.'

Lily Warner looked embarrassed and distressed, but there was nothing she could say. It took Mr Gaverick a full minute to get over his first feeling of amazement and realise the meaning of Hulme's proceeding.

'Ah!' he exclaimed. 'You are quite right, Dicky. You are quite right, my boy. But you must come back to breakfast in the morning.'

He promised to do this, and shyly offering his hand to the girl, he bade her good-night. Her response was hardly audible, and she raised her eyes only a little way towards his face. A blush at the same time told of some unspoken emotion.

Hulme lay awake most of that night thinking of her, and wondering what was the key to her demeanour towards him since that evening in Coolgardie. He was grateful that she appealed to him in her distress and accompanied him with such child-like confidence. But it might have been from a sense that he owed her much. How was he to know? At all events, let his doubts and anxieties be what they might, he was glad she had separated herself from her father and Mark Revel.

Mr Gaverick, too, gave a good deal of thought to Lily Warner that night. He admired and approved the propriety of Dicky Hulme leaving the house. This led the old gentleman to consider the situation further. He was certain in his own mind, from all that had fallen from Hulme concerning this Miss Lily, that the young man was in love with her. That was all right. Dicky could read and write, and was well educated; and no girl could ever be ashamed of him on account of his illiteracy. But the little lassie, he argued, should get a fair chance for herself. If she stayed in this house, with Dicky Hulme at her side every morning and evening, it would, according to Mr Gaverick's quaint notion of the case, be placing her at a disadvantage. There was nothing the old gentleman would like better than to see these two young people married and happy. But he thought the girl ought not to be run into a corner. Moreover, his was a dreary old house, with no society but that of Betty. How would the poor lassie get through the long days alone?

The conclusion of all this cogitation was, that he would send Lily Warner down to his sister's farm-house in Buckinghamshire. There would be ducks, and geese, and fowls, and cows, and sheep, and a dozen other healthy interests to occupy her there. His sister Molly and her husband were a genial couple, who would be delighted to have so pretty an object to pet and make much of. They had no child of their own. They had had a daughter once, of Lily's age, who died of consumption. They should have the girl, Mr Gaverick decided, but upon the clear and express understanding that they should be willing to surrender possession whenever required. From his knowledge of them, Mr Gaverick was convinced of the necessity of this stipulation.

What Lily Warner's thoughts were that night will never be known. But she looked so bright and charming next morning that Mr Gaverick was more than ever impressed with the importance of binding his sister Molly and her husband by a very tight compact.

Lily Warner, accordingly, was taken by Mr Gaverick to Buckinghamshire in the course of a few days. Since then Dicky Hulme had been vainly hoping she would some day send him a line or two for himself—about the weather, or the country, or anything—just to show that he had some special place in her thoughts. But she sent him no line. He was far from murmuring against her silence, because he doubted whether he had any right to what he was wishing for. She wrote regularly to Mr Gaverick, and sent Hulme her kind remembrance; that was all. Mr Gaverick now declared that he, Dicky Hulme, ought to have gone to see her, and he went on the Saturday afternoon, with a good deal of anxiety as to the manner in which Lily would receive him.

Farmer Broughton, sister Molly's husband, met them at the station with his dogcart, and drove them home. Mr Gaverick hailed his sister in a very kind voice, asking her a dozen questions in a breath, none of which she had an opportunity of answering. Tea-things were laid in the cosy parlour, and rubbing his hands as he glanced around, Gaverick demanded:

'Where is the little lassie? I say, Broughton and Molly, where is she?'

'Oh, she's coming, she's coming,' was his sister's reply; 'she is only putting on an extra ribbon in honour of the visitors.'

'Ha! the little witch,' cried Mr Gaverick, laughing heartily; 'she means to break our hearts. Here she comes; here she is!'

Lily entered the room, bright and blushing with a beauty that almost took Hulme's breath away. She went up to Mr Gaverick, put her

soft hands round his neck, and kissed him. The ecstasy of the old man on receiving this unexpected salute was delightful to behold, and would be impossible to describe. Turning from him after a few seconds, she approached Dicky Hulme with a still higher colour in her face, and gave him her hand.

'I am glad to see you,' was all she said; but the words were so softly spoken that no one heard them but Hulme.

And at tea—which was a rather formal business at the farm-house, with incidents of abundant bread-and-butter, cold ham and fowl, jams, and other things—she sat next to him, and after a little while told him of her happy life in the country, of the primroses and violets that lined the hedgerows, of the nest-building of the birds, of the young lambs and young rabbits, and the corn springing up in the sunshine.

'What's all that talk about?' inquired Mr Gaverick, who had been keeping them under furtive observation from the corner of his eye.

'I was telling Mr Hulme about all the changes one sees in the country in the spring,' she answered.

'Ah! Better take him out after tea and show him some of them. It's precious little we know about such things in the City. And there are some things he doesn't know—that he ought to know,' Mr Gaverick added.

The significance of the observation was not lost upon Hulme. The girl was innocent of the meaning, but she glanced shyly at the young man.

'I hope you will, Miss Lily,' he said; 'I should like a ramble through the fields so much.'

'Very well,' she answered at once. 'I will get my hat and jacket.'

Dicky Hulme's heart had never felt so buoyant as it did whilst she walked by his side through the pleasant fields. The primroses, and violets, and lambs, and rabbits were unnoticed. They talked of the 'Golden Lily' and Jim Gaverick. The girl knew it was her own name the dear old miner had given to his find. On the downfall of her father and Revel they were altogether silent.

'I think I never heard any news in my life,' she said, 'that made me so happy as the news that Jim was alive and well.'

'Have you heard that he is coming home?'

'No!'

'He is. He will be in England in six weeks.'

'Oh, how I will kiss his dear old sunburnt face! Poor old Jim! It must have been a disappointment to him, when he returned to Coolgardie, to find that you had gone back to England.'

'I believe so, Miss Lily.'

'Why do you call me "Miss Lily"?'

'The habit clings to me. What should I call you? "Miss Warner" doesn't come so readily to my tongue.'

'Call me — Lily, simply,' she said after a pause.

'Lily. Then, Lily, I am no longer to be "Mr Hulme," please.'

She laughed and blushed.

'Very well,' she replied. 'And now, why did you leave Coolgardie?'

'In the first place, I was too weak after my illness to do anything. In the next place, I believed Jim Solus was dead. Lastly'—— He hesitated, and the girl looked at him with expectant eyes. 'Well,' he said, lowering his voice, 'for some reason I never could fathom, you came to see me no more. Then you went away to England without a good-bye. It was very foolish of me, no doubt; but I felt it keenly, and was sick until I got away from Coolgardie.'

She sat down on the step of a stile, and after looking vacantly for a minute across a field of young corn, burst into tears. For some time her tears flowed freely and she made no attempt to speak. Hulme stood gazing upon her in perplexity and distress.

'Lily,' he asked, 'have I said anything to offend you?'

'No, no, no! Sit—sit down beside me, and I will tell you.'

She made room for him on the narrow seat, and he was very close to her when he sat down.

'This was the reason,' she said, lowering her face. 'You showed me those letters from my father and Mr Revel. You did not know who I was. But I knew. How could I come near you again after that? I was my father's daughter, Dicky. I was ashamed to meet you again. You would learn who I was, and shun me and despise and hate me. That was why I did not see you again.'

'Oh Lily, Lily! What had your innocent soul to do with the misdeeds of others? If I had only known! And I thought, when you went away and they said you were to marry Revel, that I could tear you out of my breast. But when I saw you again in London, sitting with him in a theatre, in spite of myself my heart leaped out to you with a cry. I could not get you out of my life. And, fearing the cause of your change, I have been afraid to speak to you since you came to Mr Gaverick's.'

'You are not—afraid—now?' she whispered.

'Oh Lily!'

He was not afraid now; not afraid to kiss the sweetness of her lips, her cheek, her forehead, her hair, her hands—to strain her to his heart, until she uttered a short 'Oh!' of delicious distress.

Six weeks from that day these two young people were married, Jim Gaverick looking most uncomfortable in a black frock-coat, impressively giving the bride away. Jim's functions were not finished in the church. After the breakfast at his brother's house, the division of the 'Golden Lily' had to take place, according to the terms of the original

partnership, from which no power on earth could make Jim depart by a hair's-breadth. Twenty-five thousand pounds and thirty-five thousand shares were transferred to Dicky Hulme, who had already settled upon Lily all he had—his mother's little fortune. Nor was Jim likely to forget his promise to Miss Lily, as he still called her.

'My word, Michael!' he said to his brother in his most solemn manner, 'you will never know what a stunning girl Miss Lily is! I know—and Dicky knows. But you—you can't imagine it, Michael!'

Mr Warner and Mr Revel, it may be mentioned, were not at the wedding, being detained abroad by circumstances beyond their control.

THE END.

ARMY RECRUITING ABROAD.

AT the present time, when the recruiting of the army is attracting public attention, it will not be inappropriate to describe the systems by which foreign armies are maintained, more especially as the adoption of conscription has been boldly advocated of late.

It is not necessary to trace the history of conscription, for it is at once apparent that it arose in primitive communities when every man naturally armed himself to repel the attacks of invaders or to avenge injuries inflicted upon his country. The modern principle of conscription was first adopted in France in 1798, and until 1872 it was resorted to from time to time as necessity arose. After the disastrous defeat at the hands of the Germans, personal military service was finally adopted as the permanent means of providing an adequate fighting force. Every Frenchman, unless physically unfit, is bound to enter the army. There are, however, certain youths who are exempt from this law. All men under five feet two inches in height, and others incapacitated by deformity or permanent disease, are exempt on the grounds of physical unfitness. Extreme ugliness, short sight, stammering, slight lameness, and an excess or the reverse of the right number of toes or fingers, are included under this heading. The eldest brother of a family of orphans, the only son of a widow, of a disabled father, or of a father over seventy, are required to serve for one year only. In the case of two brothers, if the younger is efficient, he enters the army and thus exempts his elder brother; or if one of two brothers is serving when his younger brother attains his twentieth year, or has served previously, the younger is exempt. Convicted felons, as in England, are not allowed to enter the army.

Every year about three hundred thousand Frenchmen reach the age of twenty. After the physically unfit, and those who are exempt under any of the above clauses, have been weeded out, the actual number of men required to maintain the standard strength of the army is chosen by ballot. They spend three years in the active army, and are then dismissed from permanent service and return to civil life. But for the following ten years they are numbered among the reserve of the active army. They are then drafted into the territorial army for six years; at the conclusion of which they pass into the territorial reserve for another six years. Not until the age of forty-five does a Frenchman become free from all obligation to military service; for thirteen years he is liable to be called upon to serve either at home or abroad, and for the following twelve years to defend his country against invaders. No exemption can be purchased; unless a conscript is exempt either on the ground of physique or for family reasons, he is bound to serve his twenty-five years. Until 1890 there was a class of conscripts known as 'one-year volunteers.' These were men of good education, who were allowed to purchase their discharge after one year's service. The extent to which conscription has militarised France may be gathered from the fact that every fourth male is serving or has served in the army.

Compulsory service has been in force in Prussia since 1817, and in 1871 it was extended to the whole of the empire. Every German, with exceptions similar to those in France, must serve twelve years in the army or navy. The term of service includes two years with the colours in the standing army (three years in the cavalry and artillery), four years in the reserve of the standing army, two years in the Landwehr, and four in the Landsturm. On leaving the active army and passing into the reserves, the men may be refused permission to emigrate during their first year of civil life. After the standing army has been recruited to its full strength each year, the surplus conscripts are enrolled in the Ersatztruppen, and for twelve years undergo annual training. Until the age of forty-two all Germans, whether they have served in the active army or only in the Ersatztruppen, are liable to be called upon to serve in the Landsturm. In the infantry, men of good education are allowed, under certain conditions, to purchase their discharge after one year's service.

Universal service was introduced into Austria-Hungary in 1868. There are no exemptions, and those who are physically unfit are obliged to purchase their freedom by payment of a fine according to their means. About seven hundred and fifty thousand men are examined yearly, and of

these one hundred and fifty thousand are selected. Service is for three years with the colours, seven in the reserve of the active army, two years in the Landwehr, and ten in the Landsturm. The second class of conscripts are drafted into the Ersatz reserve for twelve years. Those who escape these terms with the first and second lines of defence are liable to be called upon to serve in he Landsturm from their nineteenth to their forty-second year. Thus every Austrian is at the call of his country for twenty-two years, though only three, and perhaps no, years are spent in actual service. In addition, men who have passed through the active army are also liable to be called upon to serve as officers in the Landsturm until sixty years of age.

Russia adopted conscription in 1870. Purchase of freedom from service, though legally prohibited, is practised, eight hundred roubles (£127) being the usual sum. Some parts of Siberia and the Trans-Caucasus are still exempt from conscription. The period of service is from the twenty-first to the forty-third year. Four years are spent in the active army, fourteen in the reserve, and four in the Opoltschenie or militia. Men drafted into the artillery or cavalry spend five years with the colours and only thirteen in the reserve. Every year nine hundred and fifty thousand Russians become liable for service; but of these only two hundred and seventy thousand enter the active army, the remainder being passed direct into the militia for twenty-two years. Seventy per cent. of all conscripts are unable to read or write; and, as they are taught the rudiments of knowledge while in the army, conscription may be regarded as a system of education. The Cossacks form a separate class; they pay no taxes, instead of which they are bound to give their military services for fifteen years. They enter the corps at eighteen, and after three years' training pass into the front brigade for twelve years. Cossacks are obliged to provide and maintain their own horses, clothing, and equipment. About sixteen thousand Cossacks enter the army every year.

All Italians are liable to military service from twenty to thirty-nine. The usual exemptions are permitted, and one-year volunteers are also allowed. The conscripts are divided into three classes. Those balloted into the first class spend nine years (five of which are spent on furlough) in the active army and ten years in the militia. Conscripts of Class II. spend eight years in the active army, with unlimited leave—which means that they receive no training, but are liable for eight years to be called upon to enter the active army. They are then drafted into the militia for eleven years. Class III. includes all other conscripts; they receive no training, but for nineteen years are liable to be drafted into the territorial militia. Thus very large numbers of Italian conscripts receive no training at all, financial considerations forbidding it.

In Belgium there is an eight years' compulsory service; but, as only fourteen thousand men are needed annually, substitution and purchase are freely allowed. Compulsory service for nine years, without substitution, is the law in Holland. One year is spent in the infantry, one and a half in the cavalry and artillery, and the remainder in the reserves. In Sweden there is a twenty years' service—eight with the colours and twelve in the reserve; and in Denmark sixteen years. Service is compulsory on all for eight years in Spain or four years in the colonies, though freedom may be purchased for £60. In Turkey all Moslems are liable to compulsory service, but Christians and other sectarians can purchase exemption. The Turk spends four years in the Nizam or active army, two years in the reserves, eight in the Redif or Landwehr, and six in the Mustahfurz or Landsturm. Thus, from twenty to forty the Osmanlis are liable to military service. Though Switzerland is the only country in the world which possesses no standing army—the constitution forbidding it—military training is compulsory on all males. The Japanese introduced conscription in 1874, every male being liable to military service from seventeen to forty. Three years are spent in the active army, and the remainder in the reserves. Those who escape active training are numbered among the militia for the whole twenty-three years. Six years' (from nineteen to twenty-five) compulsory service is in force in Egypt; but as only fifteen hundred men are required annually, and one hundred and fifty thousand men reach the age of nineteen every year, the burden is a very light one. Compulsory service is general in the South American Republics. In Brazil it is partly compulsory and partly voluntary. Each province must provide a fixed number of recruits, and if enough volunteers do not enlist, the requisite number is made up by conscription. The standing army of the United States has heretofore been a small one; but in time of national danger all men from the age of eighteen to forty-five may be called to arms.

Thus it will be seen that Britain is practically the only country that still recruits her army by voluntary enlistment. Under the Anglo-Saxons every freeman was bound to give three months' military service every year. The feudal system cannot be called forced service, as the military service was a condition of and quit-rent for the tenure of land. But as the feudal system died out, forced levies became common. It was with these that Elizabeth waged her wars in Ireland and James II. crushed Monmouth's rebellion; and it was the press-gang which recruited the army and navy for the Napoleonic wars of this century. Thus the constitution has always recognised the liability of every man to be called upon to fight for his country. Even now, by the Ballot Act of 1860, all males over five feet two inches

in height and between the ages of eighteen and thirty are liable to be called upon to serve in the militia. Though this act is suspended every year by the Army Annual Act, it could at any time be brought into force. So near home as the Channel Islands all natives of physical fitness between sixteen and forty-five years of age are liable to be called upon to serve in the militia, refusal to do so being punishable by fine or imprisonment.

Militarism in Europe—despite the Tsar's rescript—has not yet reached its zenith. All the states are increasing their armies and navies; and the course which Great Britain will have to take the future alone can decide. A great military power Britain is not, nor aspires to be; but if she is going to maintain her army and navy on the same relative scale with the other Powers, conscription in one form or another appears inevitable. This question will most probably form the burning one of the near future; and it will then be for Britain to determine if she will sacrifice her sons, as well as her wealth, for the maintenance of the integrity of the Empire.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND:

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER V.

'CIRCUMSTANCE is the test of a man's quality; his conduct in a crisis the standard of his value.'

The Bishop closed the book impatiently. Mr Dallis looked up from his paper and smiled. They were both sitting on one of the lawn seats.

'What is the matter?' he asked. 'Is it very poor?'

'It is absurd,' said the Bishop. 'Absurd—inane! It is time to restrict this man's output;' and rising hastily, he stepped into the drawing-room to replace the volume upon a table.

Commander Digby, as usual, was there, and looked up as he entered. The Bishop gave him a glance of doubt and questioning, not unmingled with a little curious but pardonable resentment. He remembered that this fellow-guest had checked his plans more than once by his apparent desire to lounge in that corner chair as often and as long as he possibly could. Such conduct seemed utterly thoughtless and unreasonable.

But now the Commander rose, with a little gesture of relief.

'I give it up,' he said lazily. 'I am afraid that it won't work.'

'What do you mean?' asked the Bishop, in natural surprise.

'My little plan, or rather my theory,' answered Commander Digby. 'It's about that diamond.'

'Oh, indeed!'

The Commander proceeded to explain. 'I'll tell you how it is,' he said; 'it's a rather curious case, because you are in it yourself. Do you know, I have an idea that Lady Stalland's diamond was picked up by one of the servants.'

'Indeed?' said the Bishop again. He was looking out through the window with no sign of particular interest.

'Yes. Ignorance and sudden temptation, you know—just as I suggested at the dinner-table when the loss was discovered. But an idea occurred to me yesterday morning while I was dressing, and it was this: If one of the servants took the stone, she would probably soon regret the theft. As soon as she realised its value, and as soon as the loss was discovered, she would be frightened, and would begin to wish she hadn't touched it. Then her one thought would be—— What do you think?'

'To hide it,' suggested the Bishop deceitfully; for he saw what was coming.

'Not at all—not at all. Her one thought would be to return it to the spot from which she had taken it. I am presuming, you observe, that it was one of those silly women. No man would do such a mad thing.'

The Bishop nodded agreement.

'As soon as I thought of this,' continued the Commander, 'I determined to work it out. I came down early yesterday morning—you were down only just before me, if you recollect—almost expecting to find the diamond somewhere on the floor. It was not there, so I concluded that the woman had not yet had a chance to replace it. I calculated, however, that she would hang about the drawing-room until she found her opportunity, and that until she had found it she would look into the room just three times as often as any other person. That would be something after the style of the moth and the candle, you know. Therefore, I resolved to keep a good look-out and watch faces, keeping in the room as much as possible. In fact, I have scarcely left the place for a minute except when I was bound to do so, or when there was some one else here.'

'That is true,' thought the Bishop. 'You haven't.'

'You will understand, of course, that I am not qualifying for a thief-catcher,' the Commander said apologetically. 'I have been doing this for the simple purpose of testing my little theory. But it hasn't worked out as well as I expected. You'll never guess who has made the largest

number of visits to this room since yesterday morning.'

The Bishop might have made a very creditable guess. He thought it wiser not to try.

'It is yourself,' said the Commander.

'Dear me!' exclaimed the Bishop. 'Dear me, how very remarkable!' and he looked suitably startled and impressed. What a deceitful Bishop he had become since Saturday!

'Yes,' proceeded Commander Digby, rising from his chair. 'You have come into this room exactly twenty-three times since yesterday morning. As for the servants, why, not one of them has acted a bit suspiciously, and it is evident that my theory was weak somewhere. I'll give up detective work after this.'

The Bishop smiled. If the Commander's eye had been nearly as keen as his theory, he must have noticed the sickliness of that smile; but he did not notice, and in a moment more had passed out to join Mr Dallis on the lawn.

The Bishop was glad to see him go, for he was plainly a dangerous man. Standing alone on the hearth-rug, he wondered how many more threads he had yet to come upon in this tangled skein.

It was now Monday morning, and he was looking forward with feverish eagerness to the hour of his departure. As far as he was aware, no fresh movement had yet taken place. Sir Edward had said nothing at breakfast, and Mr Fitchett was invisible. Things were quiet, and he began to think that they would remain in that state until he could settle them. His letter to-morrow morning would do it.

He had passed another miserable night—a night such as he had often read of but never experienced before. As the hours had followed one another, his self-scorn had magnified his fault into something quite unlike itself. His old assurance, his self-confidence, had vanished utterly with his self-respect. He had learned that he was nothing better than a contemptibly weak mortal, doing wrong because he dreaded the opinions of his fellow-men. He was not Saturday's Bishop of Hexminster, but some other feeble and unworthy creature who had in a mysterious way found himself in lawn.

So he mused now, standing on the rug where all his trouble had commenced, and looking vacantly at the bronzes on the mantelpiece. But suddenly his glance fell upon a mirror which reflected the portions of the room behind him, and the region of the door; and he saw that some one was watching him from the doorway.

At first he was naturally startled, but had the presence of mind not to look round. He examined the face of the watcher carefully, and saw that it was the face of a woman—a young woman. Something, partly memory, partly intuition, told him that it was the face of little Miss Connie's nurse.

In another moment he saw more. The expression on the girl's face was not the expression of one who watches as a spy. True, there was a certain furtiveness about it, and she evidently did not intend to be seen; but that was not all. There was a great deal of anxiety in the manner of her gaze, as though she wished, almost as much as she feared, to attract attention; and, above all, there was a look of eager appeal not for a moment to be mistaken.

Still watching, motionless, the Bishop tried to imagine a reason for this curious conduct. She wanted something; that was clear enough. That her want was in some way connected with himself seemed equally clear. She was on very good terms with Martin, as he knew. Ah, yes—Martin!

The Bishop gave a start, as a horrible suggestion came to his mind, and the face vanished abruptly from the doorway. The house, he now noticed, was unusually quiet; but it was a quiet which had in it a hint of impending danger. Where was Sir Edward? Where was Lady Stalland? Where was Fitchett? He reached the door in three strides, just in time to hear light footsteps hastening down one of the farther corridors.

He stood for a minute irresolute. Then the second footman happened to emerge from the dining-room.

'Where is Martin?' asked the Bishop.

'In the library, my lord.'

'Who is with him? Is your master there?'

'Yes, my lord; and her ladyship, and the strange gentleman.'

'Thank you,' said the Bishop; and the second footman, dismissed, went his way, wondering.

The Bishop stood in the hall for several moments longer, and then proceeded to the library. On his way he was obliged to pass the stairs, and one who was slowly descending greeted his appearance with a cry of recognition:

'Oh, there's my wobber!'

The Bishop looked up. This time the child's greeting caused him no tremor.

'Wobber!' she cried, 'have you seen nursie? I'se lost her.'

He remembered the face at the drawing-room door. 'Yes, my dear,' he said. 'I think she is down here.' And he prepared to pass on.

But there was something still to be said. The child was now on the fourth step, looking full into his face. What she read there, with the marvellous and unreasoning perception of childhood, must have produced her next question:

'Is the game finished, wobber? Is it over? Are you going to give up the diamond you wobbed?'

The question was cruel, heartless, almost triumphant; but the face of the questioner was full of sun and laughter. The Bishop answered mildly, yet speaking with difficulty:

'I think so, my dear—I think so—I fear so.'

'In the lib'wy?' asked Connie. 'Where papa is? Then I'se coming with you.' And before he could protest or object she had descended the remaining steps and had taken him by the hand. Half-unwillingly he submitted, and they went on together.

In the library Sir Edward Stalland sat at the writing-table, with his back to the door. At his right stood Lady Stalland, and before him, with the table between, Martin the footman. Inspector Fitchett was also there.

The entrance of the Bishop and his companion took place at a singular point in the proceedings. Sir Edward had just asked a question.

'So you refuse to speak, Martin? You have nothing more to say?'

It was a final question, and Martin had answered it finally:

'Nothing, Sir Edward.'

A pause had followed—a pause curiously suggestive of a deadlock. It was during the pause that the new-comers entered. Their appearance was received by Lady Stalland with a sigh of relief, and Sir Edward evidently shared her emotion. Martin's obstinate features relaxed a little, but the inspector made no sign.

'Oh, my dear Bishop,' cried Lady Stalland, 'I am glad you have come in! This is a most unhappy affair.'

The Bishop inclined his head gravely, and looked at Sir Edward. 'Can I do anything?' he asked.

Then the baronet spoke abruptly. 'We have been questioning Martin,' he said; 'you know the circumstances, and you can imagine why we should have done so. We simply ask him whether he has seen anything, or whether he knows anything, of his mistress's diamond. He refuses to answer.'

'Either "Yes" or "No,"' interposed Fitchett quietly.

'Either "Yes" or "No,"' repeated Sir Edward.

There was another long pause. With the exception of the child, who was gazing at her elders in wide-eyed surprise, every one seemed distinctly uncomfortable. Sir Edward and Lady Stalland waited for the Bishop's opinion, and wondered at his sternness and pallor; while Martin hung his head low. But the most troubled of the whole group was probably Inspector Fitchett.

For something was going awry with his plans. When Martin had been called in a few minutes before—when the footman had found himself face to face with this old acquaintance — everything had seemed to be going right enough. The man's amazement, his dismay, his evident guilt and fear, had gladdened the officer's heart with prospects of speedy success. Then Sir Edward had asked the fellow a question, and a check had taken place at once.

He had never expected a refusal to answer. Denial would have been natural, and he had been fully prepared to hear a long tissue of falsehoods and protestations. He had been still more prepared to witness a collapse, a confession, and a pitiful appeal for mercy. But silence might mean anything, and he did not forget that the whole of the evidence was purely circumstantial. He watched the faces and waited, his small blue eyes half-closed.

'Of course,' said Sir Edward, 'since he refuses to speak, I have only one thing to do. There is no alternative.'

The next remark came from the most unlikely quarter. It was spoken in a small voice, full of indignant surprise:

'But Martin isn't a wobber. He isn't a bit of a wobber!'

'Ha!' said Inspector Fitchett to himself; 'what is this?' Lady Stalland frowned at the child, and Sir Edward turned impatiently. Seeing, however, that she held the Bishop's hand, he said nothing. It was the Bishop who silenced her by a whisper of 'Hush!' The others had been surprised at her remark, but he had been alarmed.

He had come to settle this matter himself, and she must not do it for him. In Martin's face he saw that the game was not yet really over—that the man was prepared to keep silence. He would keep silence, at least, until to-morrow, when all would be set to rights. But the Bishop had brushed the thought aside with contempt. He was a man once more.

His emotions of the night had culminated in a sudden revival of his fugitive courage. Face to face with this crisis in affairs, he became himself again. Martin's conduct was a revelation, and the revelation a stimulant. While his weakness had been without hurt to others he had indulged it; had allowed it to lead him into doubtful places, into evasions, shufflings, almost into baseness. Now he saw another man accused in his stead, and it was another matter. So there was something heroic in the way in which he faced the group and prepared to own his error. In spite of his pallor, he had never been so like a Bishop, so like a man.

'I am sorry,' he began—'I am sorry that Martin should have been suspected in connection with the loss of the diamond. It is a great mistake.'

He paused, to allow his words to have their full effect. Inspector Fitchett heard them with growing uneasiness, the others with surprise. Martin looked up in breathless anxiety. But at that critical moment there came a slow *tap, tap, tap* from the edge of the table where the Bishop stood, and Miss Connie was heard to count in a loud whisper, '*One, two, three!*'

The Bishop heard, but did not look down. He had more to say, and lost no time.

'I have already told Inspector Fitchett,' he said, with a stern glance at the officer, 'that I have

every confidence in Martin's integrity, despite what occurred a few years ago. I have the very highest reasons for this confidence.'

Tap, tap, tap—'*Four, five six*,' counted Miss Connie, in quiet disdain of all that was passing. And there the Bishop paused, exactly on the verge of his confession. The others were looking at him no longer—all eyes were upon the child at his side.

He looked down. On the edge of the table were six pieces of glass. At the same instant she raised her eyes triumphantly—the child who had placed them there.

'You wobbed one of my diamonds,' she said; 'but I had six all the time. *I found one more on the carpet!*'

The pallor of the Bishop's face seemed to deepen as the last words were borne in upon his understanding. His lips were parted, and he stared vacantly, first at the articles on the table, then at the countenances of those around him. Mr Fitchett's eyes were wide open for once, and the word he uttered was short and sharp. Martin's expression was one of astonishment, and so was Lady Stalland's. But Sir Edward, with an exclamation quite as abrupt as the detective's, picked up one of the six glass diamonds and gazed at it fixedly.

There was a brief pause. The object Sir Edward held was smaller than the other five, but it gleamed with tenfold lustre.

'What is it?' gasped the Bishop. 'Is it the—is it the'——

'Yes,' said Sir Edward quietly; 'it is. It is the lost diamond!'

To the Bishop's gaze, the faces around him were hazy at that moment. He gripped the edge of the table to steady himself. His companions began to speak, excitedly, wonderingly; but he did not hear what they said. He was recalling the incidents of Saturday night, the words of the child, the finding of the diamond, and the truth was coming home to him—the real truth this time. Had he been mistaken all along? Had he suffered all those agonies needlessly? Could it be possible?

Slowly he took from its place of concealment the other diamond—the one he had found. With a sickly smile, he laid it down beside the others. It was exactly like them. Then he looked at Miss Connie.

'That's *my* diamond,' she said, nodding in complete understanding. 'That's my diamond. You've been a make-believe wobber ever since Saturday; but now the game is over;' and she gathered up the toys in her chubby hands with every sign of satisfaction and delight.

Yes, the game was over. Again the Bishop smiled. The child's words were quite true. He had been only a make-believe robber after all. But what a terrible game it had been! He had been playing in dead earnest.

Half-an-hour later Inspector Fitchett was being driven away in the dog-cart, muttering sundry opinions as to the 'infernal meddlesomeness' of children and the stupidity of their parents. Sir Edward was telling his guests in the drawing-room how the diamond had at last been found in the very spot where no one had dreamed of looking for it; and Miss Connie was reflecting upon the really excellent way in which a bishop can make-believe to be a robber. The Bishop himself, after a short interview with Lady Stalland, was speaking to Martin in the hall. The incident of the lost diamond was over and done with, and the Bishop was, to all appearance, the Bishop of last week, benign but dignified, affable but stately. Yet this interview and one which followed it indicated that there had been a change.

'Martin,' he said kindly as the man came up, 'I have been thinking of what you told me on Saturday evening. Your words gave me great pleasure, and I shall be glad to try you once more in my own service.'

'Yes, my lord,' said Martin humbly. Since he had discovered the injustice of his late suspicions the poor fellow had not dared to look his lordship in the face.

'As it happens,' the Bishop continued, 'my butler, Gannet, will be leaving at the end of the quarter. If you think you could take his place you may write to me in a day or two. I have mentioned the matter to Lady Stalland already.'

And with that the Bishop passed on. Martin stood still, thinking it over, and the more he thought of it the more astonished he became. Why, the butler at the Palace had a house all to himself. A house, of course, meant a wife to keep it; and a wife—— But when his meditations had reached that point he hurried away to find Miss Connie's nurse.

The other interview indicating a change in the Bishop took place at lunch. The story of the diamond had, of course, to be retold, and Sir Edward concluded the tale with an expression of surprise.

'What puzzles me,' he said, 'is Martin's silence. I can't imagine why he should have refused to answer the question I asked him.'

'Ah,' said Commander Digby, 'I shouldn't trouble about that. Perhaps the man was hurt, and some people get obstinate when they feel insulted. He felt himself in Fitchett's black books, you know.'

The Commander's suggestion was generally considered satisfactory, and the matter dropped. Mrs Digby, who was again the Bishop's neighbour, then turned to another subject.

'By the way,' she began, 'you remember the case we were speaking of the other night. That man has been brought before the magistrates.'

The Bishop remembered very well. 'Indeed?' he said. 'What was the result?'

'He reserved his defence,' answered Mrs Digby, 'and he hinted that he was the victim of circumstances. Of course that's all nonsense, as you said on Saturday. Circumstances, indeed!'

It was a minute or more before the Bishop replied. 'Hem!' he said slowly but clearly. 'I have been thinking over that remark, and have slightly changed my opinion. If the man pleads circumstances, I shall be inclined to wait a little. Circumstances, you know, my dear Mrs Digby'——

'Yes,' murmured the lady as he paused. 'Circumstances'——

'Often alter cases,' the Bishop concluded calmly.

It seemed a very trite, a very aged remark; yet when he held it up to criticism he saw that he could not have said anything more representative of his own changed, enlightened views. Mrs Digby subsided into wondering silence, entering the last remark in her mental note-book for future use. How broad-minded the dear Bishop was!

. . . . . .

As I have already said in other words, the Bishop of Hexminster is famous for his sympathy with the faults and failings of his fellow-men, and for his reluctance to judge them hastily. He is always ready to consider the argument of circumstances; but even his most intimate friends cannot guess that this is because circumstances on one occasion made him almost a criminal, and showed him in his own conduct the helplessness and the weakness of even the most upright of men and bishops. His admirers do not know this, and probably will not credit the story when they read it; but the Bishop's own character, in its increased charm and attractiveness, is the best possible evidence of his short and unhappy connection with Lady Stalland's diamond.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A RELIC OF BYGONE TIMES.

A VERY curious and interesting discovery has been made by a local antiquary, Mr W. A. Donelly, on the shores of the river Clyde, about a mile east of Dumbarton Castle. Here has been found the remains of a 'crannog,' or dwelling on piles, the structure being situated below high-water mark and about fifty yards from the water at low tide. Its circumference is one hundred and eighty-four feet, the outer circle of piles being of oak sharpened to a point with stone axes, and still perfectly sound where the wood has been buried in the ground. The other woods used in this ancient dwelling-place of man are birch, ash, &c., and are used for the transverse beams and for the pavements. Twelve feet outside the structure extends a huge refuse-heap, in which have been found the bones of dogs, cattle, sheep, &c., a hone or whetstone, and distinct evidences of the use of fire. In the immediate neighbourhood has also been discovered a canoe, thirty-seven feet long, with a beam of four feet, and hollowed out of a single oak-tree. This pile-dwelling is of more than ordinary interest in that it seems to be the first which has been found in tidal water.

ALUMINIUM FOR INDIA.

Aluminium, which is now used in Great Britain for such a variety of purposes, has recently been introduced into Madras, and cooking-pots and other utensils which used to be made of copper and brass are now being manufactured of the white metal. Professor Chatterton, of the Madras University, has been the mainspring of this new departure, for he caused experiments to be made at the metal-working classes of the School of Arts at Madras, and in this way interested the natives in the matter. As a result a small factory was established, and this met with such signal success that in five months the output of manufactured aluminium amounted to a ton a month. This, be it remembered, would be equal, bulk for bulk, to four times as much copper. It is considered curious that the intense conservatism of the Indians should have allowed such an innovation to succeed; but on one point they are obdurate. The old shapes and fashions of vessels must be rigidly adhered to in making them of the new material, and as these shapes vary in different districts, the point is one of some importance.

ALUMINIUM *versus* STONE.

A German firm of colour-printers, Messrs Scholz, of Mainz, are credited with the introduction of a printing surface of which the metal aluminium is the base, which is found to be a most efficient substitute for the unwieldy and heavy lithographic stone. The metal is coated with a chemical surface which has the property of absorbing water like the stone, and has also, when dry, a like affinity for fatty inks. The artist can make his design direct on the surface, so that it is not vitiated by interference from another hand; and such design, when it has served its purpose, can be readily removed to make room for another without the long process of grinding down which is necessary with a drawing on stone. One of these new plates can thus be used for hundreds of times, and they are so thin that a hundred and fifty of them occupy only the space of one lithographic stone. It is to be hoped that

this new process of printing will be demonstrated at the exhibition of lithography which will probably be opened in London before these words appear in print.

THE PLAGUE.

Dr F. G. Clemow contributes to the *Lancet* some very interesting facts regarding the plague epidemic in Calcutta, which go far to prove that rats were responsible for the introduction of the disease into that city. It seems certain that rats, in common with dogs, pigs, pigeons, and domestic fowls, are liable to be affected by the disease, and that, some time before the occurrence of a single case of plague among the human inhabitants of Calcutta, it was reported to the health officer that a number of dead rats had been found in a building near the river. Shortly afterwards more dead rats were found in a street close by and in the offices of a shipping company near to the wharf where ships unload. This discovery, from its unusual character, attracted much attention, and as a precautionary measure disinfectants were largely used. Subsequently some of the dead rodents were examined at the municipal laboratory, and found to be infected with the plague bacillus. Since this time dead rats have been found in the city in large numbers, and more especially in and about the houses where cases of human plague have occurred.

A NEW USE FOR THE TELEPHONE.

The monotony of farm life in Australia, where houses are few and far between, has recently been modified by an ingenious use of the telephone. It would hardly have paid any one to lay wires from farm to farm, for those buildings are often separated by many miles of open country; but some one found that the wire fences which are in common use were most efficient lines of communication for telephonic purposes; and the discovery has resulted in friendly intercourse being established between the members of families separated from one another by as much as a dozen miles. A number of different stations are now connected together in this way, and we can readily understand what comfort the thought must bring to the members of an isolated household that they are, in case of emergency, within call of fellow-beings.

MAKING HASTE TO BE RICH.

That there are hundreds of persons who still believe in the possibility of perpetual motion, the philosopher's stone, and other myths of bygone times is well known. But there was certainly some excuse for those who recently invested their savings in the Electrolytic Marine Salts Company of America, whose ostensible business it was to extract gold from sea-water; for it is a scientific fact that the waters of the ocean do contain a certain proportion of the precious metals in solution. According to *Cassiers' Magazine*, the trick by which the subscribers were induced to part with their money was simple but decidedly clever. They were invited to witness a most conclusive experiment which took place in a shed which projected over the water at the end of a pier. Through a trap in the floor a pan of mercury—and it should be noted that the capitalists had brought the metal with them in order that they might be assured of its initial purity—was let down into the sea. An electric battery was then connected up with it, and the current allowed to act upon the sunken mercury for several hours; while the men with the money-bags kept watch the whole night through in order to see that all was fair. In the morning the pan of quicksilver was raised from the sea-bottom and its contents at once assayed, when the metal was found to be heavily charged with gold. It is supposed that during the night a diver was employed to substitute the valuable amalgam for the pure mercury in the submerged pan. However this may have been, the 'inventor' of the process has disappeared with some sixty-eight thousand pounds, which represent the profits on the transaction, obtained not from sea-water, but from the pockets of the credulous.

THE TRANSPORT OF TIMBER.

A huge raft of timber six hundred feet long, cigar-shaped, with a central diameter of fifty feet, was recently towed from the Columbia River to San Francisco, a distance of seven hundred miles, in five and a half days. The weather was certainly very favourable for the venture; but the event is noteworthy for the reason that this is the largest structure of the kind which has ever entered the above-mentioned port. Other consignments of the same nature and equally large are now being arranged for, this method of transport having several advantages. The number of piles contained in this cable-bound raft was ten thousand, each pile consisting of a log of timber from thirty to forty feet long, with a diameter at the butt-end of about eighteen inches—in all the raft comprised five million lineal feet of timber. To convey a similar cargo piecemeal by steamer in the old-fashioned method of stowage, twenty vessels of the largest capacity would have been required, while the expense would have been trebled. It is intended later on to economise still more by transporting timber which has already been sawn into square logs.

RECOVERING A LOST BELL.

A story told not long ago to an audience at the United Service Institute, London, is illustrative of the fact that native instinct—or shall we call it common-sense?—will sometimes solve a problem which technical training fails to grapple with successfully. During the second Burmese war the British troops endeavoured to carry off to Calcutta,

as a trophy, a big bell the weight of which was more than forty tons. The engineers managed to get it as far as the river Irawadi; but, in trying to get it on shipboard, the tackle slipped and the unwieldy thing rolled over and disappeared beneath the water. After trying in vain to raise the bell from the river-bed, the engineers were forced to admit that the task was beyond them, and went their way. Then the Burmese went to work, and, strange to say, they soon accomplished the task in which the British had failed. They first of all encased the upper part of the bell in a wooden structure, so as to convert its external form into that of a cylinder, and they then, by means of ropes, rolled it up the river-bank on to dry land. It is obvious that the water must have been very shallow to admit of this method of procedure.

CLOCKS WHICH TALK.

A very curious development of Edison's famous phonograph is found in the speaking clocks and watches now being manufactured in Switzerland, timepieces which altogether throw into the shade the old 'repeaters,' which on the pressure of a stud would strike, or 'repeat' the last hour. In the new form of watch a button is pressed; but, instead of the stroke of a bell, the owner is informed of the time in articulate speech. Alarm-clocks are also made; but instead of the usual vibratory bell, they call out, 'It's six o'clock. Up you get, and don't go to sleep again.' These talking clocks and watches are due to the ingenuity of a French manufacturer who has settled in Geneva. In order to make his wares talkative, he introduces into the works a disc of india-rubber, which on its edge bears the necessary phonographic 'record'—in connection, we presume, with a vibrating diaphragm.

MOVING A HOUSE.

By the term 'moving house' is meant in this country the unpleasant operation of shifting one's belongings from one domicile to another; but in America it is the house itself—roof, walls, bricks, and mortar—that is moved. This wondrous engineering feat has been accomplished so often that it ceases to excite much remark among our transatlantic cousins, but, for some undiscovered reason, the work of house-shifting never seems to be undertaken in Britain. The Continent has, however, afforded at least one example of this mode of changing the site of residence, for a few months ago a house which interfered with the enlargement of a German railway-station was pushed along for three hundred and fifty feet to its new situation. The entire journey was accomplished in seventeen days, the structure, with its cellars and various stories all complete, being supported on rollers and thrust forward by jacks. The house weighed seven hundred and fifty tons. The operation was completed without the cracking of a single pane of glass, and the entire expense was half the estimated cost of pulling the building to pieces and setting it up again on its new foundations.

A CURIOUS CASE OF SOMNAMBULISM.

The modern novelist is very prone to found his plots on the doings of sleep-walkers and hypnotists; but, as usual, 'truth is stranger than fiction,' and his efforts are outdone by actual occurrences. Here, for example, is a true story from France of a gentleman missing from his bedroom a packet containing more than two thousand pounds' worth of bonds. The thief could not be traced; but shortly afterwards the mistress of the house, who had taken the robbery to heart even more than her husband, was taken to a doctor, for she was suffering from nervous prostration. The doctor, a firm believer in hypnotism, was told of the robbery; and, putting two and two together, hypnotised his patient and extorted a confession from her that she had taken the bonds and buried them in the garden. There, upon search being made, they were found; but the lady is as yet quite ignorant of the fact that she herself was the person who hid them.

A RECENT EGYPTIAN DISCOVERY.

It has hitherto been supposed that in Egypt the practice of embalming the bodies of the dead and forming them into mummies was the most ancient method of sepulture; but Professor Flinders Petrie, the well-known Egyptologist, has, by recent excavations, thrown quite a new light upon this question of the ancient method of disposing of the dead. At Deshasheh, a place about fifty miles south of Cairo, he has discovered a series of tombs, in the coffins of which he has found complete skeletons from which the flesh has been carefully dissected, evidently previous to burial. The coffins are of admirable workmanship, are made of sycamore, and are in perfect preservation, notwithstanding their five thousand years' burial in the sand. It remains to be proved by further excavations whether the mutilation of the bodies was performed as a ceremonial rite, or whether this removal of flesh from the bones points to cannibalism on the part of the ancient people.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

It would seem that the business of insuring against train accidents must be a very profitable one, for, according to the most recent statistics—those for last year—the risks to human life in travelling by railway are of the slightest. The figures refer to accidents in the United Kingdom only; and we gather from them that only one person was killed among every eight millions carried, while only one person in six hundred and twenty-eight thousand was injured. It would, therefore, appear that it would be far safer to travel all day by rail than to venture upon the

ordinary risk incurred in going up and down stairs in one's own household. It is quite needless to state that the danger of crossing the crowded streets of our large cities and towns is vastly greater than any incurred in taking a journey by railway. It is sad to see, at the same time, that the number of railway servants killed and injured —especially during shunting operations—maintains a terribly high average; and we are glad to note that steps are being taken to ascertain whether there is anything in the practice adopted on foreign railway systems which can be introduced here with a view to lessen the number of fatalities which occur.

DISCOVERIES AT POMPEII.

It is quite certain that no excavations have ever aroused so much general interest as those which have been in progress for so many years at Pompeii. This is no doubt due to the awfully tragic manner in which the place was overwhelmed by the ashes from Vesuvius nearly two thousand years ago. Contrary to popular belief, it was not flowing streams of lava that did the mischief, but ashes mingled with a deluge of rain, which sealed up the houses under twenty feet of mud, which has long ago solidified. Only a comparatively small portion of the city has as yet been uncovered once more to the light of day; but the work is still progressing, and it does not lose in interest. One of the most recent discoveries is that of the site of a small but most beautiful temple, which was evidently in course of construction when the city was overwhelmed. There are the various parts of the building, exquisite pieces of moulding, and Corinthian capitals, some half-executed, with the chisel-marks plainly visible upon the stone, lying about ready to be placed in position, as they were left by the Roman workmen just previous to the catastrophe. There was also recently found buried outside the city walls a most exquisitely designed piece of mosaic pavement—a perfect picture in stone representing a group of seven philosophers in council. This noble work has been purchased by the Italian government, and will be added to the treasures of the Naples Museum.

SONNET.

THERE'S that more precious than the diamond's flame,
And beautiful as is the ruby's glow,
Or bloom of pearls: which gold indeed may maim,
And yet not easily again bestow:
Which giveth beauty grace, like scent to flowers;
Without which beauty is a rootless bloom:
Which raiseth bright-dressed thoughts, like vernal showers
The beaded grass, and gildeth sorrow's gloom.
It makes a beggar happy as a king:
A king who wants it is a fettered slave!
'Tis Manhood's very Sceptre; it may bring
Hope to the hero, courage to the brave!—
'Come, tell us, pray, what is this priceless wealth?'
What we are spendthrifts with, my friends—our Health!

G. G. SOMERVILLE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*d*. For its return in case of ineligiblity, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*d*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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CHRISTMAS 1898.

ORMON THE GULFER.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

AUTHOR OF 'STEVE BROWN'S BUNYIP,' 'IN THE GREAT DEEP,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

ON WILD HORSE CREEK.

'WELL, I reckon the claim 's about worked out. Only a patch after all. What do you think? Not that that matters much.'

'Maybe another few weights left in the cracks; we can clear them up in the morning,' I replied, answering my mate Amos Ormon's ungracious speech as we sat outside our tents and smoked in the moonlight after supper.

In front of us, a quarter of a mile away, loomed a high range of scrubby hills, at whose foot, over shingly bars, ran Wild Horse Creek, a tributary of the Georgina.

Prospecting in half-hearted fashion, after many disappointments, here at last we had struck promising colours, pegged out a claim, sunk many shafts without much luck; and then, in the very last one that our rations would run to, bottomed on a patch worth the having. Our camp was in as secluded and solitary a spot as could be found in North-western Queensland; for, although the country was known to be auriferous, so few and far between had any finds been made that gradually prospectors had given it up in disgust, and moved on to the Cloncurry and other fields towards the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Amos Ormon was an old 'Gulfer'—a name by which the settlers and bushmen around the shores of the Carpentarian Gulf are locally known—I had met and worked with for a short time as mate on the Gilbert diggings, whither I had drifted from a coasting brig that her skipper had managed to stick securely on the Horseshoe Reef, off Tribulation Island. I was mate of her; and the Cooktown Marine Board —although I had not been on deck at the time of the accident—having suspended my ticket for six months, I determined to try my luck ashore for at least that period.

Of my present mate I knew little. People in the bush work alongside each other for years in ignorance of the slightest personal detail. About forty, stout and 'nuggety' of build, with a flaming shock of red hair, thick fleshy nose, face burnt to a permanent brick colour, mouth hidden under a heavy moustache that lay almost white against the brown skin, and a pair of small, light-blue eyes, Amos hailed for an Australian native. But I always doubted this, because at odd times he rolled his 'r's and burred them in a way that few men do unless to the manner born—between, say, Tweed and Tees. His temper for the most part was a cold and saturnine one, and there was no cordiality between us, although I strove by working my hardest to keep my end of the log up, and atone as much as possible for the lack of that practical experience as a miner that my companion pos-

sessed in a very high degree. A peculiarity of Ormon's was to look as if he was always brooding over something—always turning some project over and over in his mind with a ponderous secretiveness that feared discovery. Only a mannerism, likely enough, but an unpleasant one. Had there been any chance of getting a better mate, I would have long ago left him. But the majority of the Gulfers on these tucker diggings—for they were little else—were as rowdy and drunken a lot of scoundrels at the time I write of as Australasia could produce. Though peculiar and often disagreeable, Amos was a big cut above any of the alleged diggers I had as yet come across, who, the greater part of them, struck me as in search of most things except gold.

My mate made no reply to my last remark, only smoked and pondered, whilst the moon rose higher, turning from yellow to white, and pouring floods of light over the flat at our feet, showing the red heaps of mullock from many 'duffers' stretching up from the creek-bank to the last shaft just in front of us—our 'golden hole.'

It had been a good season; grass was plentiful, and the steady klop-klop-klop of our knocking horse-bells came pleasantly to the ear in token of steady feeding; whilst the warm air was laden with the thick, heavy perfume of many species of beautiful flowering scrub. Our tents were pitched in the shade of a clump of bloodwoods and Moreton Bay ashes, and just in front of them was a rough erection of four forks and rafters, bark-roofed to form a sort of cooking-place. Underneath this was the always smouldering fire, the camp oven, billies, pan, and other utensils. Another similar structure, only covered in with bushes and furnished with table and seats of split slabs, served as dining-room. In all these matters Ormon was most methodical and painstaking. Remnants of food bring ants about a place, and one, even, of those insects in his tent made him restless and uncomfortable. As to his personal habits, they were those of a cat. He would wash himself a dozen times a day, always preferring to get away out of sight to a water-hole in the creek; the least smudge from pot or billy on his fingers made him palpably uneasy until it was off; and he spent all Sunday combing and brushing, clipping and cleaning about his body, in an excess of fastidiousness that would have been remarkable even in civilised places, but that a thousand miles from them, in the heart of the wild bush, was simply wonderful.

Under the rude table in the dining-shed was 'planted' our most unexpected find, some thirty pounds' weight of nearly pure gold. I had sent up the first greenhide bucket full the preceding morning from a depth of fifty feet, seeing nothing out of the way in the usual mass of clay and water-worn gravel through which I had worked in one corner of the shaft until I struck bed-rock of granite from which the pick-point bounded with the solid-sounding, unmistakable jar that echoes 'true bottom' to the miner's ear. But, as I was saying, I had shovelled the dirt into the bucket and sung out to 'Heave up!' possessing not the slightest suspicion that the stuff was thick with gold. So little had we seen of the noble metal for many a day that I simply worked away mechanically and without interest; having resolved, too, that, now my 'suspension' was expired, I would at once be off to sea again. Digging, I presumed, was all very well where one was getting something, if only tucker. But for weeks we had not made an ounce, and into the bargain worked like niggers and lived like Chinamen—principally on tough kangaroo meat, birds, and rice. My clothes were patched with gunny-bags, my boots all uppers, and, taking it full and by, I was about satisfied that I was not meant for a bush life.

Therefore, you can imagine my surprise when, as my shift finished and Ormon hove me up, the first thing to catch my eye was a big panning-off dish half-full of dull yellow lumps and specks in all imaginable shapes and sizes.

Characteristically enough, my mate had said not a word to me, toiling below, of the riches he was washing out of each bucket I sent up; and even now, as I stared in wonder at the pretty show, there was no answering gleam in his cold eye, no smile under the white thatch of his lips.

'Lower away,' was all he curtly said, after we had poured the gold into a stout sugar-bag and covered it with mullock. 'I expect it's only a patch. Don't try to wash anything till my shift's over. If anybody passes, tell 'em we're scarce makin' tucker.'

The foot or so of wash-dirt on the bottom was soon cleaned up. Then we put in a drive, but there was nothing but heavy clay and rock. On every side it was the same; and by sundown my mate had quite satisfied himself that our find was but one of those rare pockets dropped upon now and then, but for the presence of which there seems nothing to account, and that led no farther.

'What's about the value of the gold we've got?' I asked presently.

'Nearly £1400,' he replied, 'taking it at £3, 17s. 6d. per ounce. Your share'll be, at that rate, close on £700. Not bad for a new chum like you, is it?'

'Capital!' I exclaimed buoyantly. 'I was thinking of making off to sea again; but if we can keep going in such fashion I'll stick to you a bit longer. Shall we try another shaft to-morrow?'

'Clean up the one we're at first,' said he; 'we might ha' missed a little on the bottom. And as for sticking to me, why, as regards that,

you can clear out as soon as you like. I don't want you, I 'm sure.'

'Nor,' I replied hotly, 'do I want to force my company upon any man. We 'll settle matters in the morning, then, and I 'll get my horses, and leave.'

He was silent at this, apparently rather surprised to be taken so shortly at his word. Perhaps, now, it was the sense of having money in view that prompted me to so sharp an answer after often in times past letting similar remarks go unnoticed; but, in any case, I was very tired of the self-absorbed, taciturn, unsociable fellow, and, gold or no gold, had made up my mind to stand no more of his company and the hard, squalid life I had led of late.

'Well,' said he at last, turning towards me with a sullen note in his voice, 'I expect we 'd better clean up first. There may be more there 'n we think for. Then we can divide the lot. I 'm goin' to stay on a bit longer yet; but I can work single-handed as well 's with a mate.'

'All right,' I replied lightly. 'For my part, I 'm off somewhere to get a square feed and some decent togs to wear—Brisbane, most likely. And now, as there 's about as much flour left as 'll make a small damper, I 'll mix one up and put it in the ashes.'

'Right,' said he, but still in surly accents; 'and I 'll take a rifle and see if I can't pot a kangaroo along the creek.'

I baked my damper, and setting it on its edge to cool, presently turned in. But Ormon had not come back when the Cross told me, through the open door of my tent, that it was midnight. Towards morning, however, waking, I could hear the incessant grinding of teeth that always marked his sleep—a horrid noise resembling nothing so much as the sharpening of a cross-cut saw.

I didn't turn in any more, but lit a pipe and strolled away over the ridges, thinking what I should do with all that money—pleasurable thoughts, accentuated mightily by the feel of my rags and nearly naked feet, not to mention a stomach that looked forward doubtingly to its breakfast.

CHAPTER II.

IN A TIGHT PLACE.



ORMON had shot nothing, and our breakfast of damper, rice, and sinewy kangaroo meat, some days old, made me in no way regret the resolution I had come to.

My companion was morose and preoccupied as ever. But so pleased was I at the notion of being able to get away, with a pocketful of money into the bargain, that I took little notice of him, and felt intent only on finishing work and making a start for fresh and livelier scenes.

I descended first, and sent up some score of buckets full of dirt that had been left from the last drive we had put in. Then, carefully cleaning the bottom, even to picking out the wash from crevices with my fingers, until the rock was bare as a new-swept oven, I sang out to heave up the bucket, which was only about three-parts full.

'Better put the tools in,' said Amos, his head hanging over the shaft; 'they won't be wanted there any more.' So, hitching shovel and driving-pick to the rope, I watched the lot go swinging aloft, feeling glad and pleased that our partnership was ended, nor experiencing the slightest inclination to stay and search for more gold.

Presently, to my utter bewilderment, I became aware that Amos was taking the rope off the windlass.

'Hello!' I shouted. 'Have you forgotten that I 'm here yet?'

Without making any reply, he kept on at his work, whilst strange suspicions and surmises flashed through my mind. In a minute or two more I saw him come to the edge of the logging and look down. Somehow, I felt I was putting a most useless question even as the words left my mouth and I asked, 'Why don't you lower the bucket?'

'Because I 'm not going to pull you up,' he replied calmly. 'Did you think I was such a fool as to go halves with a new chum like you? All I took you as mate for was to get your luck. No men is luckier than new-chum sailors on a diggin's. Well, the luck 's come, and I 'm goin' somewhere' (mimicking my words) 'to find a square meal and decent togs. You 'll stop there till somebody comes along or the shaft caves in. The chances are that you 'll stop there altogether. You 've always been growlin'—growlin' about your belly—since I knowed you. Well, you 'll have somethin' to growl about now in real earnest.'

'Well, but, Amos,' I cried, now thoroughly scared, 'it 's murder. A man might as well be in his grave as here. Better take your rifle and shoot me at once as leave me to linger miserably. Hang it, man! lower the rope, and quit fooling in such a fashion.' These last words I spoke with a degree of assurance I was very far from feeling.

'I ain't foolin',' he replied promptly. 'I wasn't built that way. But I should be a fool to pull you up and make you a present of £700.'

'I 'll take five,' I cried desperately, feeling that the brute was in deadly earnest.

'Four—three!' I shouted after a pause, as I saw the black dot of his head shaking in dissent. 'There,' I continued, 'for God's sake pull me up, and you can take the lot!'

But still his head wagged to and fro decidedly. 'No,' he said, rising and looking down at me over the empty windlass barrel; 'it ain't good enough. Once begin a contrack, and you 've got to go through with it. But,' he continued, speaking slowly and deliberately as ever, 'there 's one thing I 'll do for you if you really wants it.'

'Well,' I asked hurriedly and a little hopefully.

'Well,' he continued, 'you asked me to shoot you just now. If you asks me again, and you 'll stick the candle on the wall, back o' your head, I 'll put a bullet through you clean as a whistle.'

For a minute I was too astounded at the cold-bloodedness of such a proposition to utter a word. All I could do was to stare up at him stupidly as he stood there, his features clearly outlined now against the patch of blue sunlit sky, with his heavy moustache looking like a curved chalk-line drawn across his face under the thick-spreading nose.

'Very well,' I shouted all at once in a sudden access of fury; 'shoot and be d—d to you, you murderer!' Almost as I spoke he disappeared, and I guessed he had gone to fetch his rifle from the camp. All the same, I had not the remotest intention of being made a target of, hopeless as my case seemed. And I was perfectly convinced that shoot he would, and with as little compunction as at a kangaroo. I was but five-and-twenty, and at that age life still feels sweet, even when things look most gloomy. So, without more ado, I crawled backwards into one of the drives, and lay there with my head just inside of it, and screwed up towards the top of the shaft. Presently I saw a shadow cross the light, and heard the rattle of a rifle-butt.

'Hello!' he hailed. 'Where 's that candle? I can't see. Changed your mind, eh?' he continued, as his sight, becoming accustomed to the darkness, made out that the bottom was empty. 'Well, so long; I can't wait here all day. I 'll put the money to good use—better 'n you 'd ha' done. Sailors never have much sense, anyway. You 've got your chance, and we may meet again bimebye.'

'I 'll live to see you hanged yet!' I shouted.

'I can't spare the time just now, as I 've got to pack up,' he replied; 'but if you say another word I 'll fill you in.' And, as if to emphasise the threat, some great lumps of mullock came tumbling down the shaft. I burst into a cold sweat at the notion; for there was plenty of loose earth above that a strong man like Ormon could perhaps have buried me under in an hour or two. And, anyhow, if I came out of my tunnel, he might shoot me easily. Therefore I held my peace, and heard him walk away without taking other risk than cursing him most heartily under my breath. After a while I heard the sound of horse-bells, and knew that he was catching the animals—two of mine, two of his own—preparatory to packing up and making a start.

He came near me no more; but for some time I stayed under cover, thinking perhaps he might change his mind and empty a rifle down the shaft before leaving. Presently, however, I smelt smoke, and, looking up, could see a cloud of it blowing across overhead. Evidently he had fired the camp, together with such articles as he found he could not conveniently carry. Coming out of my burrow, I stood in the middle of the hole and stared about me in a dazed sort of way, as if I had never seen the place. Indeed, I was utterly taken aback and dumfounded at the extraordinary turn things had taken with me during the last hour. Even now I was almost incredulous, and would not have been surprised to see Ormon appear with the saturnine grin his face sometimes wore, and busy himself fixing the rope again.

But as the day wore on any such vague hopes left me, and I felt there was nothing for it but to meet my doom with what courage I might. No more hopeless case could well be conceived. The hole, nearly fifty feet in depth, was untimbered (being fair standing-ground in dry weather) and composed of stiff red clay and small gravel. It was, for a prospecting shaft, rather large—some five feet by four—oval in shape, and with sides almost perfectly plumb. Any attempt at climbing them was quite out of the question. Even with tools to make foot-holes it would have been a risky, if not impossible, business. Also, if it came on to rain—a heavy thunderstorm would suffice—most probably the whole shaft would cave in and bury me alive. I had never been in a really tight place before. But still, I could not for a time think of anything but the amazing treachery of my mate, nor quite recover from the stunning sensation that overpowered me when certain that I was deserted and left to perish miserably in that dark hole; and as I squatted on the rock floor I swore that if ever a day of reckoning came between us two, it should be a hard one for Amos Ormon. Human help, I knew too well, was almost out of the question in that secluded corner. Even if travellers came up Wild Horse Creek, only a quarter of a mile away, I should be none the wiser. I might yell myself hoarse without being heard, or at most be put down for a howling dingo. Besides, the main track to Birdsville—a slight and unfrequented one—ran along between the Creek and the Georgina, miles off. All these facts had been coursing athwart my mind mechanically as I sat and stared at the patch of sky that capped my prison, barred black against the blue by the barrel of the windlass. I had a pipe, some tobacco, a small knife, and a box of wax-vestas in my pocket. On a ledge over one of the drives was

a piece of candle about eight inches long. Terribly hungry, I bit a small junk off. It tasted more of resin than anything else, and I put it aside for future use, just then preferring a pipe. As I carefully shredded tobacco, four crows came and perched on the windlass barrel, and, peering down with ghastly white eyes—one variety of the Australian crow has white eyes—and heads cocked to one side, quark-quarked interrogatively, and then muttered to each other quite plainly, 'Wonder how long he'll last.' 'Not very long.' 'We'll pick his eyes and tongue out by-and-by, when he gets weak enough.' At least that's the sense I made of their low mumblings and mutterings as they stared ghoulishly into the shaft. High aloft an eagle-hawk poised on stirless pinions, as if he knew that he too had an approaching feast in view. But the crows worried me with their continuous low rumbling palaver, broken occasionally by an impatient croak, and I shouted at them till they flew away. They soon, however, returned; and, as I sat quite still, one of them dropped a stick straight upon me to see if I was yet a fair subject to operate on. As I gave no sign he fluttered down a few feet, but flew back with a harsh croak of disappointment when I raised my head. More than once or twice as the afternoon slowly passed, during long spells of quietness, did the cunning black watchers let fall their test-sticks in similar fashion.

The tobacco soothed and calmed me, besides easing the gnawing pangs of hunger. As to thirst, I was secure from that. In one corner of the shaft, at minute intervals, a solitary drop of water fell and soaked away through a crevice in the rocky bottom. By kneading some of the tough clay into the shape of a basin, I had already caught enough for a drink. But I was not thirsty. It was damp and cool enough down there. I was desperately hungry, though, and would have tackled even a crow could I have laid hands upon him. Instead, I chewed another inch of my candle-end. It tasted more palatable at this second essay, and I wished there had been a larger supply.

Do my best, I could not make up my mind to die. The thing seemed quite unreasonable whilst my body felt so active with life and freedom smiled so near. In vain did I try and compose myself to meet the inevitable becomingly, renounce all worldly thoughts, and turn my mind to preparation and prayer. Instead, wild schemes of vengeance upon Amos Ormon flashed across my brain, mingled with acute agonies of regret for pleasant possibilities lost in the treasure he had robbed me of.

And so the daylight passed; the gloom grew thicker; the black watchers, with a parting growl and a muttered promise to return early, flew off to their roosts; tock-tock-tock-tock, measuring the minutes, fell the drop of water; the moaning howl of a dingo came from the deserted camp, followed presently by an outburst of yells and cries betokening a full pack. And I sat there in the darkness and sucked gingerly at my remnant of candle, and watched the stars come out, and tried hard, but as yet in vain, to realise that my doom was indeed upon me, racking my brain instead to find some means of escape. But I could think of nothing that would enable me to scale those smooth prison walls my own hands had helped to fashion; and presently, aided by hunger, solitude, and darkness, cold Despair laid her chill fingers upon my heart as the long-kept-at-bay conviction that I must surely die tore its way into my soul. A most shockingly incredible and awful thing seemed my fate to me, and one that all the strong life and nature within me rose in wild protest against. And I raved and shrieked until the howling wild dogs ceased their concert in a fright; beat head and hands upon the rough, pick-grooved walls; kicked at them in insensate fury; and for a time became to all intents a raving, foaming maniac, maddened not so much by the fear of death as by the dreadful impotence to gain the life that lay visible within the few feet a child might almost hurl a stone to the summit of.

CHAPTER III.

SHAHBAZ KHAN.

I SUPPOSE that at last I must have fallen faint and insensible from exhaustion, and remained so for hours, as when I came to myself again the moon was shining almost directly down the shaft. Lying on my back, feeling stiff and sore, I was staring hopelessly up at the great white orb, when all of a sudden she was blotted out by something that nearly filled the mouth of the shaft, whilst upon me fell showers of clay and gravel. Jumping to my feet in alarm, I snugged into a corner and stared wonderingly aloft to where, as well as I could make out, the hind-legs of some large and powerful animal were playing a tattoo on the sides of the shaft as they hung down it, accompanied by the most hideous bellowings and screamings. That a horse or a bullock had slipped into the hole was my first notion. But neither of those animals could by any possibility, I fancied, make such extraordinary and barbarous noises as the brute above me was doing.

As, scared and wondering, I was about to retreat into a drive, thinking that presently the thing would come down by the run, there fell on my ears a chatter of human voices sounding sharp and shrill above the din of roarings and gurglings. Then, all at once, came a great noise of pulling and shouting, and little

by little I saw the animal, still complaining bitterly, pulled to the surface amidst much vociferous talk and laughter.

Now, thinking it my turn, I yelled at the top of a voice made strong by hope of succour. For a minute there was dead silence; then I saw several black and turbaned faces poked cautiously over the edge of the shaft where the moon made things light as day to my eyes.

'Hi, yah?' asked a voice. 'Who dar?'

'Me! me!' I replied hysterically. 'For God's sake send a rope down and pull me up!'

At this there was another outbreak of clamorous strange language, not a word of which could I understand as I listened with my heart beating my ribs black and blue, and the sweat rolling off me in fear of being left to perish. And never voice of mistress to lover sounded sweeter than when, after a minute, some one shouted:

'Ar rī! you wait—mendee windeelas.' And I heard a knocking and hammering, and saw men raising the windlass standards and replacing the barrel that the beast had knocked over in his struggles.

And presently down came a line of different-sized ropes knotted together, into which hastily putting a bowline and seating myself therein, I was, with much grunting and heaving, at last safely landed. As I stood up, weak and trembling, the dark-faced men who surrounded me fell back to right and left in something like dismay. And, as I afterwards discovered, not altogether without cause, for—hatless, shoeless, my clothes in ribbons, head and hands and feet bleeding from many self-inflicted cuts and bruises—I must have made a wild and forbidding spectacle. But food and a nip of good whisky that some kind soul produced, together with a wash in the creek, soon revived me sufficiently to tell my story to Shahbaz Khan, a great, handsome Afghan, owner of the camel-train, to whom I owed my rescue, who listened, stroking a long black beard with many expressions of sympathy and disgust.

By the merest chance, it appeared, they had that night camped on Wild Horse, intending to proceed after an hour or two's spell. Then one of the camels, straying, had slipped into the shaft, and so saved me from a most miserable fate. The train consisted of forty animals not long landed from a British India steamer at Cooktown, and was bound to Eucla, in South Australia, thence to the new goldfields in the West. The men who had arrived with the camels from Aden were a wild enough looking lot; but the rest were old hands in the country; some of them even had been digging on the Palmer, and were well able to appreciate the treachery to which I had so nearly fallen a victim. Nor ever could I have conceived such friendly goodwill, help, and sympathy as I met with among these kindly people, upon whom Australians generally look with aversion and dislike. Before I had finished my meal new clothes were being got ready for me out of Shahbaz Khan's stores, so that I was speedily rigged anew from head to foot; and not that alone, but rugs and blankets and provisions were brought and packed; each of these dark Samaritans vying with each other in being of service. And as at dawn the long train moved off, headed by the big bull whose curiosity had been the cause of my rescue—angry still, with much throaty gurgling and grinding of teeth—the chief, before mounting his riding camel, shook me by the hand and put into it two one-pound notes, listening the while silently to my heartfelt thanks. Then said he, speaking very slowly, but in good English:

'Fare thee well, my brother! Evilly hast thou been entreated. Maybe in days to come thou shalt meet thine enemy and repay him with usury the ill he hath worked upon thee. Then—what saith thine own Scripture—eye for eye, tooth for tooth? And as for thanks, thou owest me none. "Succour the afflicted and distressed, whether by reason of hunger or by reason of thirst or of wounds; those that fall into the hands of robbers and are left empty by the wayside, the poor and the friendless. So shall it be with thee hereafter." Thus commandeth our Prophet. In his name—the name of Allah the All-Merciful—fare thee well!'

And so saying, that Christian and gentleman—as I understand the meaning of these words—swung on to his camel and made off after his people, leaving me full of gratitude and wonder for such charity as assuredly few, if any, of my own colour would have shown me.

Feeling still sore and weak, I walked up to the site of our old camp, where a big heap of stuff yet smouldered amongst the poles and boughs of the dining-place. In it I recognised portions of my tent and blankets; also the shaft-rope, burnt nearly to tinder. With gratuitous cruelty and meanness, Ormon had evidently thrown all my little possessions on the fire—the pocket-book containing the few treasured home-letters and photographs; the tin case with certificates and discharges; comb and brush, towels, &c. And I swore as I poked about the pile that, if ever I got the chance, I would not forget my friend Shahbaz Khan's injunction respecting repayment with usury.

On the spot where my tent had been pitched I found, however, a small folding looking-glass and a copy of *Monte Christo* that had been amongst my belongings. Opening the former, I started back in dismay at what I saw. The peaked beard I wore was flecked with white spots here and there, whilst one side of my moustache was altogether white, the other gray; and dabs of white showed on my thick black hair like patches of paint. It was long before

I mustered courage to look again; and I really believe that this wound to my vanity touched me more nearly than the murderous treachery of my mate and the loss of the gold. You see, I was young, and generally thought good-looking; and to suddenly know myself disfigured —spotted like a native cat—gave me a sore shock. Perhaps this matter accounted partly for the compassionate gaze I had noticed in the dark eyes of my friends, the camel-people yonder; for no man seeing me but might well guess that the bleaching had been sudden and recent, inasmuch as no person in his senses would grow hair in such piebald fashion on lip and chin. Without a doubt, now must I go clean shaven for the rest of my days—a prospect that was far from pleasing to me. But now to find the author of all this misfortune, or at least to raise the hue-and-cry after him over the whole of Northern Queensland! So, stiff and sore though I was, I set forth on my sixty-mile tramp to Jubilee, the nearest township. But, what with new boots, cut feet, and the heat and reaction consequent on my mad fit in the shaft, I made but a very poor stage that day; nor, unaccustomed to walking, did I do much better on the next one. And it was quite a week before I entered Jubilee. Here my first proceeding was to report in full to the police, of whom there were a sergeant, three troopers, and a black tracker. Then I bought a razor, and nearly cut my throat during my first essay at shaving.

The police were confident of soon laying their hands on Ormon; and they scoured the country far and wide, besides setting the wires to work wherever possible. But a fortnight passed and no news could be heard of him.

'He 's gone out back,' said the sergeant; 'right away across into the Territory. But I 've sent word to the S.A. police, and they 're all on the watch for the beggar. You 'll see him swing yet, my lad, if you 'll only have a little patience.'

All very fine; but my money was done, and I must get work or starve—there being no Shahbaz Khans amongst the Jubilees that I could see. So I started off for the coast, stone-broke, but hopeful of finding a job somewhere on the road. But it seemed that Amos Ormon had taken all my luck as well as my gold with him. Always I was just too late or a considerable time too soon. And everywhere, as I passed, I made vain inquiries respecting a stout, red-headed, fair-moustached man, with three or four horses. Nobody had heard of or seen him; and it was almost as if the earth had swallowed him the day he rode away from the burning camp on Wild Horse Creek. Everywhere, to those of the police who had not already received particulars—and they were few and far between, at isolated outposts—I told my story. Thus, swagging along from station to station, township to township, I had at least the poor satisfaction of knowing, when I finally reached the sea at Cardwell, that I had made Queensland too hot to hold any ordinary man answering to the description of my late mate. In my own mind, however, I was pretty well convinced that, long ere this, he was in one of the southern colonies, if not out of the country altogether. A most excellent bushman, with four horses, all good of their kind, arms, ammunition, and money, he could, in that lost week, have crossed by back tracks and unobserved to any point of the compass he wished. He neither drank nor gambled; also I knew, from stray words let fall in his less dour moments, that he was a man who, like many professional miners, had travelled far and wide in the practice of his calling, deeming no spot too distant, no hardship too great, when once the magic voice of gold reached him across seas and deserts, fever-stricken lands, and hostile tribes. And still, in spite of all, I thought we might yet meet again. Meanwhile the first fierce desire of vengeance had calmed down to a steady glow, burning always brightly and enduringly, but yet not absorbing my mind to the exclusion of aught else.

And ever as the years went by in varying fortune, mostly poor, some sudden turn or look about a man passed in a crowd, the sight of a red shock of hair, the sound of a deep, slow-speaking voice, now and again enabled me to feel in quickening pulse and thickened breath that if ever the moment of reckoning arrived the payment would be heavy, the creditor pitiless.

CHAPTER IV.

MR SINCLAIR AND HIS SERVANT.

AS I said before, since the day, now seven years ago, that my mate had left me to die at the bottom of the shaft on Wild Horse Creek, Fortune had been far from kind to me. For a time I had followed the sea; then, leaving it, I went on to the diggings again—west to Coolgardie, outside to New Guinea and Sud Est; but never more than making a living, and not too good a one at that.

And at last, stranded in Brisbane, I had shipped as quartermaster on a small London barque called the *Ulundi* that had put in for some repairs on a passage from Foo-Chow to Melbourne, with tea. From the latter we went to Colombo, thence to Port Elizabeth in South Africa, taking a cargo of coffee; loaded wool at the port; and had now come round to Capetown to fill up for home. As we lay in the bay, under the shadow of the mighty rock, our topsails loose, and cable up-and down, the captain was growling to the mate about the non-appearance of a passenger.

'Why the deuce,' the old man was saying, 'can't he go home, like any other decent body, in one of the mail-boats! I hate passengers—'specially in a ship that ain't meant for 'em. He 's bringin' his servant, too, the agents tell me—as big a swell as his master, I suppose.'

'Ay,' replied the mate, taking his cue; 'and the saloon 's chock-a-block with luggage, and the lazarette with private stores—cases o' wine and provisions till further orders. Must be well in, whoever he is. Do you know anything about him, sir?'

'Party the name o' Sinclair,' replied the captain testily. 'One o' those gold and diamond fellows, like Brown and Healy and that lot. Gammons he wants a long sea-trip for his health. One comfort—the agents made him pay through the nose. I 'd take his passage-money cheerfully for two years' wages.'

As he finished speaking a small steam-launch left the shore and was soon alongside. There were only two men in her, and as they came up the gangway I had a good view of them. The first was a stout, portly, clean-shaven, dark-haired customer, dressed all in white, wearing a diamond ring on his finger and diamond studs in the stiff shirt that ran into the blue silk cummerbund around his waist; tanned shoes, cut low, showing red silk socks, Panama hat, and a big cigar completed the outfit. The other carried a portmanteau, and was a youngish-looking Malay—evidently the servant.

'Stinkin' nigger!' muttered the skipper, sighting the latter, as he walked to the break of the poop and bawled, 'Heave away there, for'ard! Sheet home as soon 's the anchor 's off the bottom. Steward, show Mr Sinclair to his berth.'

Meanwhile the latter leaned against the quarter-deck capstan, puffing at his cigar, and shaking his hands—which had become soiled by the man-ropes—as a cat does wet paws. But now the steward advanced, all deferential smiles and inquiries, as befitted one with handsome tips in view, and the three left the deck as I went to the wheel; whilst under jib and staysail the ship's head fell off, topsails were sheeted home, fore and main tacks boarded, and sheets brought aft, and the *Ulundi*, with the wind no more than free, stood out of Table Bay into the great Atlantic.

Very few vessels of the *Ulundi's* size can afford to carry quartermasters. But then, very few vessels steered as atrociously as she did. Time after time her owners had attempted to remedy the defect, but to no purpose. Whether, amongst a dozen other assigned causes, there was something wrong with her lines; whether the foremast was too far for'ard, or the mizzen too far aft, mattered little; the fact remained that she steered like a driven turkey after sundown. In heavy wintry weather off the Horn it took two men sweating in their shirt-sleeves to keep her within a handful of points each way. In light and moderate winds she was all her time trying to slip off or up in the most aggravating fashion. No matter how closely you watched her, she 'd best you sooner or later. Going along quiet and steady at half-a-spoke or so each way, you 'd think that at last you 'd found out her soft side and could afford to let your eye leave the card for a moment. Then all at once you 'd feel her swing away from under you as her head fell off three or four points or came rushing up into the wind; and then the fun was only beginning. Gentle helm she took no more notice of than a bolting horse with the bit broken. Hard up, hard down, and her head spinning as if on a swivel in wild dartings to one side and the other for five and ten minutes, was the rule before she could be induced to come to her course again. The officers swore, and so did the helmsman; but, unless new to the vessel, the former never volunteered an exhibition of their steering. There are few things at sea more perilous or heart-breaking than a thoroughly bad-steering ship. Thus the *Ulundi* seldom kept her company, fore or aft, two successive voyages.

Naturally, being at the wheel so much, I saw a good deal of Mr Sinclair. For hours he would lie in his deck-chair alongside the binnacle, sometimes reading a trashy 'yellow-back,' but oftener pondering, with brooding, light-blue eyes fixed on vacancy, and a long, thin-lipped line of mouth tight shut. Early in the passage he and the captain had concluded not to suit each other, and now seldom spoke. To the officers a curt nod was his only greeting. He smoked incessantly the most expensive cigars, but I never saw him offer anybody one. Waited upon hand and foot by his Malay, Ali, his slightest wish seemed to be forestalled, his least want understood.

Of course, the *Ulundi* being the daisy she was to steer, I had little time to study faces, or anything else besides my helm. Still, as day after day that wrinkled, naked, impassive countenance met my eye, there seemed a curious, uncomfortable familiarity in it that grew upon and puzzled me mightily, in addition to spoiling my steering as much as was possible. Thus, being preoccupied, and letting the barque go off on her capers much more than usual, I one day, for almost the only time, lost all control over her. Mr Sinclair, as he watched the wheel and the ship's head alternately, seemed interested in the play, and stared hard at me as I swore under my breath, whilst the skipper stood grimly and silently by, until, after an exciting ten minutes, I brought the beast to her course again. Then, turning to me, the old man remarked sorrowfully, 'Well, Davies, it 's the first time I ever knew her to get away so badly with you.'

At the mention of my name I saw our passenger start slightly and give me a steady, searching glance from his cold blue eyes as he half-rose from the chair that, taken up with the struggle between ship and helm, he had turned round

facing the wheel. As I met his gaze a strange notion took hold on me; and over those thin, cruel lips I drew, in my mind's eye, a heavy curve of flaxen moustache; in lieu of the black hair I placed a coarse, red shock; took furrows out of the forehead, seams out of the full cheeks, crow's-feet away from the temples, and Ormon the Gulfer stood before me. The next moment I laughed the idea to scorn as I watched him lie back in his chair and motion to Ali to come with cigars and soda and whisky. To my astonishment, as the Malay mixed the drink, his master pointed to me, saying in his deep voice, 'Take it, quartermaster. It 'll do you good after that tussle. She 's as bad to hold as a buckin' brumby.'

As he spoke an undefinable something in the manner and tone of him, no less than the bush allusion, thrilled me through and through, making suspicion leap hot to my heart again as I waved the proffered glass aside and bent eyes I felt growing fierce and eager upon the compass.

'Against the rules, eh?' said Mr Sinclair indifferently, as the mate explained. 'Oh, all right. Only it 's such a picnic steerin' this bitch of a ship that I thought you might make an allowance.'

The mate—a quiet, elderly man—frowned and moved away without reply; whilst, my relief appearing, I gave up the wheel and went for'ard for a think and a smoke.

But I could come to no solid conclusion except that a fancied resemblance might, if I was not careful, get me into trouble. Still, with it all, there was a persistent, haunting feeling at my heart that my quest was ended, my quarry marked down; and, to strengthen this almost certainty, I noticed, to my secret joy, that, when my wheel came round again, Sinclair, whilst pretending to be absorbed in a book, was furtively studying me, feature by feature. I managed, however, to look as stolidly unconcerned as any other man might have done; nor did the doubting frown escape me with which he at last finished his scrutiny and turned to his reading in earnest. Something, I supposed, in voice or feature—called up by the name, perhaps—must have struck him for a moment as familiar. His doubts, however, were, I fancied, only partially set at rest. Still, it would have been strange if in the gaunt, brown-faced, middle-aged man, with hair almost white, he should have recognised anything of the bearded, fresh-coloured, new-chum sailor he had robbed and left to die so miserably in the Australian bush. Nor could he have been expecting any resurrection of the kind; and here I, of course, held the advantage over him, being ever on the watch. Nor did I trouble my mind as to his motives in disguising himself—if such had really been his idea. Men, especially as they grow older, often shave clean; and as for the hair, when I remembered how Ormon the Gulfer used to dress it, and soap it, and endeavour vainly to darken and force it into some kind of shape, I was not surprised that when able to afford a wig he should have done so. And, indeed, as a matter of fact, he was now a far better-looking man than he had been seven years ago, to say nothing of the added consequence given to his bearing by the wealth that he evidently possessed. Still, could that glossy, black headpiece, consorting none too well with the light brows and pale-blue eyes, be a wig? By no stretch of imagination, however, could I conceive of that flaming, turbulent, crimson shock submitting to any dye, no matter how powerful. However, I thought I should soon be able finally to solve that puzzle. Meanwhile a fact accidentally came to my knowledge that helped not a little towards converting belief into stubborn certainty.

Being at the wheel one night when the second mate was relieving the chief, and the former appearing almost before the bell had ceased striking, the mate remarked jokingly, 'Now, that 's the smartest relief I believe I ever had! What 's the matter? Killed anybody in your time, and can't sleep for thinking about it, eh?'

'No; but I believe that infernal passenger's conscience is troubling him. The beggar 's grinding his teeth all night long,' replied the second mate wrathfully. 'I never heard such a row in my life. I 'm going to ask the old man to let me change into another berth. Ugh! You listen to him as you go by. It 's just like a fellow chewing gravel.'

And as he spoke I seemed myself to hear the horrible grating noise again, as many a night I had heard it proceeding from the tent on the banks of Wild Horse Creek. The very next day I was present at an altercation between the steward and Ali.

'Allus water, water, water he 's a-wantin', quartermaster,' said the former, appealing to me. 'Sez his boss can't do without lots o' water. Well, all I knows is, I 've been wi' passengers afore this—swells an' toffs among 'em, too; but I 've never seed 'em forced to wash their 'ead an' 'ands an' face a dozen times a day, to say nothin' o' baths without number. Why, the condenser 's kep' agoin' for nothin' else.'

Here was another trait retained by the Amos Ormon I remembered. Still, there were probably more people than one in the world who ground their teeth in sleep and cultivated an inordinate fancy for washing themselves.

Ali was Capetown bred and born, and had, I found, been not long in his present employ. He was a smart young fellow of about twenty, and particularly expert at grooming his master, an operation that took up a good deal of his time through the day. For me, as it happened, he had a particular regard, because more than once at the beginning of the passage I had

interfered—remembering my obligations to men of colour—between him and certain of the crew who, after the manner of their kind, thought that anything black was made to be knocked about. Thus Ali was grateful, and would, I thought, answer a simple question I meant presently to put to him.

During the day all hands had been busy scraping paint off the front of the poop, and giving it a priming coat of red, preliminary to a final dressing of white.

And when, as, in the first dog-watch, I sat smoking on the after-hatchway, and Ali came hurrying past bearing a great can of hot water, I stopped him and abruptly said, 'Ali, what's the colour of the boss's head when his wig's off?' he first gasped in surprise, then showed all his white teeth in an appreciative grin, and silently pointed to the paint glowing with a fine flare of red in the sun. I was thoroughly satisfied.

CHAPTER V.

THE WRECK OF THE 'ULUNDI.'



ALL this time the *Ulundi* had been making more or less erratic headway, mostly with light south-east winds, until she got well over towards the South American coast. Apart from the steering trouble, she was a good little ship enough to be in; officers and crew worked well together, and the provisions were above the average. Perhaps out of the whole ship's company I was the only really unhappy man, pondering as I did night and day on some means of paying Amos Ormon what I owed him, and seeing no chance.

I don't think I wanted to kill him; but I certainly did want to get a bit level—make him feel something of the pain and agony he had caused me, and—yes, decidedly—force him to disgorge my seven hundred pounds, with liberal interest added.

But for all the prospect I could see of doing anything of the kind, I might as well never have discovered him. All day long, with intervals for meals and groomings, he would lie in his chair thinking, reading, and speaking to no one but Ali. Such an unsocial customer had he proved himself, together with a tendency to insult coarsely both captain and officers, that they had practically sent him to Coventry—rather, it would seem, to his satisfaction. He smoked incessantly, drank a good deal of light wine, but never sufficient to be overcome by it; and at times, leaving his chair, he would pace the deck for an hour or two, pausing now and again to thoughtfully finger his upper lip, as I had on many an occasion seen him do in camp when a moustache grew there. And often, watching him, I noted several little familiar mannerisms that, had I needed additional proof, would have been of value. But I was long ago satisfied. Once or twice I fancied, when his eyes met mine, that I detected something like speculation in their cold, shallow depths, as of one struggling with some half-formed, elusive memory of feature that perhaps, as I had thought before, the similar name and avocation of his victim had called into existence. In vain I racked my brains for some feasible project that should bring us face to face and alone, with no one to interfere when the row began. I could think of nothing. And then Providence took a hand in the game.

In making this remark it must be understood that I mean nothing irreverent. I am getting an old man now, and doubtless some of the loose sailor speech of earlier days still hangs about me—at least, so the friends and relations who found me out when my luck turned are always telling me; but so far as His name is concerned I have in my wildest talk been more careful than most seamen.

In about twenty degrees south, then, one day it came on to blow heavily from the south-west, with a sea gradually getting up of a size one might expect perhaps off the Cape or across the Southern Ocean, but hardly in the Trades, or what ought to have been the Trades. Presently, with an ever-falling glass, the wind hauled astern, and, under a couple of lower topsails and a foresail, her captain ran the *Ulundi* before it when she ought to have been hove to. But he had left that too late, and was now frightened to attempt it. So, with two men at the wheel, bareheaded, the sweat raining off them, and every muscle strained to the thrusting spokes, the barque raged along, nosing wildly a couple and three points to each side of her course, and kept at that only by dint of downright hard bullocking.

Early in the afternoon the gale increased almost to a hurricane, and it became evident that the foresail would have to come off, keeping her bows down as it was, and doing far more harm than good. It was a big sail, and for a long time all hands fought at it without avail. Even the cook and the steward had volunteered and were on the yard. One minute, watching from the weather helm where I stood, it would appear to be conquered; then, all of a sudden, the great breadths of hard, wet canvas would thunder out from under the men's grasping fingers and shake the barque in every timber of her. Nor did we dare to luff and touch her up, and thus spill the sail, or keep away, as one might do in a decent-steering ship. Give the *Ulundi* a point, and one never knew when she'd stop; and with such a sea as rolled its mountainous crests astern of us, all our efforts went to keep her stern to it.

Close to the wheel, anxiously glancing now at the compass, now at the great spar dotted thick with clawing, straining bodies, stood the captain and the mate. The second mate was already aloft. Of Sinclair nothing was to be seen; but, poking above the half-closed hood of the companion, I caught a glimpse of Ali's face quite green with fear. And still the foresail flapped and thundered, whilst the *Ulundi* shot up one big comber and rushed down another all a-smother with foam and water up to the coamings of her hatches, and lying over so heavily at times as to dip her port foreyard-arm.

'They want more beef up there!' shouted the captain suddenly. 'Quartermaster, you and Hendricks had better run along and give 'em a hand, or that cursed sail 'll never come in;' and so saying, he stepped to the weather side of the wheel, whilst the mate gripped the lee spokes.

Hendricks—an ordinary seaman picked up at Capetown, and my lee helmsman—ran for'ard, very glad to get away, for the sight of those roaring walls of water towering over his head had been making him sick with fear, and during the last hour his eyes had been constantly turned over his shoulder.

If I could help doing so I never went aloft in oilskins; thus, as I clawed along the weather deck, I paused for a minute in front of the house that we quartermasters shared with the carpenter and the sailmaker, to take off coat and overalls and throw them inside. Hendricks was already in the fore-rigging. Suddenly I heard a terrible cry, and, looking up through the blinding spray and foam that arched over the ship from wind'ard, I saw a most shocking sight. Once more the foresail had escaped and was thundering and bellying with cannon-like explosions from a yard that tossed crazily to and fro, held only by the lifts and braces. The great iron truss or crane securing it to the mast had carried away; and even as I stared the big sail and its yard swung round to the wind, lifts and braces snapped like threads under the tremendous pressure, and the next moment the spar and its human freight were blown away like an insect-covered twig into the seething cauldron to leeward.

Probably the yard snapped the forestay; for, whilst I gazed, there was a dreadful crashing of timber, as the foremast with all its spars and yards fell fair over the forecastle-head in one great heap of ruin. Instinctively turning aft, as I felt the ship stop almost dead, I saw a huge black-green water-mountain hanging over the stern, and under its shadow the captain and the mate, still at the wheel, with their faces turned back and upwards as if fascinated. Then, just as the avalanche descended, I bolted into the little house, closed the door, and throwing myself into a lower bunk, clung to the stanchions with might and main. Another second, and I heard the thunder of the great comber aft, mingled with the crashing of more spars; then, with a burst, the water was upon me, and I was choking and stifling under, it seemed, tons of it. Thinking I must be overboard, I let go my grip, rose, and grabbing something else, presently found my head clear, and that I was hanging on to one of the iron girders forming the framework of the house roof. The water had made a clean sweep right through it, in at one end, out at the other; and as I drew myself up, panting and exhausted, I saw that the *Ulundi* was a hulk. Main and mizzen masts had snapped off just below top and topmast cross-trees respectively, and gone clear of the hull. Big seas broke inboard amidships and for'ard, for she had slewed round to the wind, and her after-part was comparatively clear of water. Clinging as I was to the iron frame of the roof, my situation was precarious, and, watching my chance, I dropped down and crawled aft amongst an indescribable mess of gear and ship's furniture, which, washing about fiercely, gave me no end of trouble to get through. The poop ladders were gone, of course, but I managed to clamber up there without them. To my surprise, I found the skylight and companion intact; but wheel, binnacle, boats, and all else were swept away, the davits of the latter being twisted like corkscrews. The port mizzen rigging lay across the deck; but the shrouds had gone in the eyes on each side of the mast-head and let all the spars float clear off. The same thing, apparently, had happened at the main, for the big barrel of it stood up naked to the splintered summit, whilst its rigging swam in long black trails empty to leeward. To my delight, I saw that the gale had blown itself out, for the lowering sun was trying to peer through ragged drifts of wrack, and eyes of blue dotted the sky here and there. The wreck, too, rode high; and, though a big sea still ran, I fancied she was tight. For'ard there was a tremendous raffle of spars and gear now washing along on each bow, but I could hear no bumping.

So occupied had my mind been with the dreadful catastrophe and the suddenness of it that I had completely forgotten all about Sinclair and Ali. Indeed, I had taken it for granted that I was the sole survivor on the *Ulundi*. But now I recollected that the others were probably below, and that if they had stayed there they might still be alive. Finding the hood of the companion jammed, I was forced to get on to the quarterdeck before I could enter the saloon.

The ship had a heavy list, making me think some of her dead-weight below had shifted. The light was dim as I stepped over the washboards, up to my knees in water, and groped my way carefully along, holding on to the table, and with all sorts of stuff washing against my

legs in response to the sharp, jerky motion of the hull.

Seeing that the decanters were still in the swinging tray, I took a long drink out of the first one to hand. It proved to be brandy, and did me good. Then I shouted aloud; but, save the creaking and complaining of the barque's timbers that filled the whole place, I could hear nothing. Suddenly, as she gave a heavy lurch, some soft object washed up from leeward and was blocked against me by the backward roll. Stooping, I caught hold of it, and up popped poor Ali's black face—a nasty sight. But the spirit had put heart into me, and I made shift to drag the body on to the table, the head, meanwhile, lolling unnaturally, as if hung on hinges—a thing that made me sure the neck was broken. Had his master met a similar fate? I wondered, as I looked anxiously about me. But the dusk had come; and, for all I could see, there might be another body washing about to leeward or stuck amongst the furniture. So, making back to the pantry, I got a box of matches, and after a lot of trouble lit the big lamp that hung from the deck over the saloon table. Then, seeing nothing, I tried the door of the berth I knew to be Sinclair's. But it would not open, feeling not as if locked, but rather as if some heavy mass were against it. In the pantry I had noticed a nearly new tomahawk used by the steward for opening cases. Getting this, I attacked the upper panels of the door, and soon had a hole big enough to put my head in. It was too dark, however, to make out anything. But imagining I heard a groan, I went to work again, and after a while had a space chopped down right to the obstruction, that I now felt to be a great, heavy chest, which, fetching 'way, had effectually blocked the door from the inside. By the light of the saloon lamp I could see, as I stepped through the breach on to the box, a spacious, well-furnished cabin, with, right in front of me, an empty swinging-cot; a handsome wardrobe stood along one side, its doors wide open, displaying much clothing that shaped out fantastically to the list of the ship. As I stared around, a groan, apparently under my feet, made me jump. It was dark just there, and striking one of my long wax-vestas and looking down, I beheld a ghastly face glaring full at me out of senseless eyes whose whites, showing horribly, sent my memory flashing away to the fixed regard of the crows on the windlass barrel at Wild Horse Creek, what time they gloated over me in anticipation. The body lay on its back, with both legs jammed between the big chest and the door. The head, I saw, as I gazed till the match burned my fingers, was covered with a crop of vivid red hair cut close to the skull, whilst along the upper lip grew a curve of white bristles—testimony to the lack of Ali's razor. All the colour had gone from the face, leaving it pallid and shrunken, and for a minute I thought the man was dead. But as I struck another match and lit the cabin lamp he groaned and beat his one free hand on the floor; the other hand and arm seemed doubled up beneath him. There, then, at last, was my enemy, brought to book through no effort of mine, and apparently in a very sorry plight. And, strange to say, as I stood there and looked down at him, crippled, helpless, almost dead, all that desire of vengeance nursed so carefully through the years vanished, leaving in its stead merely a weak sensation of pity. This struck me as curious and disappointing. But without pausing to analyse my emotions, I threw all my strength into the endeavour to pull the chest away from the sufferer's legs. I might as well have tried to move the ship. In vain I tugged and pulled; the thing never budged an inch. Resting after one of these attempts, I was startled by a voice saying, 'You 'll never do it, Frank, without a lever.'

Looking round, I saw that life had come into Ormon's eyes and a little colour into his face; saw also that he knew me for his old mate.

'Both my legs are broken, I think,' he went on presently. 'I was trying to get out when I heard the row on deck, and that cursed box broke its lashings and pinned me here. Where 's Ali? And what 's happened?'

As I lifted his head and gave him to drink of brandy and water, I answered him briefly, and then made my way on deck for something to help me to move the chest. Both wind and sea, I found, had gone down a lot. The night was clear, with stars; and as I threw a swift glance round the horizon, my eye caught the loom of a dark mass on the port quarter that looked uncommonly like land. But I was in a hurry; and luckily coming across one of the long handspikes that used to stand in a rack around the mizzenmast, I returned, and by aid of it and strenuous effort, at last prised the box away sufficiently to allow of my drawing Ormon from between it and the door, shocked to perceive as I did so that not only were splintered bones projecting through the skin just above one knee, but that the other leg also seemed terribly injured. He fainted as I pulled the mattress out of the cot and got him on it the best way I could. Some more brandy revived him; but he was evidently suffering intense agony. Still, he insisted on my telling him how I had escaped from the shaft. And then, in words broken by gasps of pain, he said:

'I 've had nothin' but good luck since. Don't think I 'm sorry, because I ain't. It was my chance, and I took it. I 'd do the same again to-morrow if it had to be done. Didn't I tell you I 'd make better use o' the money than you could? I 'm worth twenty thousand pounds to-day. Hard lines, though—ain't it?—gettin' jammed by that infernal chest. It 's only quartz specimens from different claims I 'm interested

in, and that I was taking home to float a few companies with. I told the fools to stow it in the hold, and they put it here instead. I knowed you some time ago; at least I had a good notion it was you, and of late was almost certain of it. Cursed if I don't think I'm goin' to croak this trip! I can feel cold creepin' up me inside. Put your hand under my shirt and take out what you find there.'

Obeying him, I drew forth a small bag of wash-leather fastened to a gold chain he wore around his neck. It seemed to the touch full of different-sized pebbles.

'There's between ten and twelve thousand pounds' worth o' diamonds there,' he said faintly. 'Take 'em; they're yours. And they're honestly come by. Now open that desk and you'll find pen and ink and paper. Write that I, William Sinclair, of Johannesburg and Kimberley, leave you, Frank Davies, all shares, stock, and mining scrip, &c., that I'm possessed of. You might as well have it as any one else. Now let me try and sign it.' And by a great effort he guided the pen along the letters of his name, and then fell back in another faint.

The motion of the vessel was now much easier, owing not only to the sea having gone down, but because most of the forward wreckage had cleared itself, and thus allowed the bows to rise and fall freely. But still she rolled heavily enough to send the water and *débris* splashing up from leeward almost into the berth; and from where I sat wiping the cold sweat off the dying man's forehead I could see through the hacked and battered door dead Ali moving restlessly on the table under the lamp-light.

Suddenly Ormon opened his eyes and ceased his stertorous breathing. Looking fixedly at me, he grinned and said slowly, 'Well, after all, I'm glad you got out o' that hole. Such a chump as you was, to be sure! And what wouldn't you do to me when you caught me, eh? And now you've got me proper—and I've *made* you! You'll be all right,' he continued faintly, as a tremor convulsed his limbs; 'I can hear 'em comin' now.' Raising his hand to his head, he felt the coarse bristly hair with a petulant frown on his face; and I turned to get the black wig I had noticed in an open case. But when I looked again the eyes were fixed and staring, the jaw fallen, the end arrived.

Even as I covered his face I heard the sound of voices hailing, and, going on deck, found that the dawn had broken, and that close alongside lay a small steamer; whilst not two miles away was a thickly-wooded island, with high up its sides a cluster of white houses.

This turned out to be Fernando Noronha, the penal settlement of Brazil; and the steamer was the one that brought the convicts and soldiers their monthly supplies from the mainland.

The *Santa Anna* towed the *Ulundi* into Pernambuco, whence, taking passage to London, I soon discovered that Ormon's estimate as to the value of the diamonds was, if anything, under the mark. Realising on them, I proceeded to the Cape, and there also found that Mr William Sinclair's name was well known as a lucky mining speculator on the Rand, where, although not a popular man, he was looked upon as a fair and capable one. And his investments were all genuine, solid, and realisable. Thus, after all, it will be seen that my mate atoned fully enough, after a fashion, for the theft of my luck and my gold, and without any necessity on my part for application of the *lex talionis*, as laid down by my good friend Shahbaz Khan—may his shadow never grow less!

THE SILVER JOSS.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

CHAPTER I.

UNTIL about five years ago the silver joss had occupied a conspicuous, if not exactly an honoured, position in the hall of Quarrendon Manor. It was, of course, an ugly thing, and therefore much esteemed as a curio. Besides, it had a history. It was distinctly an antique. A London merchant in antiquities, who had once seen it at Quarrendon, had tried hard to buy it. Old Jeth Anjou, the master of Quarrendon, would have sold it to him like a shot if it had been his to sell. But it belonged to Hilary, his nephew, after having belonged to Hilary's father, who had been a lieutenant on the *Ramrod* during the sack of the Summer Palace at Pekin in 1860; and Hilary had a profound regard for the mass of bullion. The young man was only waiting, he used to say, until he could afford to pay the cost of its transport to his chambers in the Middle Temple. He seemed likely to wait a long time, for now, at the end of five years, he had made not a single step of importance towards the Woolsack, or even, indeed, towards a valuable acquaintance with metropolitan solicitors.

Meanwhile 'the idol' (as the Quarrendon maids termed it) had been removed from the Manor hall to Mr Hilary's own room. This had been done partly as a precaution by Hilary himself, and partly because, really, Jeth Anjou's scowls at the precious antique, whenever he passed it, seemed calculated in time to develop into mania of a more aggressive kind.

The joss's modern history may be sketched in few words. The lieutenant had chanced to be confined to his ship on that memorable day when the available force on board the *Ramrod* was mustered to join in the burning and loot of the palace of the 'Lord of Heaven and Earth.' It was, as he growled repeatedly in his fever, a 'ghastly nuisance.' There was no knowing what luck was in store for his brother-officers. And he paid small heed to Jim Tarver's humble assurances that whatever *he* got should be Master Hilary's, if Master Hilary would do him the kindness to let it be so. Jim Tarver was one of the marines on board the *Ramrod*, and he hailed from Quarrendon, where his father had employment on the Anjou estate. But Lieutenant Anjou quite lost his momentary petulance when the others returned and showed him their treasures. These were of a most fascinating kind — sumptuous silk garments; ivories carved into the semblance of lace; idols of jade and a variety of other materials, including silver; china of enchanting tints; as well as jewellery, quaint pseudo-scientific instruments, and much else. Hilary's brother-officers were good fellows, and would not be satisfied except by a division of their spoil with him and the other unfortunates who had been held to the *Ramrod* by duty's call. This was delightful. But to Jim Tarver it did not seem enough.

Jim Tarver had with great greed pounced upon the silver joss in a bizarre and beautiful little temple of the palace. It had been neglected, though with regret, by the French and certain British tars, who had already inspected it, kicked it, tried to carry it off, and abandoned it for treasures of a more portable kind. It seemed to most of the men that they could do a deal better than burden themselves with this uncouth lump of stuff, which might not be silver after all. But so did it not seem to Jim Tarver. The instant he saw its squat form, he said to himself that it was the very thing to rejoice the lieutenant's heart; and so he put a rope round its short, thick neck, and passed the other end of the rope round his own waist. The joss weighed nearly a hundredweight. Hence Jim soon wearied of lugging it he scarcely knew whither, and so he just sat down on its head and chewed tobacco until some of his mates came his way on their return to the ship. The four hours were nearly up. These worthy comrades, though their hands and pockets seemed choked with good things, yielded to Jim's entreaties; and between them they dragged the joss in most humiliating mode towards one of the *Ramrod's* boats. It was the proudest moment of Jim's life when he hailed the lieutenant on deck and bade him gaze upon the idol.

'It 's for you, sir, axin' your pardon,' he said.

Young Hilary accepted the gift. To be sure, he gave Jim a five-pound note for it, much against the seaman's will. But it was obviously worth more than that at a time when silver was so much less common than it is now.

Honest Jim Tarver never saw Quarrendon again. They had to drop him over into the Yellow Sea shortly after his adventure with the idol. But when the lieutenant revisited his home he took the joss with him, and at Quarrendon it had stayed ever since. In 1863 he married. That, his elder brother Jeth said, was a piece of monstrous imprudence, considering that he had little but his pay to live upon. Jeth had about £3000 a year in land, being the eldest son. The imprudence of marrying on these conditions was, however, as nothing to the calamity of his and his young wife's sudden death two years later. That was how Jeth found himself saddled with Hilary the babe, plus the silver joss. The residue of the lieutenant's estate went to pay debts, funeral expenses, and the like.

To do him justice, Jeth Anjou, though a prodigious grumbler, was not a man to shirk a duty. Quite the contrary, indeed. He was in some respects a martyr to his conscience. It was his conscience, for instance, strengthened by a sense of family pride, that made him care for young Hilary, his nephew, as he would have cared for his own son, if he had ever married and begotten an heir. The boy went to Winchester and New College; and afterwards, having studied a little, was called to the Bar. The eminent counsel who subsequently accepted a hundred guineas that Hilary might, if he pleased, profit by his advice and society, did not pretend to be enthusiastic about his pupil's abilities. Events seemed to prove that the eminent counsel was prudent in his reticence. Jeth Anjou of Quarrendon grumbled abominably at all this. Nevertheless, he paid Hilary his allowance of £300 per annum just the same. But he cursed the silver joss more and more whenever his steps led him into the temple of fishing-rods, double-barrelled guns, boxing-gloves, and golf-clubs, in which it was now enshrined.

Quite lately old Jeth's moods had become very sulky indeed. His man could make nothing of them, and the maids expressed their fear of him.

The fact was that the master of Quarrendon was suffering greatly from that all-too-common epidemic, agricultural depression. As if that was not enough, he had been lured into speculation, with the result that in nine cases out of ten comes to vex the speculator. The two complaints together had brought him well within sight of ruin, and that was why he had written an imperative letter to young Hilary in town, summoning him to Quarrendon.

The barrister had just arrived, brown and spruce and hearty; the picture of a man in excellent health, in the prime of life, and without any worry of consequence enough to disturb either his digestion, his sleep, or his heart's action.

Old Jeth was lean and yellow, wrinkled beyond his sixty odd years, and with the look of a hunted deer in his eyes.

'Well, uncle,' said Hilary gaily, 'it's always a pleasure to me to run down, but I can't say I liked the tone of insistence in your letter. I hope to goodness nothing is the matter.'

Jeth pushed out his lips and lifted his brows.

'There's nothing that isn't wrong,' he said sharply. 'You've got to stand on your own feet henceforth.'

'You mean'—and the barrister's face now certainly showed some alarm—'that you have had money losses?'

'Read that letter,' said Jeth.

It was a simple notification from some people in Throgmorton Street that the fortnightly account of Jeth Anjou, Esq., showed a balance on the wrong side of £2941, 14s. 11d., and that they would be glad of his cheque for the amount.

Hilary whistled. But he quickly recovered his presence of mind.

'I say, I never thought *you* would have been roped in like that. Still, it isn't so *very* much.'

'It's been going on for three months,' exclaimed old Jeth, almost with a shout. He resented the need thus to explain matters to his nephew, who was dependent upon him, but he meant to go through with it, cost his spirit what it might.

'For three months?'

'And nearly always the same. I'm an old fool; it's as plain as the thumb on my hand. I'll save you the trouble of saying so. I had to tell you, and I've told you. Quarrendon must come to the hammer, and there's an end of it—and me. And now just get upstairs and dress for dinner, will you?'

'Oh, bother dinner!—let that wait a bit,' retorted Hilary.

'I will *not* wait for dinner,' cried old Jeth, thumping his hand on the Throgmorton Street letter.

Now Hilary, though something of a butterfly, was not utterly spoilt by London life on an allowance. He realised his and his uncle's position in its entirety. For himself this reverse was bad, distinctly; but for his uncle it was very much worse. Hilary was touched by the sudden recollection of all this soured, disillusioned old man had done for him. This very step that had brought him to ruin had, like enough, been taken on his behalf, as the family representative for the next generation.

'Dear old uncle,' he said quietly, as he put his arm round Jeth's neck, 'let us feed first; I'm frightfully ravenous. We'll find a loophole somehow, never fear. I reproach myself bitterly for not having done anything hitherto for Quarrendon.'

'You're young yet,' growled the old man, trying to wriggle away from his nephew.

'I am eight-and-twenty, God forgive me!' said Hilary. 'But,' he added, with an assumption of levity, 'I really *have* made some way of late. I dined with old Worstenleigh only last Friday—his influence is incalculable—and he dropped a sort of a hint. But there, *do* let me persuade you not to wear yourself out in this way. Close accounts with those folks—they 're pestilent sharks, that 's what they are, and ought to be put down by act of parliament. And, by the way, come and see old Worstenleigh's phiz. His daughter gave it me with her own. It 's in my den. Come along; there 's time enough. It wouldn't be such a mortal crime either if we didn't dress, just for once in a way—just you and I. Come.'

Uncle Jeth yielded with a grunt.

'So Worstenleigh has a daughter, has he?' he inquired, with a withered and rather plaintive bit of a smile.

'No end of a daughter. She 's five feet ten if she 's anything, and'——

'I never had much taste for tall women, Hilary—not that I 'm a judge, and I believe they 're commonly supposed to be amiable.'

'You *believe!* Now, I must say, uncle, your affectation of ignorance in such matters really amuses me.'

'Your grandmother was small—your paternal grandmother, I mean. Does she want to marry you, this Miss Worstenleigh?'

'The saints forbid!' cried Hilary. 'No, no, uncle. You mustn't jump to conclusions like that. She is a lady; therefore I pay her such poor attentions as I can. She is Worstenleigh's only child; therefore I endeavour to enlarge my ability to pay her such attentions as ladies love. But for marriage—that 's quite another matter.'

'I don't follow you,' said old Jeth. 'Where is this portrait?'

They were in the temple of the joss. Instinctively, Hilary got between his uncle and the poor dumb idol. But he marked how the old man's eyes turned towards it, and how the furrows on his brow deepened almost into ferocity as he caught sight of it. It was an extraordinary thing, this craze of enmity in Jeth Anjou. It was a rare illustration of the survival of an element of savagery and superstition in spite of all counter influences of civilisation for centuries.

The master of Quarrendon glanced at the portrait. It did not interest him, however. There was no particular reason why it should, especially after Hilary's explicit avowal that he did not intend to marry Miss Worstenleigh. He felt that the thing had served merely as a diversion.

Having looked at it, he threw it down.

'I am going upstairs,' he said, and he moved away quickly, as if to oppose any effort Hilary might make to detain him. But ere he went through the door his eyes yet again shot towards the joss, and his fingers might have been seen to close inwards, unconsciously, as if they were throttling something.

Hilary noticed all. When his uncle had gone he turned and scrutinised his inherited treasure, with a forced smile.

'You, my friend,' he said, as he took the squat nose between his fingers, 'will have to go to the melting-pot, I very much fear. Dash it all! this *is* disgusting news; but it must be faced. Poor old boy! . . . and poor little Amy! It will make a difference—there 's no doubt about that.'

CHAPTER II.



On the evening of Hilary Anjou's arrival at Quarrendon Manor, an atmosphere of lively expectation was pervading the old farm-house of Underwood, little more than half a mile from Quarrendon.

Jabez Tarver, the tenant of Underwood (he was rather more than that, for he held a first mortgage on the property for two thousand pounds), was brother to the Jim Tarver who had gone off as a sailor long ago, and found a moist grave in the Yellow Sea. A steady, shrewd fellow was this Jabez, and proud to be regarded, as he was, 'a warm man.' He had a family of two sons, as good a dame to look after the butter as ever man had, and a sort of relation ('niece' he called her, and the lads called her 'cousin') named Amy Grove.

Now Amy Grove was the daughter of Jim Tarver's widow by a second marriage. Jabez had helped Jim's widow very materially after her husband's death, until she married again. Later, when this second husband absconded to Australia, and died there, and the troubled woman also died, the farmer took up the little Amy, and ever since she had been as his own daughter.

Amy was now a tall, tender-eyed, smooth-cheeked, gentle, and altogether charming maiden of nineteen. Every one loved her—at least it seemed so. Certainly her so-called cousins Ezra and David did, though in different ways. Ezra, the elder brother, yearned to have her for his wife. David, on the other hand, felt towards her as if she had been his sister.

Both Jabez Tarver and Mrs Tarver asked for nothing better than that Providence should give Ezra his wish in this matter. Hitherto, it must be admitted, they had not had much encouragement; but, as they said, the girl was still young, and could scarcely be expected to know her own mind. Twice during the past year had Ezra impetuously asked Amy to let him think she would be his wife when she was a little older; and twice had he been rebuffed. The girl had vouchsafed him no other reply than this: 'I cannot, Ezra; I cannot, indeed.' Her flaming cheeks

and the sorrow in her voice had not told Ezra very much. He put it all down (thanks to his mother, who might be supposed to know) to virginal shyness, and meant to persevere. Nevertheless, he had begun to feel uneasy. Try as he might, he could not get Amy to look upon him with any except sisterly affection. This amply sufficed with David, but it was profound, heart-searing irritation to the elder brother.

Once Mrs Tarver had interrogated Amy on the subject.

'My dear,' she had said, 'you 're growing into a buxom young miss. You mustn't let the young men say what they please to you. I was married to your uncle at twenty, and there 's not a mite of reason why you shouldn't get a husband as soon. How should you like that, my dear?'

But Amy had answered, crimson all over her pretty face:

'Please, don't talk about it, aunty.'

'Oh, but,' Mrs Tarver had continued sturdily, 'that 's all stuff and nonsense. Men are men, and young women are young women; and marriage is just meant for every one. There 's Ezra, now—take him. He 'd mek a rare good husband; there 's no flightiness about Ezra. Where he loves he 'll love always, and that 's the kind of man a woman would always hev if she could get him. There ain't a many like Ezra, and he 's main fond of you, lovey; there 's no denying it.'

So far the excellent woman had advanced well towards her purpose. But she was now quite nonplussed by a gush of tears from Amy's gray eyes, and a half-restrained burst of sobs.

'Name of goodness, lovey, whatever 's the matter?' she demanded, with much concern. Having had no daughters herself, and as a girl having been wholly free from abnormal heart action and hysterics, she did not know as much about girlish natures as might have been expected.

But Amy had nothing to tell her in explanation of this terrifying show of sensibility. She could only rest her head on Mrs Tarver's roomy shoulder and quietly have her sob out. And when it was over her aunt did not reopen the subject, for fear of bringing on the tears again. She was not half as wise as most women. On consideration, she came to the amazing conclusion that the tears and sobs were the outward and visible (and audible) sign of the beginning of a proper—that is, a conjugal—affection for Ezra. She said so to her husband—who had no objection—and to Ezra himself. But Ezra was not so sure. He wished it might be so: that was all; and he determined that so desirable a fortress as Amy's heart should not be lost to him from backwardness in besieging it.

All this time Amy's young life had Hilary Anjou, and no one else, for its secret pivot. She thought of Hilary the first thing in the morning, and when she went to bed his face was with her to bless her. He loved her; he had told her so again and again. That was enough for her. She wanted no one else's love—at least not in that way. She would have felt her lips polluted had they been kissed by any other young man.

It was, of course, shocking—this clandestine affection between these two. Yet neither of them so regarded it. Amy was the less likely of the twain to do this. How could that be shocking which warmed her life through and through, which filled her with noble thoughts and impulses, and which made her bright eyes more beautiful than ever with her secret sense of infinite happiness? As for Hilary, though a man of the world to some extent, he was a child in this matter. He never doubted that Amy would be his wife eventually, even as he never doubted that he would eventually be master of Quarrendon, with enough annual income to make it indifferent to him whether or no he got a firm footing in the courts of law.

Ezra Tarver alone of those at Underwood had the least suspicion how things stood between Amy and Hilary, and even he had no very good grounds for the fancy. He had noticed a certain look in Amy's eyes, which was like a dagger in him, when Hilary was being discussed; and also he had remarked the ease of Hilary's smile of greeting towards Amy when they chanced to meet. He would have given one of his little fingers to have acquired such an enchanting ease of manner. It did not occur to him that this simple trait could be the outcome of aught except a certain intimacy with Amy such as seemed denied to him.

At about eleven o'clock that morning a telegram had come to the farm from Hilary Anjou. It had been despatched from Rugby station, and simply said that he (Hilary) would be at Quarrendon in the evening, and towards eight o'clock hoped to be at Underwood 'to see the pups.'

The young barrister had, during the last eighteen months, developed a remarkable passion for St Bernard mastiffs. It was odd, yet true, that this passion was in its growth concurrent with his other passion. His uncle Jeth hated dogs. What more natural than that Hilary should ask Jabez Tarver to give him a corner of his yard for his canine protégés? Jabez would have done more than that for 'the young squire,' as he boldly called him.

Regularly, therefore, when he made his hurried flights from the Middle Temple to Quarrendon, he visited these delectable mastiffs; and as regularly he advised Jabez of his coming, either by letter or telegram.

The thrifty farmer did not mind a letter about the dogs, but a telegram seemed to him a needless piece of extravagance; and he said so openly, both to his family and to Master Hilary. But he did not know what Amy knew—to wit, that a letter meant that she was to meet him at the third stile from Underwood across the fields to

Quarrendon; whereas a telegram indicated the edge of a coppice just off the lane as the spot whereon he wished to take her once more to his heart, unseen of other human eyes than their own.

This particular telegram had caused particular excitement at Underwood, because, as it happened, the mastiff bitch Juno, who had recently given birth to four male whelps, seemed that morning very ill. She had been taken with convulsions. These fits recurred during the day, and, to Jabez's consternation, towards five o'clock in the afternoon Juno gave up the ghost.

'I 'll never know how to face Mr Hilary over it,' the farmer said at tea-time.

'He must take his risks like other folks,' remarked Ezra. 'He ought to be beholden to you just the same.'

'That,' retorted the farmer severely, and with sublime disregard of reason, 'is a nohow way of looking at things. I 'd liefer have lost one of the best rams.'

'Well, well, Jabez, we must e'en make the best of it,' said Mrs Tarver, with an audacious assumption of cheerfulness. 'What can it be that brings him down so all of a sudden, I wonder? You didn't hear no ill news of the old gentleman, any of you?'

No one had heard aught of the kind. But Ezra had his eyes on Amy Grove, and noticed with a miserable satisfaction that the girl was agitated. She looked fixedly into her tea-cup while Mrs Tarver was wondering about the young squire's purposes, and her bosom rose and fell much faster than usual.

At that moment Ezra Tarver might readily have been persuaded to commit a crime, and a very heinous crime to boot.

It was for the sake of the puppies, therefore, that Hilary broke away from the Quarrendon dinner-table almost immediately after the meal. He had a plausible pretext in his cigar. Jeth Anjou did not smoke, and did not care for the society of tobacco. Wherefore Hilary had no sooner lit his weed than he strolled outside with a cap on his head, and, with his hands in his pockets, moved away more and more quickly towards the narrow lane that led by the coppice to Underwood.

They soon met, these fond lovers!

Amy's heart almost choked her with its sweet agitation when she caught sight of the head she loved so well. She could say nothing—only look up at him between smiling and crying for joy, and put her arms on his shoulders, while he clasped her to him with the simple words, 'Well, sweetheart?'

Then he held her a little aloof while he searched her face with his keen eyes; and she on her part was content with this opportunity to see what effect time (that is, two months) had had upon him.

They seemed well satisfied, these two, with their brief inspection of each other.

'More and more of a woman every time, little one,' said Hilary gaily, as he kissed the happy, quivering lips again, and held his own lips towards Amy's that they might have fair-play. 'And always changed for the better!' he added.

These last words urged the girl out of her silence, which was indeed the speechlessness of ecstasy.

'Oh Hilary!' she whispered, and she hid her face against his breast.

'"Oh Hilary!" Well, and what does that mean? Is it reproach, or appeal, or satiety, or what? Or is it the expression of your illimitable wretchedness?'

He knew it was not this last, of course. Amy's eyes were so gloriously tell-tale.

'No,' said the girl. 'I am very, very happy; but'——

'But! This is worse and worse. Never until to-night have I heard you use that infamous conjunction. It is the first "but" that has ever come between us. Do you realise, my darling, the seriousness of the situation?'

The happy girl nestled her head against him, and wished the sun would stand still as it did in Joshua's time. Then she half turned her face up to Hilary's, and, with a fair wrinkle of doubt on her smooth brow, murmured:

'I have been thinking, Hilary, since you were here last, and I wonder—oh! I wonder so much—if you are sure that you—care for me really.'

'No. I don't care for you,' replied young Anjou, with quick assumed severity that was like a cruel pain to Amy. 'I don't care for you, I repeat. Care is a sickening sort of word. I thought we had settled all that long ago. Care for you, Amy! There must be no word less torrid than "love" used between us. I love you, Amy, better than ever, and it is my one prayer that this love may never diminish. Is that enough for you, little glutton?'

It must have been; for, although Amy said nothing in reply, she raised her face towards Hilary's with irresistible sweetness. Once again they embraced passionately.

Then, without warning, Hilary put his hand to his forehead and exclaimed:

'Amy, I ought to have acted differently. Confound it all! you must moderate your fascinations in future. I 've bad news to tell you—very bad news.'

'Tell it me,' said the girl, looking up at her lover.

'My uncle is a poor man, and if I am to live I must work in future. Do you see what that means?'

'Will it take you from me, Hilary?' asked the girl, in a sudden terror, as she stood erect.

'If so, it will be the worst blow of all;

but if I can help it, it shall not. But you see, child, that it may necessitate long and tiresome waiting before we can be married.'

'Oh!'

Amy sighed with joy, as she again let her head droop against Hilary's waistcoat.

'So long as I know you—care for me,' she whispered, 'I do not mind anything.'

Hilary repaid her with yet another kiss, this time upon her forehead. The next moment he urged her to stand apart.

'Your cousin is coming!' he exclaimed.

Amy looked where he looked.

'It *is* Ezra,' she said in a low voice, as if half-terrified. 'And he has seen us!'

CHAPTER III.

FOR the first time in his life since he had realised the vast gulf that separates a rich man from a man that has to work hard for a livelihood, Ezra Tarver did not touch his hat to Hilary Anjou when they met. Jabez Tarver, honest man, was himself imbued with a respectful sense of the mightiness of the aristocracy, especially as represented by a squire of almost any degree. He had not the least sympathy with modern levelling ideas. 'A man's born this or that,' he was wont to say; and he held to this oracular statement even while he himself, by his steady industry, was slowly yet surely rising above the station in which he may be said to have been born. Jabez had done his best to instil his old-fashioned notions into the heads of his sons. It was scarcely likely that he would succeed. The weekly paper alone was a strong antidote to his teaching. Instinct, also, in the young men made them carp somewhat at these obsolete ideas.

Nevertheless, until to-day, Ezra had never given any outward sign to Hilary that he did not agree with his father in believing that the heir of Quarrendon was his superior.

'Well, Ezra?' said Hilary, quite cheerfully, as he stepped towards his discomfited rival. Ezra marked how he insinuated himself between him and the panic-stricken, shamefaced Amy.

'Good-evening!' muttered young Tarver. Then he looked round at Amy. Their eyes met.

'I came out to the coppice, Ezra,' stammered poor Amy, 'and—and'——

'Knocked against me. Didn't you?' said Hilary. 'Well, so much the better. I like to hear how you all are as soon as possible.'

'Then,' exclaimed Ezra, with a gleam of revenge in his eyes, 'she'll have told you all about the dogs?'

'Oh yes. I'll come along at once with you,' continued Hilary. 'By the way, I've been thinking, if the whelps do well, I'll get rid of Juno. She ought to fetch a big price, and'——

Ezra made a hideous noise in his throat. Amy shivered as she saw the movement of his lips.

'Yes. Go on, Mr Hilary. Now, what might you be expecting for the old bitch?'

The barrister saw that something was very wrong; but he was quite in the dark as to the nature of the 'something.'

'Well, I don't know, you know,' he replied. 'You're a better judge of her worth. What do you say?'

'So she told you all about us at Underwood, did she, and she didn't tell you that? That's what I call a good un.'

'Ezra!' whispered Amy.

'I hear you,' proceeded the young farmer heatedly. 'You can hold your tongue, miss. Now, between ourselves, Mr Hilary Anjou, what do you think is the price of cat's meat just at present?'

Hilary drew himself up.

'I fail,' he said, 'to understand you.'

'She's dead,' whispered Amy. 'I forgot to tell you that.'

'She didn't forget something else, though, I'll swear,' cried Ezra. 'Look here, Hilary Anjou; you may be a gentleman. Then all I can say is that I'm very glad I'm not a gentleman.'

The three stopped short. Ezra and Hilary faced each other. The former was fast rushing into a passion that seemed likely to become ungovernable. Amy saw it, and, knowing as she did that he was strong as well as passionate, she trembled for her lover. But Hilary on his part was no child. Besides, he had the advantage of coolness and self-control. Ezra had turned as pale as his brown skin would let him appear, and his right fist was clenched as he glared at the other. But Hilary still held *his* right hand in his trouser-pocket, and there was a smile on his lips. The smile was forced, but Ezra did not see that.

'You are,' remarked the young barrister, 'just a trifle crazed. Amy, walk on ahead, please. I'll exchange a few words with your cousin.'

'It'll be something heavier than words,' shouted Ezra.

'That shall be as you please—after you've heard me. But, for the present, I shall feel obliged if you will repress your ungracious yearnings.'

This tone of sarcasm put the last straw of indignity upon young Tarver's overburdened soul.

'I'll wait for nowt,' he cried.

'Get away, Amy,' cried Hilary, in sudden anxiety; for the girl had cast herself upon her cousin with an appealing cry of 'Don't, Ezra—please, don't.'

But he was too late.

The young farmer was quite out of his right mind. Foiled of his legitimate prey, he took the victim that chance gave him. With one blow he struck the girl to the ground.

Then the revulsion came upon him, and he dropped on his knees by her side with the heart-broken words, 'Oh, my darling!'

Hilary had never until to-day guessed that he had a rival. The realisation of it instantly abated the rage that was in him against this 'murderous young brute,' as he thought him.

'Get up, man,' said the barrister. 'A pretty pass you've brought things to! Amy dear' (and he drew his arm under her neck)—'ah! you can open your eyes!—that's a comfort! It's lucky for you, Ezra Tarver, you didn't hit straight. An inch lower and you'd have had murder on your soul, and thoroughly deserved the consequences. Fetch some water, man, and don't stand twisting like an acrobat.'

Without a word in reply, the young farmer walked away. His walk soon turned to a run. There was a brook at the base of the hedge by the coppice. Here he filled his hat, and then he ran back to the others.

In the meanwhile Amy had recovered her senses. She was not much hurt. The shock had momentarily dazed her—that was nearly all. As Hilary said, she owed it entirely to Ezra's unsteadiness that she was not killed. The blow had missed her temples and struck her on the top of the head.

Hilary kissed her, and the gray eyes resumed their old composure in an instant.

'You are yourself again?' he asked. 'The young cur!'

The 'Yes' in reply came gradually, and a smile followed it. Then it seemed as if, for the first time since the blow, Amy understood what had happened.

'Say nothing about it—at home, Hilary,' she pleaded. 'Poor Ezra! he did not mean it.'

'If you are sure you feel pretty well, *I* shall not mention it,' said Hilary.

'I am quite well—there is nothing at all the matter.'

To prove it the girl, aided by her lover, rose to her feet; and in this condition Ezra found her on his return.

She held out her hand to the miserable young farmer, whose face was a study for a physiognomist.

'You did not mean it, Ezzy,' she said softly.

The use at such a time of the pet name which was now never on her lips was too much for Ezra. Instead of touching the little white hand that was extended to him (she did no work at Underwood to spoil it—Mrs Tarver took care of that), the young farmer broke into a paroxysm of weeping.

'I was mad—mad, to do—it,' he sobbed. 'I'd rather have died, I would. You know how—how—I love you.'

'Yes, Ezra,' said Amy quietly. 'It's all right again. No one need know anything about it; and, indeed, it's nothing to be vexed about if they did. Only, no more quarrels about *me*, please. It would be different, perhaps, if I was worth it—though I don't think it would even then. Won't you shake hands, Ezra?'

Young Tarver this time took Amy's hand and wrung it till she winced. Then he let it fall, and with bowed head swung away heavily towards the farm.

Hilary watched this scene of reconciliation with interest. He felt a certain pity for Ezra Tarver. That, however, was as nothing to the admiration and new love Amy awoke in him.

'There!' he exclaimed as she turned to him; 'we'll hope that chapter's closed. From the bottom of my heart, I feel grateful his huge fist missed its mark. I should have lost the best and most lovable girl on this earth: that's enough to make a man talk selfishly. Besides, he or I would have been hung—he'd have deserved it anyway. And now, dear, let us follow him and make it up completely.'

They followed Ezra accordingly, with the pale gold of the evening horizon in their faces as they went, and the dewy air fanning the brief fever from Amy's forehead. But they did not catch him up. He took good care of that. Sorrow had come down upon him like a black cloud, and he was in no humour to exchange another word with any one. He did not even go home. From the lane he turned aside towards a broad stretch of common land over which three villages had grazing rights, and here, among the heather and gorse and the lowing cattle, he wandered to and fro for a couple of hours, pondering dismally until the stars were bright over his head.

Even then he was nothing like calm. It seemed to him that by this one chance act he had made an Ishmael of himself. Amy's words of pardon he wholly forgot. He fancied that she, and his father and mother, and David, and all the farm servants, and every one for miles round, would henceforth and for ever point the finger of reprobation at him. And, worst of all, he felt that he could in no way honestly protest against such treatment.

Thus it was about ten o'clock when he moved from the common towards home. He hoped he might sneak into the house and upstairs without seeing any one.

Now, there was a certain farm owned by a man named Gannett at that corner of the common by which Ezra proposed to regain the highway. John Gannett had a daughter, Alice, who had long in secret worshipped Ezra Tarver as a girl sometimes does worship the object of her heart's aspirations, even when he pays her no manner of attention.

Old Gannett had sent Alice out into the yard to see that the poultry-pen was securely fastened. When she had satisfied herself in this matter, the girl went and leaned against the gate which let from the farmyard upon the common. It was the very time for a quiet, happy (though illusory) dream; and so Alice, with her long hair loose upon her shoulders (she was six months younger than Amy), set her face betwixt her hands and gazed at the stars, the dim shapes of the cattle on the common, and the suggestive gloom beyond.

The girl had got to the point at which she so often stopped—namely, that there was no man in the world to compare with Ezra Tarver—when, without the least intimation of his coming, Ezra himself drifted across the common by the gate. His head was still bent.

Alice held her breath and felt as if she were seeing a ghost. But this inertia possessed her only for a moment.

'Ezra Tarver,' she whispered solemnly.

Young Tarver looked up, startled.

'Oh!' cried Alice, 'whatever is the matter? Won't you come in to father? You do look so tired.'

Ezra stood still, with his sorrowful eyes steadily upon the girl's face, which was pretty enough in the romantic twilight.

'No, I cannot come in,' he said.

'Do, Ezra,' pleaded Alice. The divine, womanly instinct told her he was in trouble. If only she might be privileged to be his consoler, even but for an instant!

Then the farmer moved a step nearer, and, without flinching in his gaze, said:

'Do you know, Alice, what I have done this night?'

'No,' the girl replied, not without a horrid sensation of creepiness: there was such an eerie tone in young Tarver's voice.

'I have struck a woman.'

'You, Ezra! Oh! I don't believe it.'

'But I did. It was Amy, too.'

'Amy Grove! Then you didn't mean to do it. You might have done it in a passion.'

'It *was* in a passion.'

'Then it isn't half as bad. But however came you to strike Amy, of all people?'

Alice Gannett's heart was capering within her. If Ezra could strike Amy, he could not be in love with her. And if he was not in love with Amy, perhaps—perhaps he might some time perceive, and like to perceive, how fond she (Alice) was of him. Oh, if it might be so!

'It was an accident, but it makes no difference,' replied Ezra mournfully. 'I can never hold up my head again.'

'Ezra,' whispered the girl tremulously—for it was heaven itself to her to hear him thus open his heart to her—'*do* come in to father. You shall have one of his long pipes; and if you 'll let me, I 'll fill it like I do his. Father says there 's nothing like a pipe of tobacco when you 're in trouble.'

Ezra went, Alice herself holding the gate for him. And he smoked three pipes of tobacco with Mr Gannett, who was a talkative old rake of a fellow; and while he smoked and listened he looked at Alice, whose eyes were at their brightest, and Alice looked at him. Peace came gradually to him.

At eleven o'clock—there was no mistaking old Gannett's kitchen clock: it made as much noise as an ironwork's—Mr Gannett moved in his chair and put up his pipe.

'Ally will see you out, Ezra,' he said; 'and I 'll come round about that theer hay i' the marnin'.'

'Do you feel better now?' the girl asked, timidly enough, as she held the door open.

'You 've done me a power of good, Alice, and I 'll never forget it,' Ezra replied.

Then they clasped hands. Alice Gannett went to bed that night a very happy little maid. Ezra had squeezed her hand as *she* should never forget. Besides, she knew young Tarver was a man of his word. Every one said so. She was, of course, very sorry for Amy—in a sense. But, for her part, she would enjoy being struck by Ezra Tarver, if she could be as sure of his love as, hitherto, it seemed to her, Amy Grove had been. She was, let it be repeated, a happy little girl that night.

CHAPTER IV.



LEFT behind by Ezra in the growing gloom of the evening, Hilary Anjou and Amy Grove gradually slackened their pace. Each felt that a crisis had occurred in both their lives. Amy was secretly elated, yet she was not so selfish in her joy in this unlooked-for publication of their mutual love that she did not sympathise with Hilary. She could not guess why her lover had wished that their love should for a time be kept from the world; but she trusted him, and was dimly sorry for his sake, though glad for her own.

As for Hilary, he saw in an instant that he should now have to tell old Tarver and Mrs Tarver that he meant Amy to be his wife.

That, however, was a matter of less consequence than the sequel. His uncle also came into count. It was one thing to gratify the pride of the farmer by informing him that Amy was to be considered betrothed to him; it was another thing altogether to announce the news to old Jeth. Hilary knew just how it would affect his uncle. It would seem to him the crowning humiliation of his life. After his own cynical fashion, he would exclaim that it was time for him to utter his *Nunc Dimittis*.

Both the honour and position of the Anjous in the county would seem to him to have gone from the family for ever.

In this state of mind Hilary could not pretend to be vivacious. Having ascertained decisively that Amy was none the worse for Ezra Tarver's brutality, he seemed to forget her presence. He spoke but once on their way from the coppice to the farm gate.

'I suppose,' he said on this occasion, 'that fellow can be trusted not to do himself a mischief. You don't think he means to throw himself into a pond, or anything of that kind?'

'Ezra! Oh no. Why should he?' replied Amy. She could not see that an event like the recent one might appear to Ezra infinitely more serious than it seemed to herself.

But at the gate Hilary paused for a moment.

'Amy,' he said, 'I shall have it out with your uncle this evening.'

'Have what out, Hilary?'

'Where are your senses, child? I shall tell him about—about us; you and me.'

'Shall you? Oh, I *am* so glad!'

'There is no help for it, dear,' continued the barrister rather moodily. 'I hope it will be for the best.'

'I am sure it will be, if'——

'If what?'

'If you are sure I am fit to be your wife, dear Hilary,' the girl whispered.

'I am sure of that at any rate,' was his reply.

Then they separated, Amy to roam off into the garden to confide her happiness to the flowers and the nightingale that might be expected already to be singing its evening hymn in the poplars above the wall where the currants always ripened so famously betimes, and Hilary to give the front door the rat-a-tat it heard only when he was in the neighbourhood.

Jabez and Mrs Tarver hurried to let in the young squire, and they greeted him with the utmost cordiality. David, on his part, grinned a welcome, and tendered his hand to be shaken without any sense of personal shortcomings. He had had his fingers pressed by a duchess ere now. That was during the election times, when the duchess would have done a good deal more than condescend to be kind to a handsome young farmer in order to increase her second son's chances of being returned as a parliamentary representative for the county.

'You 'll be worriting about them whelps, I 'll be bound, Mr Hilary,' said Dame Tarver kindly. She noticed the look of anxiety on her visitor's face.

'I can hardly say that,' replied Hilary, with a smile. 'Still, I 'd like to see them. Ezra has told me about the bereavement. It 's a nuisance, but I 'm not going to break my heart about it.'

'Indeed, Mr Hilary, that 's just what I said when it come about,' exclaimed the farmer.

Dame Tarver looked mischievous; her husband's words were so very much at discord with the truth.

'And,' continued old Tarver, 'we 'll get the whelps weaned by hook or crook, and in six months' time I 'll be darned if there 'll be much to grieve about. But you 'll be wishing to see them for yourself. Suppose you didn't run across our Amy outside?'

'Oh yes, I did.'

'Well, now, haven't she growed a fine one? It 'll be the same with the whelps. Give me time, and there 'll be nowt to grieve about.'

'The idea!' murmured Dame Tarver, with a diverting affectation of disgust. 'Fancy his putting Amy and the dogs on the same shelf, Mr Hilary! Not but what they 're pretty creatures, the puppies, sure-ly.'

'Whelps by Jack Sprat out of Juno couldn't be nowt else, missus,' said Jabez gravely. 'It 's no civility to be talking before Mr Hilary like that.'

The barrister, notwithstanding his anxieties, could not withhold a laugh.

'He 's a tyrant, Mrs Tarver, as ever, I see,' he said; 'and for your slight upon my dogs I heartily forgive you. We know each other, I think, too well to fall out over a word or two.'

'Sure-ly, Mr Hilary,' said the dame.

'Come, come, missus, get out the whisky, and we 'll be back in no time to have a sup of it, eh, Mr Hilary?' exclaimed the farmer.

Hilary nodded, and the three men left the room.

Mr Tarver was concerned that the young squire paid so little attention to his canine pets. Hilary just looked at them, caressed the heads of the adult dogs, tumbled the puppies about with his stick and the toe of his boot, and seemed to have had enough of them.

'You 've kind of lost your liking for them, Mr Hilary, I 'm thinking,' he suggested.

'Not that so much. But, all the same, I 'm afraid—I 'm very much afraid, Mr Tarver, I shall have to sell them.'

'Sell the dawgs! Why, sir, the world 's turned upside down, then.'

'From one or two points of view—personal to myself, you understand—perhaps it has. I want a word with you alone. Excuse me, David.'

Mr Tarver's second son showed his teeth amiably, and slouched back into the house.

'Well, to be sure, now,' said the farmer, rubbing his heavy red cheeks with both his hands, 'I 'll be main sorry if it 's anything unpleasant as touching your uncle as you 've got to tell me.'

'It 's that, and something else that touches you quite as much as it touches him.'

The farmer screwed his eyes together.

'Now, look here, Mr Hilary,' he said im-

petuously; 'I 'm good for another thousand, and it 'd be a pleasure to me if Mr Anjou 'd take it and have it tacked on to the same straddle as the others. I don't profess to pry into other folkses' affairs, leastways where they don't matter to me, but it ain't no secret at Quarrendon, and otherwheres too for the matter of that, that Mr Anjou 's got a bit short. Servants are such nagging hussies. And four per cent. 's good enough for me. How do it strike you, Mr Hilary?'

'My dear old friend,' replied Hilary, 'I hope he won't take your thousand, though things are pretty dark with us. I see you know about as much as I do on that subject. And now for the other. I 'm a pauper, Mr Tarver, and yet I want to have your Amy for my wife.'

Old Tarver gasped.

'Our Amy! You, Mr Hilary?'

'Yes. She loves me.'

'The little minx has the darned cheek to *love* you, did you say, Mr Hilary?'

'There 's no cheek, darned or otherwise, in the matter, I hope,' said Hilary, with a smile. 'I assure you she is more of a catch to me than I am to her. But I thought I ought to tell you, don't you know, and Mrs Tarver. You don't mind, do you?'

'Mind! Bless us all! Poor Jim's widder's little girl, by her second husband, to have gone and fell in love with you, and never made no sign at all! It 's been going on some time, I persume, Mr Hilary?'

'Well, say a year. But what does that matter, old fellow?'

'Oh, I reckon it don't matter, so to speak; but I 'm so dazzled and all. And to think as the missus should be so cocksure of bending her to take our Ezra! I never *did* think as she were made for him, somehow. But the poor lad 'll be hit hard—he will that. You don't know Ezra, Mr Hilary?'

'I fancy I know him pretty well, Mr Tarver; but I hope he 'll get over it.'

'One thing, Mr Hilary'—and the old man turned squarely towards the barrister and put a heavy hand on his shoulder—'you 're sure, now, it ain't just a passing kind of a fancy, like a heifer has for a bunch o' grass? You won't turn agin her after enj'ying her freshness, so to speak? I ask your pardon if I 'm coarse, but human nature is coarse at times, Mr Hilary, according to them weekly newspapers.'

Hilary was at first disposed to resent these words in his uncle's tenant. But his good sense prevailed. He valued them as they deserved to be valued.

'I *am* sure,' he said; 'there 's my hand on it. It is no passing fancy. Amy is a girl any man would do well to marry.'

'Then there 's a downright "Done!" on it,' exclaimed old Tarver stoutly as he gripped the proffered hand; 'and I 'm a high man indeed this night to think as we 've had the rearing of a lass as has took your eye, Mr Hilary, *and* your heart, which is far better, as the Scripture tells us. As for Ezra, he 'll just have to look otherwheres for his stock; and though I 'll not say but what I 'm sorry to see the poor lad vexed, as he will be—darned vexed!—mebbe he 'll happen on a wench that 'll take more kindly to the milk-pans than our Amy—God bless and keep her, Mr Hilary.'

'Amen!' said Hilary.

'And as for your being a pauper,' continued the farmer excitedly, 'I 'll not believe it. It 'ud never do for there not to be a Anjou'—he called it 'Anjow,' honest man—'at Quarrendon. We hev our upses and our downses, all of us, in this vale o' tears, as I 've heard it called, though I didn't know it for one; and, dammee, Mr Hilary! just you hold on, and make the old gentleman hold on, and sure as lambing-time (which I never knew not to come) there 'll be a fine fat season of prosperity for you all yet awhile. But what a gab I 've got on me! It 's all along of knowing as our Amy 've had the imperence to set her heart on you.'

'That 's all right,' laughed Hilary. 'Then we 'll consider it settled. I 'd rather *you* broke it to Mrs Tarver.'

'Oh, I 'll break it to her, Mr Hilary. She 'll kick a bit, I warrant; but let her, say I.'

'And I, Mr Tarver, as soon as I 've straightened affairs a little at the Manor, shall return to London and get my shoulder to the wheel. I shall hope to trouble you to hand Amy over to me in a year or two at most.'

'There ain't much doubt,' said the farmer slowly, 'as you 'll do pretty much what you please with them Lunnoners, if you mek up your mind to try.'

'I 'm sure,' rejoined Hilary, 'I 'm obliged to you for your good opinion of me, old friend, and I only trust I may verify your words. So now you see why I think of selling the dogs.'

'I 'll sell none on 'em, Mr Hilary, sir,' retorted the farmer. 'If it 's the money you want, I don't see as a straddle on sich fine critturs as them ain't just as good as a straddle on a house. I 'll loan you a hundred pound on 'em to-morrow, and be glad—at two per cent.—and'——

Mrs Tarver's voice was now heard calling 'Jabez! Jabez!' Hilary thrust his arm into the old man's, and thus they returned to the house.

'Not a word about it to Mrs Tarver until afterwards,' said the barrister; and the farmer acquiesced.

The whisky was soon drunk, and Hilary could not be persuaded to smoke more than one cigar in the parlour. Old Tarver had such a mirthful twinkle in his eyes that the barrister was afraid every moment that the secret would be let loose

upon Mrs Tarver and David. Amy had some work in her hands, and she gave all her attention to it. Just for the sport's sake, old Tarver now and then addressed a remark to her to compel her to look up. She saw instantly that Hilary had told him all, and fair was the bloom on her cheeks when her eyes met her adopted uncle's.

It must not be supposed that Mrs Tarver was blind to her husband's humours. Twice or thrice she asked him what ailed him. He put her off the scent completely (as he imagined) by frivolous replies about matters connected with the farm. David guffawed broadly at these answers, and Mrs Tarver was more than ever convinced that as soon as their guest was gone she was in for a fat piece of news.

She and her husband expressed their wonder that Ezra did not show himself. But as Hilary had already seen him, they did not make so much of his absence as they otherwise would have done.

At length the barrister rose and gave his hand to Mrs Tarver. Then it came to Amy's turn, and in a moment the keen-sighted dame guessed what was in the wind. The girl's crimson cheeks and her faint 'Good-night' in reply to Hilary, added to the old farmer's beaming face as he watched the scene, told her quite enough.

Hilary was by no means in a state of despondency as he plodded across the fields back to Quarrendon. And yet the day had been remarkable for conferring upon him such a blow and such a responsibility as do not often come upon one man's shoulders in the space of a single four-and-twenty hours.

CHAPTER V.

MRS TARVER reserved herself for the affray with her husband until the household had gone to bed.

'I dunnot care for the look of your face, master,' she said rebukefully when Hilary had left them. 'But we'll have the wenches in and say the prayers.'

The bell was rung therefore, and Mrs Tarver (she always did it) took the large, well-thumbed book of family prayers, and went upon her knees with a certain determination that made both Jabez and Amy feel uncomfortable. There was no doubt the good dame, as a rule, was master in the house, and she never looked more like it than when she donned her fine gold-rimmed spectacles and acted as the priestess of Underwood.

Though a trifle uneasy in the thought of the conflict that was impending, Amy could not but remember Hilary in her prayers; and the memory of him, and what he now was to her, braced her infinitely more than her anticipation of discord at home disturbed her.

'You can go off to your bed, David,' said the dame when the maids had departed, with a respectful 'Good-night' to their employers.

Amy was preparing to follow David, when Mrs Tarver stopped her.

'Your uncle, lass, looks as if he could stomach another pipeful. Lend him your little finger.'

This was a mere ruse, and was accepted as such by the three who were concerned in it.

When David's heavy steps had done sounding up the stairs, the dame shut the door and faced the others.

'What's all this grimacin' an' oglin' about, Jabez?' she demanded sternly. Whether from design or forgetfulness, she had not removed her spectacles.

'Oh, I'll tell you, missus, fast enough,' was her husband's reply. 'Give your unky a kiss, Amy, and'——

'That'll wait a bit,' said Mrs Tarver. 'Sit down, Amy. I've a notion your uncle's foolish goings-on wi' Mr Hilary have summat to do wi' you, my dear. If a egg's addled, it's no good keeping the hen on it. We'll come to a understanding this night, if you please.'

Amy sat down and resumed her work. The blush was again upon her cheeks. But she did not like this turn of affairs.

'You're raythor too previous, missus,' said Jabez, puffing smoke with a will, so that his head was almost clouded with it. 'I meant to ha' had it out wi' you—and there's an end to it.'

'Then out wi' it, and no more sech long beginnings,' rejoined Mrs Tarver.

'Young Mr Hilary, missus, have been to see they puppsies, and he've been to see summat else—eh, Amy?'

The farmer chuckled. The chuckle was like oil to the fire of his dame's indignation.

'None of your half-sayings, Jabez,' she clamoured. 'I can see through a hedge like my betters; but there's times as I want to be set right i' the middle o' the field.'

'And so you shall, then. Young Mr Hilary, he've been and axed point-blank to hev Amy, here, "for better nor worse, till death does us part," and all the rest of it. I reckon that's the state of the case, miss, ain't it?'

In response to this appeal, Amy could only blush deeper than ever, and try to work as if her fingers were moving for a wager.

'Hum!' ejaculated Mrs Tarver. 'Go on wi' the tale—a nice un, I *will* say.'

'There's no more of it, missus—not now. Here endeth the fust chapter. Please God, the the second chapter'll begin some time, and the wench'll live happy ever afterwards, like the story-books.'

'Well, to be sure!' cried Mrs Tarver, taking off her glasses.

The farmer noticed with definite uneasiness that his dame's hands trembled as she folded the spectacles and laid them aside with strained deliberation.

'An' hev you the gumption, Jabez, to tell me,' she proceeded, with growing wrath, 'that you encouraged the poor young gentleman in his foolishness?'

Amy looked up with a pained face.

'Yes, foolishness, wench—for it 's nothing in the world else. You just a nobody that your uncle picked up afore you was fledged an' kep' you till a fine coat o' feathers you 've growed, sure-ly!'

'I 'll not hev that said of her—and to her face, too, missus,' retorted Jabez. The farmer laid down his pipe, even as his wife had abandoned her spectacles. If it was to be a battle-royal, there should be no unfair advantage on either side.

'But I *will* say it, and say it twenty times, too, if it likes me. Power o' goodness, and you to know what was meant to be! Men are the biggest noodles i' the world, sure-ly.'

'Please, aunty, let me go,' petitioned Amy, standing up. 'I have *such* a headache.'

'A headache! Stuff an' nonsense! Sit down again, miss. We haven't given you bit an' sup an' pretty clothes, an' kep' you from s'iling your finger-nails all these years for you to turn again and rend us in the season o' gratitude. Amy Grove, just you hark to me. There 's our son Ezra eating of his heart out for want of you. It 's just murder to give him the mitten in this outrageous way, and it 's the hoity-toitiest impereńce into the bargain, as ever I see. There 's nobody but what can't see he 's a ch'ice mate for a young woman of a deal better bringing up than you 've had, Amy Grove; and there 's a many that 's after him, casting of their eyes up and cocking of their heads on one side; and only to think as he ain't to have his will of the one as we 've fed an' reared for the puppose. It 's a pack o' nonsense, Jabez, an' the sooner you let Mr Hilary understand it the less mischief there 'll be done.'

Mrs Tarver, being stout, here needed breath. She jerked herself back in her arm-chair and frowned formidably.

'Go it,' said her husband. 'Hev it all out in one bu'st.'

This tantalising invitation seemed to electrify the mistress of Underwood. She started forward again.

'Hev it come to that?' she exclaimed, with a sob in which passion and pathos were adroitly mingled.

'It ain't no manner o' use kickin' again a house, missus; that 's all I means,' said Jabez, relenting in his tone.

But Mrs Tarver covered her face from the eyebrows to the chin with her two plump hands, and broke wildly into hiccoughs and tears.

'I 've been,' she stammered, 'your true an' lawful wife—an' a dutiful one as ever was—these five-an'-twenty years, and now you cast me off like an old rag! There niver was sech a miserable, poor woman as me. Hands off, miss.'

The jerk of petulance and renewal of the high-handed tone with which she rebuffed poor Amy, whose anguish was excessive, and who could not, if she would, have kept herself from at least trying to console her aunt in her unparalleled affliction, spoilt all.

'You 'd better go to your bed, lovey,' said the old farmer, addressing his niece.

'She shan't,' cried Mrs Tarver; 'not till I 've had my say out. You may cast me off, an' I 'll not speak a word agin you; but if it 's my dying night, I 'll tell her she 's a false, deceitful, upstart, unthankful hussy, and I 'll niver call her Amy again—not unless she comes back to her senses. The idea of her *daring* to love Mr Hilary!'

Mr Tarver chuckled a second time.

'That,' he remarked, 'is fust-rate. We 're getting on. We 're of the same mind, I can see. It *was* owdacious of her—the coaxin' little puss.'

'Oh uncle!' cried Amy, 'I can't bear any more of it. I couldn't help it—I really couldn't. And indeed I should never, *never* have thought of—of caring for him if he hadn't first told me time after time that—that'——

'He loved your snarin' little ways an' your dove's eyes—eh?' suggested old Jabez.

'Aunty, *may* I go?' repeated Amy, with the prettiest wrinkles of distress upon her forehead.

'Go, i' God's name, an' a good riddance,' was the reply. 'Where is my son Ezra?'

'I—I don't know, aunty,' stammered the poor girl.

'No, an' you dunnot care. He 'll be in the churchyard after this, mark my words, an' his sperrit 'll come an' p'int the finger at you when you 're settin' in your luxuries and drawing-rooms with fine ladies and gentlemen as you ain't fit to black the boots of. A nice mess we 've made of it, my man, a-rearin' of her up above her station, which ought to ha' been ten times as low as our own.'

'Good-night!' wailed the tortured girl as she left the room, with her head bent low. She was paying a terrible price for her love, she felt. And, more than dimly now, the thought came to her that she might not be destined for Hilary in spite of all he had said to her, and in spite of her uncle's goodwill.

But Jabez followed her out into the hall, kissed her, and caressed her tear-stained cheek as he whispered:

'Keep up thy heart, dear.'

When she was alone with her husband Mrs Tarver changed considerably, even as her husband did. The latter took up his pipe again and smoked it sullenly.

Jabez was the first to speak.

'You ain't the manager you was, Susan,' he observed dryly. 'If Ezzy had iver had a chance wi' her, you've flummoxed it.'

'There's time to show that yet,' was the reply as the dame dried her eyes. Her dramatic gust of misery was meant more for Amy than for Jabez, who might be expected to know her too well to be suddenly influenced by such a demonstration.

'I'll tek one more dose of grog,' said the farmer—'if *you* please. You've about dried the human natur' out of me. Susan, you're a vixen spoiled; that's what you are. Niver since we went to church together hev I seen you in sech nasty fettle.'

'I've niver enj'yed sech a disapp'intment as this, Jabez,' was the sobered reply, as the excellent housewife prepared her lord and master's beverage.

'An' the best of it is,' proceeded old Jabez, 'you've done not a mossul o' good wi' your cussing an' swearing. The poor little lass! Why, darn it! you'd hev capsized the stomach of a kitchen wench wi' sech language; and to think as you should hev done it to our Amy, poor dear! And for nothing in the natur' of a crime, too; only for letting her heart-strings go same as you let yours when I came courtin' of you at Sunningdale six-and-twenty years ago. Mrs Tarver, where's your bowels? I'm more'n a bit ashamed of you—and that for the first time since we was wed.'

Dame Tarver showed symptoms of becoming plaintive again. Her large frame quivered, while her eyes rested mournfully, yet with very evident affection, upon her noble old husband. She never loved him more than on the rare occasions when he took the reins of manhood firmly in his hands and ousted her from the supremacy in the household which he was generally well content to let her have.

'And now,' said Jabez, 'let's put out the lights and follow the lass's lead. Ezra can look after hisself; he's gone five-and-twenty.'

'Five-and-twenty the last tenth of April, Jabez!'

'Yes; trust you for knowing it.'

They went upstairs softly enough, considering their size, Jabez leading.

But on the landing, where the old brown oak clothes-chest stood, the farmer stopped, looked across the candle-light at his wife, and slightly nodded his head towards Amy's door.

Mrs Tarver whimpered ever so gently. Her fall was as tremendous as her recent dignity and anger had been.

But she fulfilled her husband's desire: she quietly opened Amy's door. The girl was sitting on the bed crying as girls will cry when, after being radiantly joyful, something comes to hurl them into the bottomless pit of despair.

'There, there, lovey!' murmured Dame Tarver, with her arm round Amy's neck and her lips to her cheek; 'I am a wicked old woman. Say you forgive your poor old aunty, and get into your warm bed.'

'Oh aunty!' cried the girl, taking Mrs Tarver passionately to her heart. 'Of course I knew you couldn't mean it *all*.'

'Of course not, dearie. There, there! we're friends again; and perhaps, please God, you may be Ezzy's wife after all.'

But afterwards, when she was alone once more, Amy said to herself, 'Please God, no!'

CHAPTER VI.

HILARY did not, as he meant to do, tell his uncle the next morning that he had made election of a wife. He scarcely felt equal to it; moreover, it seemed to him that old Jeth Anjou was not equal to bearing the intelligence in a comfortable manner.

The early post had brought yet another letter from the Throgmorton Street people. The stock-markets had been in a wild condition, and Mr Anjou's holdings had still further depreciated. In view of a possible (indeed, a highly probable) worsening of prices, the Throgmorton Street people would feel obliged to Jeth Anjou, Esquire, if, with the cheque for £2941, 14s., 11d., already due, he would include an amount of, say, £500 for contingencies. Money was tight—very—in the City, and the brokers were hard pressed in several directions. They preferred not to wait until settling day, if it was all the same to Jeth Anjou, Esquire. Things *might* improve—that is, prices might go up; but really there were certain symptoms of panic on 'Change, and it was quite likely that stocks would fall very seriously indeed.

The master of Quarrendon groaned as he threw this appetising epistle to his nephew. It did not add to Hilary's appetite either.

'This,' the latter said, 'will never do. You must give me a power of attorney to do what I think best with Messrs Rise & Drop, and I'll take the first train to town this morning.'

'You think there's no help for it but to close accounts, Hilary?'

'There might be a way out of it, but we can't afford—that is, of course, you can't—to trifle with time. Just now you seem to be losing money at the rate of a few hundreds a day. That would be an enjoyable income if it were an income, but it's the very deuce to be mulcted of, even if you could bear it.'

'And I can't do that, as you know. You had better see one of the big auctioneers at the same time.'

'That,' said Hilary, 'I emphatically will not

do. I hope your other letters are pleasanter than this one.'

Uncle Jeth turned to them wearily. They were not likely to be *very* pleasant. He had next to no family correspondence; nor was he a member of any learned or convivial societies. Only one of the letters drew an exclamation from him.

'Do you remember Mr Parkinson, Hilary?' he asked.

'What! the Commodore? Well, rather! If a fellow can't remember his godparents his brain isn't good for much!'

'Ah, I forgot; that explains it. He says he 's likely to be in our county on Friday—to-day 's Thursday—and will give me a call. Wants to know what you 're doing, and so forth.'

'Well, I shall be glad to see him, uncle. The last I heard of him was that he had almost unhinged himself pottering about among Chinese manuscripts and that sort of thing. He 's quite at the top of the tree, you know, in Oriental mysteries.'

'A room shall be got ready for him,' said old Jeth dismally.

'Why, yes, surely, uncle. And, if you will allow me, I 'll ring for the dogcart at once. I dare say I can get back to-night, or the first thing in the morning else.'

Before leaving Quarrendon, Hilary penned a short note to Jabez Tarver, asking him to be kind enough not to let word of his and Amy's engagement reach the Manor for a day or two. It would, he said, never do that his uncle should hear of it from any but his own lips; and this was impossible at present for certain reasons which necessitated his immediate departure for town.

This done, he was rattled through the green lanes under the shade of the elms and oaks, with the sweet perfumes of the teeming country offering themselves to him like incense.

The business with Messrs Rise & Drop was none too agreeable. It was out of the question to give them a cheque even for the settlement amount. A thousand pounds on account was the best that could be done. This the head of the firm for long shook his head at. It was, he declared, little better than nothing. But eventually he accepted it, with a very positive eagerness, too, upon Hilary's remark as he was preparing to fold the cheque up and repocket it, that a bankruptcy was the only course open to his uncle. The stocks standing in Jeth Anjou's name were not sold on the spot, as Hilary wished. Messrs Rise & Drop now professed themselves confident that the worst of the crisis was over, and that the reaction would soon set in. It would, they said, be suicidal to throw the scrip on the market when prices were about as low as they well could be.

Having done with the brokers, Hilary called upon a newspaper editor of his acquaintance, and mentioned his ardent desire for literary work of some kind. The editor laughed at first; Hilary's request seemed to him so innocent. But he was a good fellow at heart, and he gave a promise that he would do what he could. As a beginning, he let the barrister carry off three three-volume novels (a mighty package), which he was to review at his leisure, to show of what he was capable.

By this time the afternoon had got nearly into the evening. Hilary therefore turned his face towards Euston. For about the first time in his adult existence, he reached that classic portico afoot. The nine volumes of fiction did not make him think highly of the pleasures of metropolitan pedestrianism.

This evening also the barrister forbore to tell his uncle about Amy. He listened guiltily to the old man's chatter about the Underwood property, and Jabez Tarver's desire to buy its freehold; and he acquiesced feebly enough when Uncle Jeth observed that, since old Tarver was willing to buy the farm at pretty much what price was asked of him, it was running in the teeth of circumstances not to let him have it rather than throw it upon the market.

'He shall know all about it to-morrow,' Hilary assured himself. 'Poor old chap! I 'm doing *him* no harm in withholding the shock from him as long as I dare.'

This was a sophistical way of putting it, however, and not satisfactory.

The next morning, before either Jeth or his nephew were downstairs, Commodore Parkinson walked up the drive to the Manor, rang the bell, and astonished the housemaid by stepping on to the uncleaned doorsteps and entering as if he were doing nothing uncommon.

'You needn't disturb them, my girl,' the visitor said kindly. 'I 'll amuse myself in the library till breakfast. I shall enjoy it exceedingly.'

Commodore Parkinson was an arrant eccentric, and revelled in his reputation as such. He was a short, stout man, prematurely bald, and with eyes that seemed quite worn out by their harrowing acquaintance with Chinese characters. Among his other uncommon habits was that of turning night into day for a month at a time. He did not, of course, mean to vex his host at Quarrendon by such abnormality. But he could not resist the temptation to travel from the north, where he had been staying, by the night mail, which set him loose at a station whence he could walk to the Manor in the very prime of the morning.

If he had not been as amiable and generous a man as he was eccentric, the Commodore would have been voted a nuisance by those whom he favoured with his society. As it was, every one who knew him either loved or greatly respected him.

Hilary was down before his uncle, and at once went to the library.

The greeting between godparent and godson was very cordial.

'I reproach myself, my dear boy,' the Commodore began, 'that I have lost sight of you so long. But you know what a rival you have in Chinese literature. A stygian pool, Hilary, if ever there was one, yet fascinating withal. And, besides, I thought a young man about town like you would be bored to death at being buttonholed by an old pedant like me.'

'You don't look too much like a pedant or a bore,' said Hilary, with a laugh. 'I'm sure we are both delighted to have you here.'

Uncle Jeth was less demonstrative with his guest—that turning up at half-past six in the morning seemed to him an alarming trait in a man.

But there was no resisting the Commodore. He made breakfast that day such a meal as it had not been at Quarrendon for many a year. They had sat at table for an hour and a half ere old Jeth said aught about ringing the bell. He then left Hilary and his godfather together.

'Got any glass about, my boy?' asked the visitor a minute later.

'Glass! Window panes, do you mean?'

'No, my son, I don't mean window panes. I am a benefactor engrained, they tell me. It's a lie, of course; but I am so far a benefactor to exotics and that sort of thing that I always (when possible, you understand) smoke my cigars in the conservatory. Women object to it sometimes. God bless 'em, I don't mind if they do; they'd compensate a fellow for any hardships—eh, Hilary?'

'Don't know, I'm sure,' laughed Hilary; 'haven't had your experience, Commodore. But there is a diminutive greenhouse somewhere. I dare say it'll hold us both.'

It did, and very comfortably, too.

The two men made themselves much at home among the geraniums and begonias.

'And now,' said Hilary, when the Commodore had ended a rather desultory yarn about the state of society in the East, 'tell me, if you don't mind, if you have come across in your prowls among John Chinaman's scribblings anything I could turn into literary substance.'

'Anything, my boy! There's enough and to spare for the stock-in-trade of a dozen novelists. By George, there is! The country itself is just a lopsided romance. Take the history of the Fo emerald, for instance. Here, give me a light, lad, and I'll tell it you.'

The narrative was not so very engrossing to Hilary, but he saw literary possibilities in it.

He was, however, astonished to hear his godfather afterwards exclaim with tremulous earnestness, as he crushed the cigar to pieces between his two hands:

'I'm after that emerald, and, by heaven! I'll have it in these fingers before I die.'

'Oh! Then is it in England?' asked Hilary.

'Either in England or France. I've spent two years in France over it. Goodness me! the houses I've wormed my way into, all for the sake of that matchless jewel.'

'Really—now this *is* what I call interesting,' said Hilary, offering the Commodore another weed.

'It's an uncut emerald, you see, my boy, and it's much on the cards that some ignorant seaman got hold of it, and still has it knocking about among his china dogs and candlesticks over the kitchen fireplace. It was in the Summer Palace before we Europeans made a mess of the place; and it was gone afterwards. Who took it? and where is it now?—these are the questions I want to get answered. The second is a deal more to me, though, than the first.'

'I see! I begin to feel sorry for you, Commodore. The journeyings of Ulysses and the routine employment of Sisyphus seem to me to about match your labours.'

'Yes, I know it looks hopeless. But it will serve its purpose if it keeps me green in my enthusiasms when my hair is white—what there is of it. And, between ourselves, Hilary, you lawyers know how degraded our human nature is; that was the chief thing that brought me here. I want to see what relics of the sack your poor father brought home.'

'Little enough,' said Hilary. 'By Jove! if only you could find the Fo emerald here! It would set us Anjous on our legs once more.'

'I'm heartily sorry the family equilibrium has been disturbed, Hilary—heartily. You must tell me more about it. Meanwhile'——

'Oh, come along, you unconscionable monomaniac!' cried Hilary; and the other required no second bidding.

The curios were, as the barrister said, limited enough in number. A few ivories in the drawing-room, some gorgeous fans, and about a dozen superb vases completed the tale of them.

The Commodore seized upon the ivories with avidity, sounded them with his knuckles, poked his finger into all their crannies, and took particular measurement of them to ascertain if any of their cubic contents remained unaccounted for. The fans he turned out his lip at. The vases he treated with but little more respect. It was unlikely in the extreme that the Fo emerald had been allowed to pass into the hands of a potter, and be thus embedded in the unbaked clay.

'And that's all, is it?' inquired the Commodore, glancing about the drawing-room.

'Well, yes, I think so,' replied Hilary. 'I'm afraid there's no chance for us. Ah, by the way, there's the old joss. We mustn't forget that; though he's far too ingenuous an old buffer to be able to secrete such a jewel as that.'

'The old joss! Is it a silver joss, Hilary? Ah, *now* I remember it. To be sure it is. Let

me see it at once. I have my suspicions that the priests—— But there, I won't hamper you with any more of my speculations.'

'This way for the silver joss, Commodore,' said Hilary, opening a second door in the drawing-room. His den—the idol's temple—was at the end of the passage.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN the Commodore saw the joss he was at once taken hold of by a flood of memories. He had been at the burning of that wonderful palace in Pekin as well as the late Lieutenant Anjou. He, like the lieutenant, had his spoils to show. Long years had passed since then—long, that is, when viewed in the mass, though all too short considered individually from the retrospective standpoint of each December the thirty-first. It was perhaps thirty years since he had fingered that silver image, and then he had made a jesting remark about it to his dead comrade which now instantly recurred to him. Little he thought then that the craze of his late middle age would be centred upon such trifles.

'Hilary, my boy,' he exclaimed, with a pensive expression on his good-humoured old face, 'I believe there is the embryo of a tear somewhere in the back of my eyes.'

'Then do keep it there, my dear sir,' said the barrister hastily. 'Dry it up at once. Life does not seem to me to supply an atmosphere congenial for emotion. The bracing, though far from sympathetic, winds of indifference strike me as better for a fellow to face and thrive in.'

The Commodore looked at his godson. His brow showed his amazement.

'Upon my word, Hilary!' he exclaimed—'so young (I speak by comparison) and so philosophic! Well, well, it wouldn't become *me*, my dear boy, to oppose your convictions. No doubt—never a doubt at all, indeed—they are much the same as my own at bottom. Poor old Hilary!—I mean your father, my boy.'

'Quite so,' said Hilary the second; 'and now, what can I get for you? Do you want to smash the old fellow to bits?'

'Oh dear me, no! I am not so far advanced in barbarism, even after my long sojourn amid barbarians.'

So saying, the Commodore put on his glasses and proceeded rigorously to examine the joss. He had a tape with him, of course. He would as soon have gone abroad without his boots as without this possible aid to the discovery that *might* be destined to make him a celebrity. With the tape he measured the idol, putting the results on paper. Hilary sat on the low window-sill and watched the proceedings, interested but profoundly sceptical. He was thinking much more of the picturesqueness of his enthusiastic godparent while engaged in his singular enterprise than of the chance of any lucrative outcome of it. The idea germinated in him of making the old boy the hero of a little romance. There was certainly scope in it, if only he, with his untrained abilities, could do justice to the opportunity.

The Commodore indulged in a variety of ejaculations over his task. At one moment he seemed to be in the seventh heaven of expectation. That was when, after very close scrutiny of the joss's head, he cried out that there ought to be a cavity in the skull. But after the most minute inspection, he could discern nothing in the least indicative of trepanning. Then he became despondently profane in a mild way.

The results of his calculations put the finish to his despair.

'Another bubble pricked, Hilary!' he exclaimed dolefully as he looked up, thrust his glasses high on to his forehead, and held the paper towards his godson.

'Well,' said Hilary, 'I hope you'll be able to bear the disappointment. I'm sure I shall—no, thanks; I'm reserving my brain for other feats of intellect. I never was great at mathematics. Even Messrs Rise & Drop soon discovered that yesterday.'

'And yet I declare I had some cause to be more than commonly sanguine here,' mourned the Commodore.

'Why so, in the name of curiosity?'

'The emerald *was* in the custody of the priests. As far as *I* can tell, it never passed out of their hands. The thick-skulled idiots! Like as not one of them has it in his own mouldering cranium. That would have been the ideal hiding-place, and a modern surgeon could have put it there without endangering the patient's existence.'

'Bravo, Commodore! I beg to copyright *that* idea. If I don't write a book for boys on it, I've more ardour than talent—which is, alas! all too probable.'

'And besides,' continued the other, again bending over the joss, 'there *is* a slight discrepancy in the figures. It's deucedly slight, I'll allow. Speaking roughly, the thing ought to weigh a hundred and ten pounds eight ounces avoirdupois. It weighs a hundred and nine pounds fourteen ounces. The ounces may mean much. But I'm afraid I must give it up.'

'For heaven's sake, do! I can,' said Hilary, 'stand a downright blow, but something between a blow and a caress is unendurable. Tell a fellow definitely that the emerald can't be in "Old Ugly," and I shall be at ease again—as touching the joss, that is.'

'No, I'll not commit myself. But I've done with it. Take me away out of its sight; the

thing haunts me. Take me away, my son, I say.'

The Commodore either was or cleverly feigned to be inexpressibly irritated by the smug face of the idol.

But before Hilary could slide from his perch to do his godfather's bidding, Uncle Jeth's nose peered into the room.

'What is wrong?' he asked.

'Oh, nothing, uncle,' replied Hilary; 'only our friend here seems to have conceived as violent a hatred for that poor dumb curio as you used to have—perhaps still have.'

'It curdles my blood,' said the Commodore. 'Those ten ounces lie like tons on my imagination. I am stultified. Mr Anjou, you will think I am a fool, but I am serious—just at present. I shall be well again when I am elsewhere.'

'I can sympathise with you, sir,' remarked the master of Quarrendon solemnly; 'it is an accursed figure.'

For a moment or two all three stared at the miserable joss, which bore its execration with entire equanimity.

Then, with a laugh, Hilary broke the spell of silence.

'This,' he said, 'is awfully absurd. What do you say to a stroll about the garden, Commodore?'

'Deligh'—— began the visitor, but Uncle Jeth interposed.

'You must excuse Hilary, if you please—for a time at any rate. I want a word with him alone.'

'How, uncle?' demanded the barrister, much surprised. 'Those fellows haven't had the impudence to'——

'It is on family affairs exclusively,' said Uncle Jeth. His lower lip, Hilary thought, looked uncomfortable. That was always a grave sign in the old man.

'You can safely,' said the Commodore, smiling serenely again, 'leave me to my own resources for as long a time as you wish. I wouldn't for anything stand in your way, Mr Anjou.'

'Thank you,' said the master of Quarrendon.

'Where will you have your talk, uncle—here, or in the library?' asked Hilary when they had seen the Commodore stroll jauntily back towards the conservatory.

'Certainly not *here*,' was the loud reply, as Uncle Jeth glanced significantly at the joss.

Accordingly they went to the library. The old man shut the door, Hilary wondering no little at his conduct. But the barrister was soon enlightened.

'Tell me,' said Uncle Jeth without preamble, 'if there is the least justification for the rumour that has come to my ears that—that you have been making love to that Underwood girl.'

Hilary's face told him at once that the rumour was no lie. Indeed, it had reached the master of Quarrendon in a very authoritative form. Mrs Tarver had decided that, as an appeal to Amy Grove and her husband against the alliance, the mere thought of which so annoyed her, had quite failed, there was no harm in trying how the squire might help her. She had done nothing on the Thursday but ponder how she might most forcibly arouse Mr Anjou's indignation in the matter. By Friday morning she had become convinced that she could do this no way more effectually than by a letter. She wrote the letter, therefore (it was an epistle for a museum), and told, because she felt it her duty, of Miss Amy's monstrous lures for the young squire, and of Master Hilary's unfortunate weakness. She wrote as if she was chiefly concerned for Mr Jeth's and Hilary's welfare, which could not but be prejudiced by such an improper marriage. Yet she also mentioned her fractured hopes about Amy and Ezra, her son, and made much of the evil disposition in the girl which could lead her, after first exciting the affections of one man, to throw herself coarsely into the arms of another, simply because he was the better catch of the two. All this was well adapted to make poor Uncle Jeth extremely wretched. He felt it the more bitterly because he was not now in a position to hold out any menace which might be expected to coerce Hilary, if his nephew should persist in his unwise infatuation.

'There is,' answered Hilary, 'every possible justification. I meant to tell you all about it yesterday, and you should certainly have heard it from my own lips some time to-day. But'——

Old Jeth lifted his brows wearily.

'Thank you,' he said in a sorrowful undertone. 'I am glad you did not mean to keep it from me until'——

'Until we were married! Uncle Jeth, I hoped you knew me better than that. What possible inducement could I have had to do that?'

'Quite so. You could have none—now. Perhaps you had better join the Commodore again. He would be glad of your company.'

'Oh, hang the Commodore!' exclaimed Hilary. 'Come, uncle, I can't bear to see you take it so seriously. She is an admirable girl, and'——

'Nothing *could* persuade you to the contrary, I imagine?'

'Nothing. I know her better than her uncle and aunt even. There is no hurry about it. When you see more of her you cannot but like her.'

'It is somewhat improbable that we shall become intimately acquainted.'

'Uncle Jeth! Surely you are not so much set on the world's canons of respectability. Is there so much in caste?'

'The Anjous have thought so hitherto. But

there, I repeat, Hilary, I do not blame you or say anything against it. I wished to know—that is all. And now leave me, there 's a good boy.'

After persuasion Hilary consented to do so. Against his own hopes, he tried to make his uncle believe that Quarrendon was not in so bad a way as old Jeth thought it. The stocks would rise in value, and not only would the outstanding deficiency be wiped off, but cheques would come from Messrs Rise & Drop. Meanwhile he, Hilary, meant to do well in literature; he had two or three splendid plots in his head. He had not the remotest intention of marrying for many months—perhaps years. It seemed barely possible otherwise. In the interval much might happen. If the worst came to the worst Hilary would devote his life's work to the recovery of Quarrendon for the Anjous. Even if he married, their domestic *ménage* should be of the simplest, for Quarrendon's sake. And Uncle Jeth was not to brood and fancy himself an outlaw and worse because he had failed to remedy one evil by a second. As long as he, Hilary, remained single, they twain would live together. There were some very comfortable and convenient quarters in Bloomsbury, and when he married he was sure it would be Amy's second wish in life to make the old man as unmindful as possible of the past.

Hilary found the Commodore in the garden working very sternly at his figures about the silver joss. These, however, were pocketed with a certain guiltiness when the barrister appeared.

'Well, my boy,' said the old antiquary, 'nothing worse, I trust?'

'Oh no, not at all. I may as well tell you, though. I've engaged myself to a poor girl, and it 's a source of trouble to the governor here. We Anjous just now seem a little off colour; but I'm not going to regard my little affair as in any sense an additional burden on our backs, corporately or as individuals.'

'Right, Hilary,' said the Commodore. 'I like that spirit. I must see her, but not now. In fact, I want to be off at once, my boy—no disrespect to your uncle, God knows! There are three other men in the south of the county whose names I've got down. I said I might manage to look over Mr Dubblethwaite's collection this afternoon, if I can catch the one o'clock train.'

'Oh, I say!' protested the barrister.

'Yes, I know it seems shocking to you. But, Hilary, I'm getting on in years, and I have a vast deal to do yet, even after the Fo emerald. And I'm no such treasure in a house. I thought the maid would eat me this morning—I really did.'

'Confound it all! Put off Dubblethwaite till to-morrow, or at least'——

'Take the night train—eh?'

'No; hang the night train!'

'It must be one or the other, my boy. My plans will all get disjointed else.'

'Honour bright, Commodore?'

'Honour bright. But while I think of it, I want you to oblige an old fellow by taking this bit of stuff just to help you a little in your new line. I 'd be ashamed to offer it to you, Hilary, if you weren't my godson. You can, if your pride 's very high, return it after your first success.'

The bit of stuff was a fifty-pound note.

'My pride,' said Hilary gravely, 'is very high, but it will not keep me from taking it on those conditions—and thank you heartily. There are reasons'——

'I know, I know, my dear boy. Don't talk about them. I don't want to hear them. You 've made me a jolly old buffer, Hilary. And we 'll consider it the night train—eh? And now I 'll run away and write some letters to folks in the next county.'

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS TARVER had not found as much satisfaction in her letter to the master of Quarrendon as she had hoped to find. The more she thought about it, the more it seemed to her an act of disloyalty to her husband. Jabez had assumed that her objections to Amy's elevation had been got over. Her own conduct in reconciling herself with the girl before laying her head on the same pillow as his head seemed proof positive of it. Nor had she made any strong fight against his humour of castle-building while they twain lay awake, and he (honest man!) tried to foresee his Amy's happy future.

The dame went about her household duties in a querulous spirit. The maids marvelled at the quite exceptional shortness of her temper, and did their utmost to keep out of her path. Jabez pursed his lips and smiled when he caught her in the tail-end of any of her tantrums. He trusted these would soon run their course, and she would accept the inevitable with tolerable grace.

But the chief source of Mrs Tarver's discontent lay with Ezra. Something had come to the lad, and she could not fathom it. She put a leading question to him early in the day.

'Ezzy, the wench hasn't said "Nay" to you, has she?'

'What wench?' her son had retorted, by no means amiably.

'What wench? Save the lad! You aren't gallivanting after ten of 'em. What wench but our Amy, I 'd like to know?'

'I haven't asked her again, and never shall,' was the frightful rejoinder. And after saying

these words, with the air of a murderer on the gallows-steps, Ezra had put a stop to further questions by turning his back upon his mother.

Yet, in spite of this blow, Mrs Tarver had determined to make the appeal to Hilary's uncle. She lay awake a long time on the Thursday, framing her sentences, and would, if she durst, have got up there and then, and written the letter while the sense of it was so hot in her. As it was, she was downstairs early enough in the morning to discomfort the maids, who were gaping at their ease and not working when she showed in the kitchen.

She managed the epistle, took a deep breath of satisfaction afterwards, and yet, when it was despatched so as to reach the squire about ten o'clock, she felt as dissatisfied as ever.

This state of mind in her was incredibly augmented by an informal visit from Farmer Gannett. At first she wholly refused to believe Mr Gannett's extremely broad innuendoes. She did not like Mr Gannett—thought him bad company even for her own man; much more, therefore, for one so innocent and pliable as Ezra. But she hated him with a downright hatred when that red-nosed person dared to imply that something ('just the usual,' Mr Gannett had said, with a vulgar wink) was up betwixt her eldest son and his only daughter.

'You're deceivin' of yourself,' said the dame haughtily. 'It ain't likely as my Ezra would look your way.'

At this Mr Gannett had laughed loudly.

'Well, missus,' he said, 'let me tell you, your own courtin' days ain't so far back but you can see a thing or two. Your Ezra, as you calls him, come and smoke wi' me night afore last, and he never took his eyes off my Ally. The gal says he was "very kind" to her at partin'. We know what that signifies. And, as if that wurn't enough, he drops in again last night too. He was pow'ful silent, I will say; but that's one of the tokens, ain't it, missus, if so be as he keeps his eyes (darned solem' uns, too!) just gummed to his sweetheart's face? And when Ally sees him out at gate, what does he do but stoop his head and say, "Alice, will you kiss me? There's no one cares for me but you." My Ally wurn't backward; and so they stands at this blessed hour.'

'Goodness gracious! The Lord grant you're a liar, Mr Gannett!' exclaimed the thunderstruck dame. At first she had been mollified by the man's reference to her youth and her earlier charms; but the farmer's subsequent words made her oblivious of the compliment.

'Can't say as I'm more of a stickler for truth than most folkses, missus,' said Mr Gannett blandly; 'but I bean't a liar about this. I'd scorn it. You can ax your son, and you can ax my Ally.'

'Your Ally indeed! Little trollop!'

There's no knowing what more Mrs Tarver, in her misery and wrath, might have said against poor little romantic Alice Gannett's character. But, though Mr Gannett could bear admirably to be called a liar, he declined utterly to have his daughter calumniated. Snatching up his hat, he made for the door. But before leaving he stood and spoke his mind.

'Mrs Tarver, ma'am,' he said, 'I've a sartain respec' for your powers in a house, but there my respec' ends. You're not a patch on your husband. He'd never say such a word about my Ally, who's as good a wench as ever behaved dutiful to her father and coy to the young men. I've never had much neighbourly tokens from you, ma'am, and I take pride I've never axed none. All I've got to say, lastly and in conclusion, about them young uns is this 'ere: your Ezra shan't set foot in my house again. I'll scorn him and you too, Mistress Tarver. You can put them words in your odds-and-ends basket and make bedcovers of 'em. I ain't a saint, ma'am, but my darter Ally's as good an' honest a little maid as ever gladdened God's earth. I wish you good-day, Mrs Tarver.'

The mistress of Underwood had a quiet attack of hysterics after this visit. But she was heroic enough to lock the parlour door and dree her own weird. She dreed it chiefly with the aid of ejaculations and a certain cordial—reputed a potent brain tonic.

But when she removed the bar upon her liberty, and that of others—for some one was trying to enter the room—she was not best pleased to come face to face with Amy.

'Oh aunty, you're not well!' exclaimed the girl, with real sympathy.

'There's nothing at all the matter with me, miss,' she said petulantly in reply, 'but what you've had the doings of.'

Ezra happened to be in the passage, and to hear these bitter words. He at once stepped up to his mother, as poor Amy, on the verge of tears, stole away.

'Mother,' he said, 'you may as well know it first as last. I think that's a hard word to give Amy. She had a blow from me o' Wednesday night. I'll never forget that—never! It's took the manhood out of me. But'——

'What *are* you talking about, Ezzy?' cried the perplexed woman. 'Amy Grove a blow from you?'

'It's as true as I stand here.—Amy!'

'Yes, Ezra,' the girl answered reluctantly from the landing.

'Will you please come down for one minute?'

'You're wanderin' i' your mind, my son,' murmured Dame Tarver; 'or else it's me. I'd as lief it was that, I would.'

'I want you to tell my mother that it's true, Amy, as I struck you by the coppice o' Wednesday,' said Ezra, with a set expression.

'Oh Ezra!' whispered the girl, 'why will you talk about it? No one supposes you meant it.'

'But I did it. That's all I want mother to know.'

'You did it—yes; but you didn't mean it, and so it is just as if you hadn't done it.'

Dame Tarver sighed like a boiler letting off steam.

'Dear Lord!' she moaned, 'and it was Wednesday I were so unkind to the wench. Welladay! The Bible's truer than I ever thought it was in what it says about "you shall hev much tribulation i' the world." Leave me be, children; I'm all of a muddle. Sech a tangle I've got into as niver was! And all for trying to do the best for my own flesh an' blood!'

Ezra promptly obeyed his mother's bidding.

But Amy insisted on doing what she could for the dame's solace. It was not much. It consisted mainly in fondling her head as she lay back in her arm-chair emitting sighs, and in the use of many endearing phrases. There was also eau de Cologne. Amy made lavish use of this, and, it seemed, to some purpose.

Hardly had Mrs Tarver been coaxed back into the greater part of her accustomed good sense than she seemed like to have a relapse that threatened to be the worst of all.

There was a knock at the door, which both women recognised at once.

'It's Hilary!' cried Amy, with a joy that made her careless of this free use of the loved name before her aunt.

'And me in sech a state—and in my old cap!' exclaimed Mrs Tarver, looking the picture of despair.

'Oh, never mind that, aunty. Shall I go to him, and take him about the garden a little till you're ready? Do let me, dear aunty!'

'You can do as you will,' was the reply. It was given with no particular good grace, but it sufficed Amy.

Hurrying out of the room, she was just in time to intercept the maid who was about to open the door.

'I will go, Jane,' she said.

They embraced without heed of the birds that saw them from the elms and poplars round the front of the farm. There was no resisting the sweet invitation of Amy's lips and eyes. Hilary thought himself a happy fellow the moment he saw the sunshine on his sweetheart's pretty face.

'This is nice of you,' murmured Amy, referring less to the kisses than to the visit. 'Shall you mind if we stroll about outside first? The house is dreadfully untidy.'

Had Mrs Tarver heard this 'dreadful' untruth she would perhaps have taken it by the throat and risked the disgrace of being seen by 'company' in her old cap. But she did not hear it. She was busy before the mirror.

'No, Amy,' replied Hilary; 'I want you to come back with me to Quarrendon. I'll tell you more about it on the way. You must dress yourself as prettily as you can—I'll say no more. You've got to win your way to my uncle's heart this day, my dear.'

Amy looked terrified—so much so that her lover burst out laughing.

'It's nothing so formidable,' he said, 'or I shouldn't think of asking it of you yet. Will you trust me that it is important?'

'But, Hilary, shall I be left *alone* with him?' asked the girl faintly.

'Oh dear no! I couldn't think of subjecting you to such a risk. I will stand close by you the whole time, and the big blade of my penknife will be ready to protect you the moment it is necessary.'

'You're laughing at me, Hilary.'

'To be sure I am. And you'll laugh at yourself, my dear, when you come to see what an absurdly timid little fawn you've been.'

'I shall not know what to say to him; and he will tell me what I know is the truth—that I ought never to have dared'——

Her lover's hand upon her mouth stopped her from finishing her sentence.

'Well, then, sweetheart,' said Hilary, 'we'll have a compromise. I'll stay to lunch here—it's your dinner, I know: never mind that; and afterwards we'll stroll back to the Manor casually and get it over. There's nothing to get over, though, I warn you. Circumstances have made your uncle a more significant man in the world's eyes than my uncle. That *ought* to make you bold.'

'But it doesn't, Hilary dear,' was the rejoinder. 'And oh! do, please, stay for dinner; and—if you could—but of course you can'——

'I can what?'

'Do be very nice with aunty. She's not herself lately; it's because of Ezra, and, and'——

'I see, Amy. Very well; I will be as fascinating with your aunt as I know how to be.'

'That is splendid!' cried the girl. 'And now I'll run and tell her you'll be here. And you can go and look at the puppies, and you'll find Uncle Jabez somewhere about there; and when I've changed my frock I will come out and join you.'

'Your programme sounds sufficiently attractive,' said Hilary as he pinched Amy's rose-red little cheek. 'I will follow it to the smallest detail.'

CHAPTER IX.

THE master of Quarrendon was harder hit by the intelligence of his nephew's entanglement (as he regarded it) with the niece of one of his own tenants than he had allowed to appear even when formally questioning Hilary on the subject. It was bad enough to be beggared. The

diminution of the family's good name was worse than beggary; and the old man had brought himself to such a mental strait that he viewed his nephew's marriage with a low-born girl like Amy Grove as nothing less than dishonour.

When Hilary left him after that humiliating interview Jeth Anjou sat and brooded, with his head bowed between his hands.

He had never been a very wise man. His affair with Messrs Rise & Drop seemed sufficiently to prove that. The solitude in which he had lived for the greater part of his adult life had not tended to an increase of his reason or common-sense. His unaccountable animus against the silver joss, if nothing else, seemed indeed to indicate a certain streak of madness in his composition.

And now, as he sat and in imagination beheld the desolation and ruin of the Anjous, the figure of that hateful little idol must needs come and dance before his vision. In a little while his fancy leaped to the amazing conclusion that this poor lump of worked silver was the evil genius of his house. Since its arrival at Quarrendon there had been no joy, no prosperity in the Manor. First, the lieutenant, its captor, had died soon after installing it in the village; then Hilary's mother had followed her husband; another brother of Jeth's had died shortly afterwards, though the doctors said there was no sufficient cause of death affecting him. Jeth's own mother's death at the age of seventy-three ought not really to have been laid to the charge of the idol, even by Jeth in his present insane mood. But he had been passionately devoted to the old lady, and he ascribed her death also to the common cause. Then an interval of many years had followed—joyless, monotonous years, during which Hilary was a schoolboy, an undergraduate, and later became a barrister. The silver beast had, he felt, been reserving its malignant energies for two or three crowning strokes of woe, and now these had fallen.

As he realised all this, and saw no flaw in the concatenation of infamies which might all be laid upon the head of the idol, poor Jeth rose and, looking twenty years older than he was, staggered to the library door.

A maid who was passing saw his face, and (though alarmed at it) had the courage to ask if she could do anything for him.

He retorted with a hard inquiry if Mr Parkinson was in the house.

'No, sir,' was the reply. 'He is out on the lawn.'

'Then,' said Jeth, with gleaming eyes, 'you may leave me. I want nothing—nothing at all, do you hear?' he added, almost frenziedly; for the girl had hesitated, to see if she could be brave enough to inform her master how ill he looked.

The maid fled incontinently and told her fellow-servants a wild tale about the squire's words and appearance.

As for Jeth, he peered up and down the corridor with the stealth and cunning expression of a wild animal. Then, seeing nobody and hearing nothing move, he went on tiptoe into the drawing-room, and thence into the conservatory. He knew now explicitly what he was about to do.

There was a sledge-hammer in the greenhouse, with an iron head, weighing nearly six pounds. It had been used the other day to force the fastenings of one of the skylights.

When he had grasped this weapon, and pressed it to his bosom as if it were the fondest treasure of his life, the master of Quarrendon glided back into the drawing-room. Here he stood for a while with his back to the mirror, breathing fast. It seemed to him that he was about to engage in a personal encounter with the Evil One. This being so, it behoved him to accumulate his strength for the duel. He looked strange enough, to be sure, with his whitened hair so loose, and his face now beset by an expression in which spiritual hunger, bodily resolution, and a certain high dignity all had a share. But instinct kept him from turning towards the mirror; and no one was present in whose eyes he could see aught of the figure he cut.

From the drawing-room he went, without deviation, to Hilary's sanctum at the end of the passage.

As he entered the den he caught sight through its window of the Commodore on the grass outside. The man seemed to be approaching the house.

The sudden thought that his guest might come in and interfere with him if he were not prompt in his actions left old Jeth not a moment for hesitation.

He stepped up to the tranquil, ugly old joss, swung the hammer as high over his head as his arms would reach, and then, with fire in his eyes and preternatural strength in his sinews, he crashed the iron upon the idol's cranium.

Had the joss been quite solid all through, it is doubtful if it could have borne such a blow as this, which represented the concentrated loathing of a score of years.

But the joss was not solid; and Jeth struck it in its one weak point. There was a resounding crack, and the silver skull parted.

Another noise followed immediately upon the fall of one side of the joss's head—a double sound, in fact. The hammer dropped to the ground, and the master of Quarrendon did as the hammer did. It was as if in that tremendous blow the poor old fellow had exhausted his vitality.

The Commodore was the first of the household upon the scene. The room window was slightly open. He pushed it up and stood like one astounded. The hammer, the extended

form of his host, and the split idol had such an evident and yet extraordinary relation to one another. But he was a man used to sensational episodes; and the next moment he had rung the bell with a will.

The maids clustered in before the tintinnabulation had ceased.

'Fetch a pillow and some brandy!' cried the Commodore.

The prostrate man was soon set on the sofa in as easy a position as possible. It was plain that he was not dead; nor did the Commodore think that he, like the joss, had had a stroke. A doctor was sent for. It seemed that they had done all they could do, and in fact the squire's breathing quickly told them that he was on the high-road to at least partial recovery.

When he saw this, and saw also that the housekeeper was a much better hand with an invalid than he was, the Commodore made no scruple about examining the consequences of the sacrilege for which Jeth Anjou seemed to have paid so dearly.

'As I thought!' he cried, picking up the broken part of the head. 'It *was* hollow!'

The housekeeper looked at him rather reproachfully. This, however, was as nothing to the glance of positive anger with which she honoured him a moment afterwards, when the little gentleman, having snatched something from the inside of the residue of the joss's head, jumped into the air with a shout of:

'At last! at last!'

'Mr Parkinson, sir!' she exclaimed, 'please to consider'——

'Consider be hanged, my dear madam!' he retorted frantically. 'This isn't a time for considering. Thomas Parkinson, my friend, this is the happiest day of your more than moderately happy life. Look at that, madam—look at it!'

The Commodore bounded to the good woman's side and flourished before her face a lump of dull-greenish substance, yet not all dull, about as big as his thumb.

'I've my poor master to look at, sir. One thing at a time, if *you* please,' was the curt reply.

For all that, the woman could not keep her eyes from peeping at the article which seemed to have bereft her master's guest of his senses.

'It's only a bit of bottle glass, that I can see,' she added.

'Bottle glass! Oh, the sublime ignorance of the ignorant! To call this matchless jewel of Fo just bottle glass!—How is he going on? Oh yes, he'll do famously. Your poor master, Mrs —— (I don't know what your name is, madam; but no matter)—your poor master never did a finer thing in his life than when he knocked himself senseless like this. Where's Mr Hilary?'

Old Jeth opened his eyes, as if the sound of his nephew's name was an elixir.

'I've settled it, Hilary!' he murmured, thinking of his brother.

'Come, come—this is first-rate,' cried the Commodore. 'Go and send Mr Hilary here at once,' he continued, addressing the housekeeper.

The woman went, confident now that all would soon be well with her master. She preferred not to attempt to understand the vagaries of her master's guest. When she had heard of the Commodore's apparition at Quarrendon at 6.30 A.M., she had reckoned up the visitor somewhat meanly. Later events had not elevated the antiquary in her esteem. Now she thought him little better than a lunatic. Nevertheless, she did not scruple to leave the squire alone with him.

'Jeth Anjou, old man,' said the Commodore, still in tones of abounding ecstasy, as he went on his knees by his host's side, 'you've done a rare day's work to-day.'

'I've meant to do it before,' was the reply, feebly but intelligibly. 'Oh, it's you,' he added, recognising the Commodore. 'Excuse me, sir; I'm not quite myself.'

'No; but you soon will be. Look at that, sir. Do you know *what* you've done? Providence or something else has made you the instrument for the recovery of one of the noblest emeralds in the world—at least it will be when it's cut. It's the Fo jewel, Jeth Anjou, worth tens of thousands; and it's yours, man, or Hilary's, which is much the same thing. Jeth Anjou, I'm proud of my godson.'

'I don't understand,' murmured the master of Quarrendon, trying to lift himself to his feet.

'Never mind; you soon will. Pulse improving! Oh, you'll do very well indeed, sir. What an inspiration it was, to be sure!'

To tell the truth, the poor squire was relieved when the Commodore was summoned away to luncheon. He, on his part, lay still, regaining his strength, and pondering the words of his guest.

Hilary, of course, could not be found anywhere within the precincts of the Manor. But he appeared ere his godfather had drunk more than three glasses of hock to the jewel that had, as it seemed, translated him above ordinary terrestrial existence and conduct; and with him was Amy Grove, looking so sweet and gentle under the combined influences of pride in her lover and bashful humility in herself that the Commodore's congratulations to his godson were as genuine as he could make them.

'Where is Uncle Jeth?' asked Hilary.

'Go and see,' was the mirthful reply. 'He's had a bit of an accident. It's nothing in the world to be nervous about, or you warrant I shouldn't be guzzling here and grinning.'

'What sort of an accident? and what have you to grin about, Commodore?' inquired Hilary, with very natural surprise.

'He knocked himself off his pins in knocking you into a for—— But look here, Hilary; go and see him. He's in your room, and you can leave this pretty young lady with me.'

'In my room! What the deuce! Wait here a moment, Amy. There's nothing to be frightened at in the Commodore.'

Hilary hurried off to his uncle. The old man was sitting up, regarding the traces of his recent paroxysm. He by no means quite believed such of the Commodore's tale of treasure-trove as he had retained.

'That,' said old Jeth, pointing shamefacedly at the mutilated effigy the instant he saw his nephew, 'is my handiwork.'

'Well, how are you, uncle?' was Hilary's eager rejoinder. He paid no heed to the sundered joss.

'I am much as usual, Hilary, thank you. But I was certainly a little wild this morning. Will you forgive me, my boy?'

'Forgive!' laughed the barrister. 'You're sure it's nothing serious?'

'As sure as I can be. Have you seen Mr Parkinson? He has some queer tale about something or other.'

'Oh, he's half-crazy; that's my belief, uncle. The sun out East has touched his brain, poor old chap!'

'He found something in its inside, Hilary. *I* don't think much of it.'

'Oh, the dickens he has! Inside my joss, too? What's it like, uncle?'

'*I* think it's like glass—green glass. But he—— Go and see it, my boy.'

Hilary did not tarry for a second invitation. A sense of coming profit had got hold of him. His heart beat fast as he hurried back to the dining-room.

Nor was this divine anticipation disappointed; for when he re-entered the room it was to be met by the Commodore arm-in-arm with Amy. The old fellow held the greenish stuff over the girl's brow as he exclaimed:

'Welcome, my dear boy, to the Fo emerald, the property of Hilary Anjou, Esquire, barrister-at-law!'

CHAPTER X.

THE Fo emerald was not quite so valuable, from the lapidary's point of view, as the Commodore had believed, in the height of his enthusiasm, it might be. But it was worth a good many thousands of pounds—quite enough to clear off Messrs Rise & Drop, and most of the mortgage on the Quarrendon property. There was, however, one mortgage that neither the Fo emerald nor the Koh-i-noor diamond would have obliterated with Hilary's consent. That was the Underwood 'straddle,' as old Jabez Tarver called it.

There were the strongest reasons in the world, according to Hilary, who might be supposed to know something about equity as well as law, why Underwood should be established as a property for Jabez Tarver and his heirs male for ever.

To begin with, the barrister was not slow to resuscitate the history of the silver joss. Whose had it been originally, from the time it had ceased to be the property of the Chinese emperor? Whose but Jim Tarver's, whose wife had been his Amy's mother.

Therefore, the Fo jewel and the silver of the joss itself belonged, said Hilary, not to him as his father's son, but to Amy as her mother's only child.

This argument was used with excellent effect upon Uncle Jeth. The old man had, since his iconoclastic fury, been unusually quiet. It was as if he felt ashamed of his childishness, even though it had wrought such unlooked-for good. His introduction to Amy and the jewel had taken place at the same time. He had said not one hard word to the girl, nor looked one single disparaging look. For this Amy was incredibly grateful to him, and at parting she would have kissed his worn, thin hand if he had not withdrawn it in a sort of horror. Whereupon Hilary had suggested that a salutation of the usual kind would be much more to the point; and Uncle Jeth had kissed the girl and said, 'Heaven bless you both!' Such had been their first meeting. The good impression each had made upon the other deepened with the days; and on Jeth's part, at least, it was likely to be fostered by Hilary's reminder that the Fo emerald belonged to his sweetheart rather than to him.

This latter idea was, of course, repudiated stoutly by Amy when it was made known to her. It was also received with ridicule by Jabez Tarver, to whom Hilary mentioned it with due solemnity.

The good farmer of Underwood was in great spirits from the time of the discovery of the jewel. He could have had no stronger aid in discussion with his dame about Amy's suitors than this sudden nominal (as he regarded it, for argument's sake) accession of wealth to the girl.

'Was it likely,' he inquired, with considerable warmth, of Dame Tarver, 'that, the wench being now a rich young woman, they could try and squeeze her against her will into the arms of their son Ezra? What would the county say of them if they heard of it? No, no; it was just providential. The girl had been sent into the world to put the Anjous upon their legs again. And what luck in life could any girl of proper spirit desire above that?'

Mrs Tarver, with humility, said 'Yes' to her

husband's reasonings. From the morning when Ezra had admitted in her presence that he had given Amy a blow, she had begun to think herself deceived in her estimate of her own abilities, as well as in people.

But the old farmer was no sooner with Hilary or his niece than he would set to and guffaw at the absurdity of Amy's making any pretence to the thousands of pounds the emerald was to fetch.

'Lovey,' he said on one of these occasions to his niece, 'it's born nonsense. You ain't no more got a right to it than I has to the money won at the Derby by a hoss as was foaled by a mare I thought nowt of, and sold to a man for a fi'-pound note. Where 'd you hev been with your fortune if the old squire hadn't smashed "Old Ugly"? That's what I 'd like to hev answered.'

As Amy answered this and all similar questions with a kiss, old Jabez had every encouragement to continue weaving reasons why his 'little gal' was to consider herself no more nor less than a pauper till she was Master Hilary's missus.

But Hilary himself did not look at it in this light. He declined to marry Amy until her uncle had consented to receive the title-deeds of Underwood—not as a gift, but in ordinary acknowledgment of the care he had exercised in the bringing up of the young heiress whom he wished to marry. As the girl herself and the old squire all joined issue with Hilary against Jabez Tarver in this matter (and even Dame Tarver confessed she liked to think of Underwood being 'their very own'), after many a pitched battle Amy's uncle confessed himself beaten. He never looked more miserable, however, than when, with a deep sigh, he accepted the parchments.

'I suppose,' he muttered, 'you 'll be takin' the whelps an' all away now, Mr Hilary? There 's a pow'ful deal more comfort in havin' a lawful straddle on a place than in bein' turned into a squire myself—all for nothink.'

'You just keep up your spirits, old friend,' said Hilary, laughing. 'It's not half so bad a business as it seems to you. And as for the whelps, if you 'll let me, I 'll leave them at Underwood in the old way—at least until I come down and settle at Quarrendon, which won't be for many a year yet, I hope.'

Hilary's intentions were much altered, in short, by this new turn in his life. He proposed to marry Amy without delay, and go back to London a benedict, and as determined a briefless barrister as ever eventually gained legal distinction in spite of opposing probabilities. For the joke of the thing he would try and woo old Worstenleigh, but he would not dine at that hospitable solicitor's table again unaccompanied by Amy, who might be trusted soon to behave in society as well as the best-blooded young matrons of Mayfair. If Miss Worstenleigh despotically bade her father have no professional dealings with him, he would bear the rebuff.

The marriage was arranged, in fact, to take place at the Quarrendon church in less than a month from the day of the silver joss's downfall.

In the anxiety—joyful anxiety—of her preparations for it, Dame Tarver for a while lost sight of her little affray with Mr Gannett. She had other and much pleasanter things to think about than men like Mr Gannett. But she ought not to have forgotten the existence of Mr Gannett's daughter, at least if she was as positive in her contempt for the whole house of the Gannetts as she had made it appear to the head of the house.

Indeed, the news of the jewel came upon Underwood so suddenly that it absorbed all other interests. That was how she omitted to tell her first-born that he was on no account to be seduced by Ally Gannett's sly, designing looks.

Meanwhile the mischief—if mischief there was in it—was done.

Old Gannett went home in a huff from Underwood after his battle with Mrs Tarver, and said outright that he 'd never, as long as he lived, have Ezra Tarver again on the hard wood chair in the kitchen with a pipe and his solemn young face. Alice lifted up her head and wept when she heard this. She would not, indeed, be comforted; so that at length the old man was fain, for the sake of domestic peace, to find a loophole by which he could restore happiness to his daughter without giving himself the lie.

'Look 'ee here, Ally,' he said; 'I 'm main agin it, but what 's got to be 's got to be. And so you can philander wi' him in the yard, and I 'll purtend as I knows nowt about it.'

As she could get no better concession from her sire than this, little Alice resolved to make the most of it. She met Ezra that very night under the moonshine, and shed many silver-tinted tears as she told how prejudiced his mother was against her; and she clung to his arm as they stood by the foal-yard gate, and looked up at him with such undisguised admiration in her bright eyes that Ezra could not but feel touched by it.

'Mothers and fathers,' said Ezra slowly, after due thought, 'make a many mistakes. They ain't always happy in their own marriages, and yet they make cocksure who is and who ain't fit for their children. I don't believe in 'em.'

'Nor me,' Alice had responded almost too eagerly. 'There 's father, for instance. Poor mother took to drink, and yet father says there never was a likelier wench when they was wedded.'

'Oh, really,' said Ezra; 'I didn't know that your mother'——

'It was because of a complaint she had inside her; only that, Ezra,' the girl hastened to add.

'I 'm glad to know that,' was the grave reply. 'It makes a deal o' difference, Alice; and so I say I think young men and young women, if they 're just usually sensible, ought to be trusted to make their own choices.'

'Yes, yes, Ezra,' said the girl encouragingly.

'And so,' continued the young farmer, though hesitatingly, 'if you 've no objection to our seeing each other like this'—('No, indeed,' murmured little Alice)—'we 'll go on doing it. That 's what I wanted to say.'

On this understanding the two met five or six times a week for a fortnight.

Alice Gannett greatly rejoiced to hear of the impending marriage, but she had tact enough to say nothing about it to her swain.

At the end of the fortnight, however, very rough weather set in. For three nights in succession the storms kept Ezra at home. This enforced absence from Alice inflamed his imagination about her. She had never seemed to him so desirable.

The fancy holding strong to the fourth evening, he then stole forth in the rain just to look at the dark house-shape that held his heart's new charmer. What happened is soon told. He found poor little Ally keeping tryst in a huge tarpaulin cloak. He asked her in surprise if she had faced the rain of the previous evenings. She said 'Yes' in a tone that seemed to imply that nothing could deter her from such sweet devotion to him. And then he put his arms under the tarpaulin and drew the girl to his breast.

'You *are* the wench for me, Ally!' he exclaimed. 'I 've thought it many a time, and now I know it.'

Their two hearts beat in unison under the tarpaulin for half-an-hour longer, and then Alice Gannett went in and told her father that Ezra Tarver had 'asked' her, and they had settled it.

It was very humble-pie indeed that Mrs Tarver was called upon to eat one day about a week before the wedding, when Amy had succeeded in persuading her to go with her to Mr Gannett's farm. But she ate it with fair grace upon the whole, and afterwards she was glad she had eaten it. Alice received her lover's parent with true respect, and showed her innumerable little attentions. She said, 'Oh, don't let her, father,' when the dame told of her wish to express sorrow for certain hasty words she had used to Mr Gannett at Underwood. But Mr Gannett was quite unwilling to deny himself the pleasure of seeing Mrs Tarver eat her humble-pie, and he did *not* stand in the way of her apologies.

'Well, there 's one comfort,' ejaculated the dame when she and Amy were outside again; 'I can mek her into what I like to fit Ezzy. She 's nothing but a lump of putty.'

Amy fancied her aunt's judgment was again slightly at fault, but she did not say so. The future might show if Alice Gannett were as plastic as putty.

. . . . . .

All Quarrendon, and a good deal more of the county than Quarrendon, came to see Amy Grove made into Mrs Hilary Anjou at the parish church.

The Commodore ran down from London for the purpose. Though overjoyed at the routing out of the Fo emerald, he was for a while like a disestablished tradesman; his vocation seemed gone, and his mind felt the vacuum. But he was exceedingly cheerful, and he talked about an almost immediate return to China.

After their honeymoon at the famous Lowwood Hotel, by Windermere, Hilary and his wife were to begin life in earnest in London.

And old Jeth Anjou was left at the Manor House to live as he had lived these many years past, but without the burdens on his soul represented respectively by Messrs Rise & Drop and the silver joss.

A PERFECT CURE.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS,

AUTHOR OF 'THE CRUCIFORM MARK,' 'THE PRINCE AND THE UNDERTAKER,' ETC.

THE bell rang just as I sat down to lunch; and when Mrs Hall, my housekeeper, announced that a lady was waiting in the consulting-room, and wished to see me at once, I glared at her.

'Did you say I was at lunch?' I demanded.

Yes, she had said so.

'Then take her in the paper or something to read, please, and say I shan't be long.'

At that moment the consulting-room bell was jerked hard. It sounded as though something broke, and Mrs Hall bundled away, with ejaculations which might mean anything, but seemed pretty strong.

I poured out a cup of coffee, and then stuck my book up in front of me against the coffee-pot. Everybody knows, or ought to know, that a medical man isn't at home for consultations at one o'clock. If I rushed in at once this person would think I had nothing else to do. Besides, I was hungry, and my coffee would get cold.

I began to eat and read at the same time—a most reprehensible practice which I absolutely forbid among my patients; but I could not ignore the fact that a spirited dialogue, audible through at any rate one door, was going on in the consulting-room. Whatever was the complaint of my visitor, I was ready to pass the vocal organs as sound. Mrs Hall was coming back to me now, and the voice pursued her untiringly until she opened the dining-room door, came in, and closed it.

'You'd better go in and see her,' she suggested.

'After lunch,' I agreed.

'No—now, sir. She says she won't wait. You'll lose her, sir.'

'Let her go!' I said obstinately. 'A medical man is not at everybody's beck and call, Mrs Hall, even if he is paid for it. No doubt,' I added, with dignified modesty, 'she will be able to find some one else just as well able to advise her—if she will only go far enough.'

I think it absolutely necessary at times to remind Mrs Hall that medicine is one of the liberal professions, and must remain so in spite of the poverty of some of its members. There was a moment's silence, and then:

'Poor body,' said Mrs Hall; 'and she's saying she's so ill, too! But I'll tell her, sir, and send her round the corner.'

'So ill!'

I got up from the table at once; for ours, besides being a liberal, is a humane profession.

'Why didn't you say so before?' I asked, perhaps a trifle hotly. 'My lunch can wait, of course;' and I hurried away.

Never, before I went into my consulting-room that day and saw my new patient there, had I realised what a small room it was. The lady was roaming about it apparently in a very excited condition, and reminded me of nothing else so much as of a black panther in a box. So far did that likeness go that when, hearing me, she turned suddenly and stopped in the middle of the room, I stopped too, almost expecting her to spring, and keeping an attentive eye upon her.

'The Doctor Tregenna?'

Her smile was bewitching; her bow was grace itself; her voice sang rather than spoke. I do not consider myself sufficiently celebrated to be known as 'the' Dr Tregenna yet; but I have no colleagues of the same name so far as I know; and, remembering this, I attempted a bow worthy of the one I had just received.

'*Si parla l'Italiano?*' the lady suggested; and this I admitted in the same tongue modestly, using such diminutives as I could remember, with regard to the extent of my knowledge.

'The Signorina will be pleased to seat herself.'

I drew forward a chair, and at once involved myself in a discussion which severely tested my knowledge of the Signorina's native tongue. She was pleased to seat herself, but not in the chair which I placed for her, facing the light. She preferred the one from which I am accustomed to survey my visitors, with my back to the window, and it took some time and polite argument before I could convince her that a change was desirable.

'The Signor Dottore,' the lady announced, after this little matter was satisfactorily arranged, 'is a specialist upon the diseases of the throat and chest.'

This was stated with such conviction that I could only shrug my shoulders, with what I trust was an air of modest deprecation. I am

no specialist; but this charming young person, who, I now noticed, possessed that air of combined grace and dignity which is truly Southern, must have read a little note which I published a short time ago concerning the probable effect upon the respiratory organs of the extraordinarily high stairs in our city.

'The Signorina,' I said politely, 'has, I trust, no serious ailment of her organs of respiration?' I may say, in passing, that this dignified phraseology is not my usual style. It was simply forced upon me by a foreign language.

'*Chi sa?* Who knows?' said the Signorina gloomily. 'I spit blood.'

'Surely not!' I said hastily. 'The physique of the Signorina'—— But she shook her head as she coughed violently, with two inches of cambric and a foot or so of lace against her mouth.

'*Ecco!*' she said triumphantly when the paroxysm ended; and, upon closely examining the pocket-handkerchief held out for my inspection, I certainly saw a little fresh scarlet stain.

'At times my voice breaks,' she told me; and straightway it certainly did break, in a most surprising manner—from a round fullness of tone into a harsh whisper—and the Signorina lay back in her chair exhausted, and with a most melancholy air.

I own that I was concerned. However much absorbed a scientific man may be in his work, he cannot let distressed youth and beauty pass by unobserved. I hold, too, that the medical man is not justified in neglecting a case simply because the patient is attractive. I questioned her further, but could as yet make no definite diagnosis.

'I will now,' I told her, 'examine the throat and chest of the Signorina before giving her my opinion;' and I proceeded to get out my laryngoscope.

But at this point the lady rose and declared that any further consultation and examination must take place at her hotel. I ventured to hint, lest her purse might suffer through her ignorance, that this would mean a consultation and a visit, where possibly a consultation would be enough; but she was firm.

'Where one's health is at stake,' she was good enough to say, 'one can but put one's self in the *very best* hands, feeling secure that money is well spent in doing so.'

'The Signorina will do me the favour of reminding herself,' I protested feebly, 'that this estimate of my capabilities is her own.'

'The Signor Dottore does himself the greater injustice,' the lady told me, with a sweeping reverence; and, blushing at such flowery compliments, I agreed to call upon her at half-past four that afternoon, refused *pro tem.* the proffered fee, bowed her to my door, and returned to my coffee and my book.

The name, Lucia della Casa, upon the card left by my new patient, although of a pleasant sound as I repeated it between gulps of coffee, gave me no information as to her history. I comforted myself by remembering that, in order to get that thorough grasp of her case which would be necessary for proper treatment, I must necessarily learn a great deal more about both the lady herself and her family. I interrupted my lunch to make a note or two of points which would need particular attention; and Mrs Hall, coming in later, found my lunch unfinished and my coffee cold—forgotten while I touched up a pencil sketch in profile, on a leaf of my case-book, of the Signorina.

'Engaged,' was the answer I got from the porter when, sharp at four-thirty, I asked for the Signorina Lucia della Casa.

'I am here by appointment,' I explained, and insisted upon sending up my card, with the result which I anticipated.

The Signorina would see me at once. I confess that my pulse rose above the normal as I followed the chambermaid who guided me. There would be a chaperon, duenna, or companion, of course, and in any case I was there professionally. Still, my pulse rose.

There was no chaperon.

When I was shown into the large sitting-room occupied by the Signorina there was only one person with her, and that was certainly not a chaperon, but a man.

He lay back in an easy-chair, with one leg thrown over the chair arm. He had forgotten to take off his glossy, curly-brimmed top-hat, which now balanced, to all appearance, upon a rather large right ear. On his sallow and somewhat haggard face there was a scowl; and of his moustache, which was as black and as glossy as his hat, one end twisted ferociously to his left eye, while the other drooped as limp as a rag.

I had time to observe this much, and to see that the gentleman's shirt-front and cuffs looked rather as though he had slept in them, before I was noticed. For the Signorina was roaming up and down the room, talking with great volubility and emphasis, while the other person watched her gloomily from the easy-chair.

The Signorina paused, breathless perhaps, and the person in the chair hurriedly seized the chance to speak, as though he had been some time waiting for it.

'Now, think, my dear girl'—— he began.

'*Mai!*' ('Never') asserted the Signorina wrathfully, and swinging round to recommence her promenade and her monologue together, caught sight of me.

'Ah! the Signor Dottore!' she cried triumphantly. 'Now the truth will be seen.'

'Will it?' asked the man with the curly-brimmed hat, surveying me dubiously. 'Well, my dear, seeing is believing;' and I straightway set him down as a rank outsider.

'Go!' said the Signorina shrilly, pointing to the door with a superb gesture of contempt. She certainly was magnificent, and I thought the fellow would collapse, but he didn't. He merely cried 'Bravo!' and threw out his right hand as though he were casting something at her feet.

'Now for your examination, doctor,' he nodded, turning to me; and I cannot conscientiously say that he seemed much abashed by the stare I bestowed upon him.

'A friend of the Signorina's?' I suggested; 'a brother?'

'*Mai! mai!*' wailed the lady; and the fellow chuckled insanely.

'Then, sir,' I said, with elaborate politeness, 'since my time is valuable to me, and this lady does not seem to think your presence essential, perhaps you will kindly leave us for a while?'

'For ever!' said the Signorina, stamping her foot; and the fellow chuckled again, though evidently angry.

'It 's all rot!' he observed as he went to the door. 'Mind you, I have a right to take another opinion if I choose. We shall see what the doctor says. I shall wait for you downstairs, doctor.'

He jerked out these observations between the easy-chair and the door, to a running accompaniment of uncomplimentary epithets from the infuriated lady.

In the doorway he paused again and delivered a last shot. 'It 's all that infernal macaroni,' he shouted; 'don't tell me anything else;' and with that he banged the door, and left me with the Signorina, who now sank upon the sofa and declared that such brutal scenes destroyed her utterly.

'A tyrant!' she told me, nodding towards the door, and laying her left hand approximately in the region of the heart, though a trifle low, which is the common mistake with ladies who have not studied anatomy. 'A slave-driver, Signor Dottore! An execrable wretch, *Dio mio.*'

'The Signorina should calm herself,' I suggested, 'or her throat will suffer far more.' And, indeed, I wondered at the force of excitement which could make the lady forget, for the moment, a malady which troubled her so greatly.

'The mind,' she sagely observed, 'is stronger than the body;' and then she composed herself, while I darkened the windows, and, rigging up my lamp, made a minute examination of the vocal chords, followed by a thorough investigation of a remarkably healthy pair of lungs.

When at the end I confessed that I had as yet discovered nothing to justify alarm, the Signorina was unaccountably distressed.

'But the blood?' she suggested.

Now, about her gums I had observed several small punctures and abrasions, and I said as much.

'The Signorina's teeth are magnificent,' I suggested. 'Perhaps in using them vigorously, say upon a piece of hard toast, or a mouthful of fish containing a bone or so, she has scratched her mouth, and already forgotten it?'

But this explanation did not, apparently, satisfy the Signorina at all. In fact she grew gloomy, and frowned at me silently in a way which I found distinctly forbidding.

'I cannot sing to-night,' she declared at last. 'It is impossible, and you must certify that.'

It is perfectly true that up to this point I had not asked the young lady anything of her vocation. I intended doing so if necessary; but she might be a travelling princess for anything I had known—until I saw her glossy-hatted visitor.

'The Signorina should have been frank with me,' I observed austerely. 'How could I know about the singing?'

'Everybody knows Lucia della Casa,' she assured me with child-like and astonished simplicity.

'That is understood,' I allowed, with a bow, and trust I may be forgiven the same, for I had never heard the name before in my life.

'Let us be clear,' I suggested after a moment's consideration, during which the lady wept into the sofa-cushion. 'The Signorina is engaged to sing to-night, and imagines herself unable.'

'I cannot! I will not! Listen how my voice breaks'—— And break it did again most convincingly, and in a way that sent its owner off into a fit of hysterical giggling.

'As I have said,' I allowed, 'I can find nothing obviously at fault in the Signorina's throat or chest; but if she believes her voice will break like that this evening, why—it probably will.'

The Signorina giggled again, and I stared at her in dumb perplexity.

'Come!' I suggested; 'cannot I persuade you that your voice will be well to-night? It would be serious, I imagine, if you lost your engagement. Besides, there is—is there not?—a prospect of fines.'

'No matter! I cannot sing to-night. All the doctors of the city could not make me well to sing to-night. For ten guineas you could not!'

'I am not sure,' I suggested. 'If only I had my patient's confidence.'

'But, no!' the lady declared obstinately; 'I am ill. It is my great wish to sing to-night, but I cannot. I will give you ten guineas from my heart to make me well for singing to-night, but you cannot do it. My voice breaks always. It is perhaps hysteria?' and her voice broke again, and she threw herself back on the sofa and giggled again triumphantly.

'And you require a certificate?' I asked.

'Yes. So the penalty is less. But if you will not give it, I will find another who will; or I will refuse, and have no certificate. What is money without liberty? I will not be dominated by your Hopkinses!'

'What are—or who is Hopkins?' I asked, just to make time.

'You have seen him,' she told me, nodding towards the doorway through which the glossy hat had disappeared. 'He waits for you, and will presently tell you that his name is De Vere. But if you wish to please me, and to make him angry, speak to him as Hopkins.'

Mr De Vere (*né* Hopkins) was evidently under the cloud of the Signorina's displeasure.

'There was something said about macaroni,' I remembered; 'the Signorina will do me the favour of explaining.'

The Signorina shrugged her shoulders contemptuously, at the same time making, with outswept hands, a grand movement implying careless irresponsibility.

'Macaroni?' she echoed. 'What could that have to do with my throat? Does macaroni, or the want of it, produce blood-spitting and a throat like mine?'

'I have seen no such case on record,' I acknowledged. 'But what can this Hopkins have intended?'

'Ah! you call him Hopkins!' said the Signorina joyfully and irrelevantly. 'That is good! Call him always so.'

'And the macaroni?' I persisted.

'How can I tell? Do I look as one who would concern herself with macaroni? It is true' (after a pause) 'that, now I come to think of it, I seem to remember that macaroni was mentioned during rehearsal this morning. But I am an artist. My soul, the Signor Dottore will observe, is in my art, and I had forgotten the macaroni.'

'Nevertheless the point is interesting,' I persisted, 'to one who is no artist. The Signorina will have noticed the way in which this Hopkins referred to it. If the Signorina had forgotten, he had not. Can it be his guilty conscience?'

With my bow drawn at a venture I had evidently, in the Signorina's opinion, pierced the black character of the infamous Hopkins. She was enthusiastic—I had almost said she was affectionate; but, now that the lapse of time enables me to consider her conduct more calmly, I remember no more than that her behaviour was emphatically and delightfully of the South. The scientific eye, she assured me, which had attracted her attention upon the first instant of our meeting, had now diagnosed that villain Hopkins for the monstrosity he really was. Was it not *inferno*, she demanded, that a delicate woman, and an artist, should have to bear insults—brutal insults—far worse than blows, from such as he?

I agreed readily that if such were the case it was indeed heart-breaking.

'And the macaroni?' I observed. 'Now that the Signorina has had her attention drawn to the matter again, she may possibly remember some of the details. That Hopkins evidently considered it of importance.'

The Signorina, so she assured me, considered it of no importance whatsoever. She had, she reminded me, entirely forgotten it. The artist has higher things to consider; and, besides, what is one petty insult, more or less, when one's life is a burden with them? The Signorina had often thought of quitting the stage altogether, and of retiring, for a pastoral life, to a secluded village that she knew of in her own beloved Italy. There, with a few kids—or lambs—as companions, and possibly some one who would love her and join her in a song at evening when the day's work was over, she would forget false popularity, hollow friendships, and the footlights—and would (this with bitter emphasis) eat macaroni in such quantities as she chose, and wherever and whenever she pleased.

Ah, that macaroni! She had returned to it, and this time, at my repeated entreaties, condescended to explain.

'The Signor Dottore knows,' she said, 'that to-night we play the grand opera *Fiamma*, and he knows, also, the part I take in it. I hold false modesty as the meanest of hypocrisies. There is no other in our company who can take Fiamma. I have said so when it seemed to me desirable to say so. Those who have thought, or rather who have pretended to think, otherwise shall see and hear to-night.'

As the excited Signorina flared out this prophecy, and, starting from the couch, raged up and down the room, she was a very fair personification of devouring flame hissing against a torrent of opposition. Watching her, I felt that I should be extremely loath, were I one of her sister artists, to fill her place.

And the macaroni?' I said softly, hoping that my eyes expressed sufficient acquiescence with the Signorina's modest declaration of her artistic status.

'Ah! I will tell you. It was so. This morning those pigs and fools with whom I work were more fools and pigs than ever before—and in saying that one says much.'

I nodded my sympathy, and she went on.

'As for me, I was in grand voice, and all heard it to be so. I could see the other ladies yellow with jealousy, and I—oh! I was grieved for them, but I sang on—ah! I sang divinely, and all the common people, the shifters of scenes and such-like, who could come stood in the wings and listened, and also watched; and the others, when they saw, grew more and more yellow, and screeched like herons on the lagoons. Oh! I was grieved for them, and to the contralto I even said so, and offered her a lozenge, which she would not take. Some are so churlish, and she has bad blood, poor thing!'

The Signorina's sympathy for her rivals brightened her up tremendously. She even had to sit down and laugh before she could go on.

'Ah, yes, I know,' she said, holding up a finger to silence me. 'The macaroni. Well, I come to it—or it came to me;' and with that she went off into screams of laughter, which I fancied must encourage the despicable Hopkins, if, as I supposed, he was waiting outside.

'The foolish contralto,' she told me, 'who is always stupid and slow, and is fit for nothing but to stand like an ox and look over the foot-lights with those great silly brown eyes she is so proud of—she, being angry with me, grew more stupid. That vile Hopkins was enraged. His shiny hat, which I will some day sit upon, was like a black comet all over the stage. He was furious; but as for me, I grew hungry to desperation. And we had been half-an-hour longer than usual rehearsing, and that *maledetto* Hopkins would make that poor silly ox of a contralto return upon her steps, and do the solo again where she implores me to spare her lover—you know;' and the Signorina began to hum.

'The Signorina's voice,' I pointed out, 'improves with exercise;' and the signorina cast a somewhat discomfited glance at me, but made no reply, merely hurrying on with her story.

'So she with the eyes of the ox,' she went on, 'began her solo again. And I—poor I, who knew my part, and had sung to the delight of all—I was supposed to stand and listen and do pantomime. It was absurd! You agree that it was shameful!'

I remarked cautiously that some one must have been to blame.

'Of a truth!' said the Signorina contemptuously. 'Now listen!' and I listened, while, throwing herself back upon the couch and emphasising every point with both hands, she proceeded with the story of her persecution.

'You must know,' she told me, 'that our labours are gigantic. Body and soul are tormented, are torn by the passions of our rôles. As for me, I am fit for nothing after a rehearsal until I have eaten. We artists, too, have our fancies, our sentimentalities in such matters. Mine is macaroni!'

'Ah!' I ejaculated.

'Ah! as you say,' nodded the Signorina. 'Yes, we are arriving. It is my custom, then, to have a small plate ready prepared in my dressing-room. After a representation or a long rehearsal I fly to it, and eat like a princess, ravenously, while my maid does her work. Is it not ravishing, boiled, with plenty of Parmesan cheese?'

'Not a doubt of it,' I agreed.

'You love it? We will eat it together, as in Naples, when you have cured my throat.'

I bowed my thanks, while the vivacious Signorina went through a lively pantomime of picking up long strings of macaroni with her fingers and dropping them into her mouth.

'Where was I?' she demanded. 'Ah, yes! There we were, by this time three-quarters of an hour late, that poor silly Emilia begging me, as though she were half-asleep, to spare her lover, while I stood frantic and thought only of my macaroni. "Wake up!" that brute Hopkins told her at the end. "We must have that over again;" at which she wept; while as for me, looking about me for sympathy, I caught sight of my maid.

'Oh, it was terrible! She dared not come on the stage; but from the side she made signs to me despairingly, for she knows how I love my macaroni.

'It was drying to sticks; she told me so, plainly. It had been ready, oh! half-an-hour.

'"Was it spoilt?" I asked her in desperation, with my eyebrows and nose—so—you know.

'"No, not yet. But another ten minutes!"

'"Bring it to me here," I told her.

'The Signor Dottore should have seen the girl's face. A Neapolitan like myself. She was horrified! But, Santa Maria! she knows it is better to anger any one else than I, and she disappeared. Oh, how I longed for it! And why should I not have it? It was absurd. I had finished, and there was an end. Would she bring plenty of grated cheese? I wondered. That is half of it; and then she came—I could see her over Emilia's shoulder, the plate all hot and smoking, the macaroni piled up in great white snakes, the cheese thick upon all. Still she did not come on. She was afraid until I frowned at her. Then she brought it forward just as Emilia began, "*O quanti giorni.* How many days, how long!" sang Emilia, and then stopped short. She had seen the plate, and—well, I suppose she was angry.

'"Go on," I told her with my mouth full. "Never mind me!" But—would you believe it?—everybody shrieked, and the silly fool burst out crying. As for Hopkins, that double donkey, I am wrong; he did not laugh. When he turned and saw what was doing, he jumped across the stage and sent my plate and my beautiful macaroni spinning into the orchestra. The plate hit the bald head of the 'cello; and one of the fiddles had most of the macaroni in his face. How they swore! It was most terrible!'

'And you?' I asked.

'Oh, as for me, I am different: it is understood. I was cold—superb!

'"Good! Signor Hopkins," I told him when they had stopped laughing, "I have been fearful for my throat these last three days, and now it is suddenly much worse. I shall consult a doctor; but I fear I must absent myself to-night. *A rivederci!*" and I came to you.'

The Signorina leant back, exhausted by her dramatic recital, and murmured that the coarse brutality of these people, with whom her art compelled her to consort, was perfectly appal-

ling. As for me, I cudgelled my poor brains desperately, while the ten guineas which the Signorina had defiantly offered for a cure seemed to dance and diminish before my eyes.

'Then it *is* the macaroni!' I said.

'*Chi sa?*' she answered carelessly. 'Who knows? It is true that my throat became immediately useless after the episode of the macaroni. Perhaps it was stage-fright! Perhaps it was hysteria produced by the brutality of that Hopkins. Do not forget, I pray you, to call him Hopkins when he interviews you presently!'

'He will be wondering what has become of me,' I said. 'Supposing I leave you for a few minutes, and have a chat with him?'

'As you please,' said the Signorina, with a fine air of indifference. 'But give him your certificate, and tell him, from me, it is secure that any further violence will make me voiceless for the season.'

'We must talk about the certificate again, later,' I decided. '*A rivederla;*' and I left hurriedly to avoid further argument.

I went slowly along the hotel corridors and down the stair, wondering what I could do. The glossy hat was not, as I had anticipated, just outside the door. This, I heard later, was because the wearer of it had been found by the hotel manager trying to follow our conversation through the keyhole.

A waiter told me, with a grin, that the theatrical gentleman had said he would wait for me in the coffee-room; and there I found him, quite as excited as the Signorina, and far more desperate. He was chewing an unlit cigar viciously; his hat, which I began to look upon as a sort of mental barometer, was jammed firmly down over his eyes; telegraph forms were scattered all about him—though what he was trying to do with them I cannot pretend to say.

When he saw me he strode forward with a wild attempt at self-control.

'Come, Doctor, you have been a long time! Our patient is touchy, isn't she? But you've brought her to her senses. Sit down here and tell me all about it now. Waiter! a bottle of Heidsieck here at once.'

He glared round him, and, seeing no waiter, sprang across to the fireplace and pressed the electric button.

'Infernal toy!' he muttered viciously, and stood with a thumb upon it until the door flew open. I could see quite well that he was longing for a bell-rope, which he might have torn down first, and sworn at afterwards.

I didn't want Heidsieck or anything else while this matter was undecided, but I said nothing, and sat quiet until it came, when my *vis-à-vis* tossed off two glasses without noticing whether I touched mine or not, and then faced me with a desperate air, and both elbows upon the table.

'Well?'

'I can give no opinion yet,' I told him.

'No opinion! No opinion!'

He pulled out a great gold watch and held it up to me.

'In two hours she must be at the theatre,' he declared. 'In two and a half hours she must be ready to come on. No opinion!'

I shrugged my shoulders, wishing most fervently that he would be quiet and give me time to think.

'Come,' he went on, 'it's all that—macaroni. She's as strong as a bull, with a throat like a foghorn. What does she *say?* Tell me all about it—every word.'

'I'm sorry I can't do that,' I decided. 'For one thing, it would take too long; and for another, professional etiquette won't allow me.'

'Professional etiquette!' The man wanted to swear, but could only gasp and choke. 'Do you know who I am?' he demanded. 'I am De Vere, *the* Impresario!'

'Can't help it,' I told him. 'If you'd only give me time'——

'Time!' He was frantic. He rose from the table, and pulling his hat down on to his nose, upset his chair, and rushed at the bell again.

'I'll have another opinion,' he declared between his teeth. 'Waiter, the Directory. I'll see if there's a decent medical practitioner in this infernal city.'

'Very well, Mr Hopkins,' I told him angrily, 'if you can't find one in the Directory I shall be happy to give you some addresses.'

'Collusion!' he snarled, and, fluttering over the leaves, ran his finger down a page, threw down the book, and made for the door, to which I followed him.

'I'm going upstairs again,' I explained; 'whoever comes back with you will need to see me.'

To this he replied nothing, but, flying frantically into the hall, cannoned against the solid form of the man who had been in my thoughts for the last five minutes—my old chief.

The shock was severe, and each man staggered a different way, but the impresario was the last to recover his footing and his wind. By the time he had done so my old chief had recognised me and shaken hands, and I had jumped at the ghost of a chance which offered itself.

'Give me a quarter of an hour,' I entreated the panting Hopkins. 'Get back into the coffee-room, there's a good fellow, and finish that champagne. I give you my word that if, in that time, I don't know how to settle it, I'll come and tell you so.'

'Ten guineas—fifteen—if you bring her to her senses,' groaned the unhappy man; and with that I pushed the poor fellow away towards the half-bottle or so still left upon the table, and, catching my astonished chief by the arm, implored him to give me five minutes.

Behold him, then, seated in a corner of the hotel drawing-room a moment later, and chuckling most openly and unsympathetically at the hurriedly-told story of my difficulties.

'I can't find a thing the matter with her,' I acknowledged at the end.

'I believe you,' the old fellow agreed, grinning at his finger-nails, upon which he spends a tremendous amount of time and attention. 'What are you going to do, my dear fellow?'

'Upon my word, I don't know, sir. I can't give her a certificate, that's certain; but I don't want to get her into trouble, you know. Besides, that impresario chap must have been a brute, though he's in such a hole now that one can't help being sorry for him too.'

'Ah! you're altogether too sympathetic. Homely sort of girl, I think you said?'

'Not a bit of it,' I declared impatiently. 'She's a most beautiful creature.'

'Lord, you don't say so!' chuckled the chief. 'Still, my dear Tregenna, I'm sure that isn't affecting your procedure;' and he grunted away at his confounded finger-nails till I felt hot all over, and would have had a row if he weren't such a good fellow.

'Come away and pay a call with me,' he said at last. 'You're not the only man to be smiled upon by *prime donne*. I'm here to see one formerly of the same sisterhood—an old friend. She knows the ropes, I fancy, if any woman ever did, and it will please her to be consulted. Go and extort another quarter of an hour from our frantic friend in the coffee-room. Tell him he owes me that for not charging him with assault.'

I went, and found that M. De Vere had finished the champagne, and was now sitting, watched closely by an anxious waiter, glaring fixedly at a blank wall, with both elbows upon the table, and both hands clutching at his hair. It wasn't difficult to get the extra time granted.

'Too late for anything else,' he groaned. 'Ruined by a woman's vanity, sir!' and he banged his hand down upon the table as I left.

I threw him a word of encouragement over my shoulder in leaving, and was interested to see that the waiter, with a preternaturally solemn face, was quietly removing a knife that happened to have been left upon a plate at the next table. He evidently thought the case a bad one.

'My friend,' said the chief as he led the way, 'is out of all this sort of thing now, and only here for a night, I fancy. She always sends us a wire, though, when she is going to pass through, and then my wife sends me along to have a chat and make her dine with us. She's resting on her laurels. She's got plenty of 'em, and professes to take no further interest in such mundane affairs now. But we shall see. I shouldn't be surprised if she knew something of your heroine, unless she's very new indeed. By-the-by, what did you say she's called?'

'Lucia della Casa,' I told him.

'Lucia!'—— The old man stopped upon the stair and glared at me in stony silence.

'*Who?*' he asked presently.

'Lucia della Casa,' I repeated. 'Do you know her, sir?'

'Know her?' He echoed my words as if he scarcely understood them, and then muttered something about old fools and the survival of the fittest, which I didn't at all understand.

'Oh, yes, I've heard of the girl,' he acknowledged presently. 'Come away, man; we'll see what can be done with the hussy;' and a minute later I was being introduced to his friend.

Now, whereas the Signorina was a study in black and ivory, and aggressively young, this lady, middle-aged and inclining to plumpness, was a lively blonde.

Both, however, when they spoke or moved, seemed to have the same trick of taking up all available space; and when this charming lady glided across the room to welcome her old friend, her welcome, though I am certain of its sincerity, was thrown out as if addressed to a great audience.

The first few minutes were filled with inquiry and reminiscence, mostly in Italian, though the lady spoke to me, and spoke fluently, in English.

Did that accursed vocal chord ever trouble her again? No, the Diva (so the old chief addressed her, half in play, half in earnest) had never been troubled by it again, thanks to her dear friend's care. And he? How had he been? and how was the dear fiddle? And, turning to me, had I heard the fiddle, the dear doctor's fiddle? and was it not charming?

I *had* heard that fiddle, played as it was for the benefit and delectation of the old gentleman's favourites. I managed to avoid giving an opinion as to its charm.

'Ah!' he reminded her, hugging his knee and beaming upon us both, 'Tregenna has never heard it and you together. That's when we're at our best, Diva!—the fiddle and I.'

'Flatterer!' The Diva shook an admonishing finger at him. 'Ask your wife whether, if I stay over to-morrow night, I may run in for a quiet dinner and a little music? To-night I dine early, to hear *Fiamma* and judge if things have changed since my time.'

We two men looked at one another, alert on hearing this, and straightway we laid my perplexities before her.

'I know of her!—the Neapolitan!' the Diva told us when the story was ended. 'The mad thing. She is a young tigress, I have heard. But what a child! What can I do, however?'

'If you could advise us,' I pleaded. 'A woman knows how to persuade a woman. I

can't give her a certificate. If you, perhaps, spoke to her'——

'Spoke to her!' The Diva swore softly and musically in Italian. 'It would be honey to her to have me petitioning at her feet—and honey and wine to refuse me'—— Then turning to the chief, '*You* have not seen her? She cannot be ill!'

I couldn't see the logic of this argument, but had no time to consider it closely, for the chief, hurriedly explaining that he knew no more than I had told him, entreated the Diva to look upon the difficulty as his own, and to help us for the sake of old friendship.

It almost seemed as if she had forgotten us. She did not listen. She did not seem to hear. Her gaze roved slowly down the long room, the pupils of her eyes dilated. She talked more to herself than to us.

'I would like to hear her sing it—that Neapolitan!' she muttered. '*Dio mio!* How they terrified me with their noise that night, when I sang it first in Milan! Can she take the high G rightly, I wonder?'

'Not as you can, Diva,' the chief declared; but she never heard him.

'Oh, the roar,' she went on dreamily, 'and the clapping! Why, a man told me, twelve months after, that he bruised his hands that night, and later got tipsy drinking my health, poor fellow! Never, never again.'

She moved across to the piano, and, striking a chord, seemed to let her voice swim away up till it floated on the upper G, stayed there, and then died slowly away. The very simplicity, the ease of it, was exquisite. We men stood reverent as we might have stood in a cathedral. Then, suddenly, while the Diva stood with one hand upon the keyboard, half-smiling as though she still heard salvos of ghostly applause, the old man snatched at my arm and dragged me across to her.

'I have it!' he shouted. 'She 's cured! The hussy 's cured!' and proceeded to explain.

. . . . . .

Ten minutes later the crushed and humbled Hopkins, whose hat by this time lay battered and dusty in a far corner of the coffee-room, listened with a sardonic smile, as of a man who no longer hoped or feared, while I cautiously suggested the possibility of a cure for the throat of the charming Signorina.

'You heard my offer,' he told me, with a hollow groan. 'I could double it without your being a penny the better. I know the vixen! All the men in all your universities, colleges, hospitals, and—and *lunatic* asylums couldn't make her call herself cured to-night.'

'Not all the men, I dare say,' I admitted, for I too felt humble. 'But what if we try a woman?' and before I had finished my explanation the curly-brimmed hat was carefully brushed and balanced at a miraculous angle, hanging, apparently, upon some three hairs, while the desperate expression upon the face of Mr Hopkins showed that hope and fear once more had possession of his soul.

It was only a few minutes later that I went back to the charming, but by this time impatient, Signorina.

'Does it take three-quarters of an hour,' she demanded haughtily from the sofa, 'to tell that *ladrone* that I cannot sing? Or is it, Signor, that you cannot persuade him, and that I must get additional evidence of my miserable condition?'

I watched the impetuous but fascinating young person closely while I answered. I spoke slowly, weighing my words, answering carefully, anxious that she should not misunderstand through any slip of mine in a foreign tongue.

'Hopkins is convinced,' I told her. 'He is conquered. Indeed, I think that he has a kind heart and is sorry for the Signorina.'

'Sorry!' The Signorina laughed tempestuously, with appropriate gestures of cynical incredulity. 'I can well believe that he is sorry,' she explained, 'but not for me! Never for me! It is for his miserable self that he repents. It will touch his pocket, where his heart lies. It will empty it!'

I shrugged my shoulders and threw out my hands to express my utter inability to judge, and then I sat down at the table, begging my patient's careful attention for one moment.

'I am about to write a prescription,' I told her. 'It has had miraculous effects in similar cases. At my pressing request Hopkins has consented to wait one hour to see its action, before he concludes his arrangements for to-night.'

'He should not,' the Signorina observed negligently. 'It is now,' consulting her watch, 'nearly half-past five. Even that fool Hopkins could tell you that the opera, say of to-morrow night, could not take the place of to-night's in five minutes.'

I was now writing the prescription, and I finished doing so, rang the bell, and gave my orders before I answered the last remark. Perhaps ladies troubled by sore throats produced through excitement may like to see my prescription. I trust that I do not risk censure for infamous professional conduct if I offer it gratis:

℞. Tincturæ Asafœtidæ ℥iss.
Aq. *ad* ℥iss.

Sig. A tablespoonful to be taken every half-hour if necessary.

The Signorina was openly sceptical of its merits.

'If it annoys me,' she explained, 'I shall not take it.'

'Then I cannot give the certificate,' I pointed out, 'and the contract will, I suppose, be considered broken. I am aware that I am using severe remedies; but the time is so short.'

The Signorina then repeated her remarks about

the time necessary to prepare for another opera, and now I was free to relieve her mind on that point.

'They will play *Fiamma*,' I assured her, 'in any case.'

'With Fiamma left out!' she laughed. 'How truly British!'

'No, with a substitute, I am told. Probably a poor one, one would suppose. There can be only one Lucia della Casa,' I told her, with a bow. 'But Hopkins tells me that another lady who happens to be passing through the city has consented to do her best, if the Signorina does not feel restored in an hour. Also Hopkins will accept my certificate.'

The Signorina gazed, I might almost say glared, at me incredulously.

'Impossible,' she decided; but I, shrugging my shoulders, in which performance I was becoming expert, through such frequent exercise, declined to offer an opinion upon the impossibility.

'So he says,' I assured her, and then asked permission to write a letter or two while waiting until the miraculous mixture should come.

'The Signorina can now compose herself,' I suggested, 'her mind being at rest concerning my certificate; I shall not hesitate to give it if my prescription prove powerless.'

I then settled down at my letters; but the Signorina, obviously, had a difficulty in following my advice and example. She roamed about the room, now staring out of the window, now poking the fire; and very often, as I felt quite easily without looking up from the paper, she watched me, once or twice making odd little noises in her throat, as if clearing it.

The medicine came, and the sentiments which she expressed on tasting it would certainly have been called 'free' if uttered in a Northern tongue.

I was in conspiracy, she assured me, with that miserable Hopkins to poison her. He, or I, might take the rest. She most emphatically would not. It would be quite unnecessary—useless, in fact—for me to wait in the expectation of seeing another drop of that infernal mixture (excuse a literal translation!) pass her lips.

As for me, I trembled, and only stood firm through sheer desperation.

'It is my belief,' I said meekly, 'that the Signorina will find herself so far benefited by this one dose (which I admit is atrocious in taste) as to be ready for the second when I offer it. In any case, I am in the middle of a letter. May I throw myself upon the hospitality of a Neapolitan lady, and beg leave to finish it here, where I have begun? Or shall I ask for the use of the coffee-room?'

The Signorina sulkily gave me to understand that, provided I quite understood her determination with regard to further poisoning, I might consider myself at liberty to finish my letter wherever I pleased; and, bowing as grateful an acknowledgment as I could manage, I turned again to my writing, with an invocation to Orpheus or whatever musical divinity happened to be within call.

It was perhaps ten minutes later that I, listening with all my ears, realised that the critical moment for the cure had arrived. Somewhere, within hearing, some one had begun to sing!

The Signorina, occupied at that moment in making a most vicious attack upon a lump of coal, did not at first pay any attention. I myself bent more closely than ever over my letters, and persisted in writing; but what I wrote will never be read by any one but myself.

'Is it not hard,' asked the Signorina querulously, punctuating her sentence by vigorous stabs at the fire—'is it not hard that we artists should be at the mercy of these pigs of speculators—these Jews, who look upon the voice, the figure, the fine feelings of the artist merely as merchandise; only preferable, say, to bacon or to cheese, because rarer, and therefore to be sold at a higher figure?'

I held my breath, listening, not to her, but to the voice that was now trying its wings gently, in little flights, somewhere below us. The Signorina, without waiting for any reply, bent over the grate, and darted a thrust at the biggest lump of coal that shivered it to atoms. 'Is it not hard?' she demanded, rising and facing me; and just at that moment, while she waited for my reply, the voice broke into recitative:

'I am the Flame,' it cried. 'I am Fire. Death to him who embraces me, in hate or in love.'

There were a few seconds more of silence—such silence as comes before thunder—while my pen moved mechanically across the paper; and then:

'What is this?' asked the Signorina from beside the fire.

'What is what?' I replied cautiously.

'This noise?'

I raised my head and listened with an air of innocent indifference.

'Some one singing?' I suggested. 'It sounds pretty, doesn't it? The music is new to me;' and I bent over my letter again.

To this the Signorina said nothing; but, stealing a side glance at her, I saw that she stood listening upon the hearth-rug, erect, tense, with the poker still gripped in a hand of which the knuckles showed prominent and white.

Heavens! if she should turn furious, and use that poker upon me! I knew the temper of these Southern women. Later, she might weep bitterly over her mistake; but how should I profit thereby? Presently, however, she put down the poker, and going quietly across to the

sofa, sat down and listened. As for me, I wrote, and wrote, and wrote, feverishly, unceasingly, glancing now and then at my watch, which lay upon the table, and longing for the end. And, all the while, that mocking voice rose and fell, soaring, sinking, while the Signorina sat and said nothing.

When, at the appointed time, I rose and offered her the second dose of medicine, she took it almost unconsciously, and did not speak until I returned to the table.

Then she said, 'That is *Fiamma!*'

'Is it?' I asked, with a show of polite interest. 'I fancied it might be. I confess that I begin to doubt whether the Signorina will be able to sing to-night. As for me, I am no connoisseur. The Signorina can judge whether her part will be passably taken.'

The Signorina vouchsafed no opinion upon that point. She only said 'Wait!' grimly, and sat like a statue, while I tried to write. The voice still wandered on. Sometimes it stopped for a moment; sometimes it turned to repeat a phrase before scaling fresh heights of success. But always it gave me the idea of a careless bird, singing at ease and out of sheer delight; and always the still figure upon the sofa held its peace; always, if one may use a term so hackneyed, the atmosphere grew more electric.

At last came the crisis.

There was a pause, and my unwilling hostess rose swiftly, and, crossing to the window, gently pushed it open.

'The throat!' I cried; but she silenced me with a wave of her hand, and stood alert, shivering, on the rack for what should follow.

Then rose that voice, triumphant, scornful, surpassing itself:

> All that fierce Fire is—that am I;
> Men 'neath my kisses faint and die.
> Ask not my birth, nor whence I came,
> Nor whither flying. I am Flame!
>
> Lo! if a woman——

The voice hesitated, faltered, and stopped. Probably the words had been forgotten; certainly in the music there was nothing beyond such powers. The verse was started again, but never finished by that singer, for her chance was gone.

The Signorina, amazed, struck dumb by the audacity of any one who would dare to sing her song in her hearing, had listened as though petrified. But when the pause came the spell upon her was broken. Throwing the window sash up to its highest, she leant out, eyes flaming, hair streaming, a veritable fury, and finished the song herself:

> Lo! if a woman cross my path,
> Straightway she reels beneath my wrath;
> Over her body I go by.
> All that fierce Fire is—that am I!
>
> Those who have fire for enemy,
> No happy ending theirs shall be;
> Bare to the winds their bones shall lie.
> All that fierce Fire is—that am I!

When, a few minutes later, the dubious Hopkins timidly looked into the room, he found my patient in floods of tears, her face buried in the sofa cushions; and he joined me in my heartfelt congratulations upon her recovery, due, as we carefully insisted, to the marvellous efficacy of my prescription. There was not a word said about the wonderful and invisible substitute. All reference to her was carefully avoided, and in this I incline to think that the still trembling Hopkins was only prudent—for such an understudy is not always available.

That night I was invited to occupy a box at the performance of *Fiamma*, with the chief, his wife, and our good fairy. That night there was enthusiasm among all the artists, including even the ox-eyed contralto, when, at the close of the performance, the 'Diva' insisted upon going to the green-room and weeping her congratulations upon the neck of the exhausted prima donna.

That night, also, after a merry supper, I, stammering, protesting, and humbly acknowledging that neither credit nor cash was due to me, was forced by the grimly smiling chief to accept handsome fees, both from the somewhat subdued Signorina Lucia della Casa and from the jubilant Hopkins.

'I'll give you one good reason afterwards,' the old man told me, 'for taking a fee while you can get it.' And the reason he gave me the next day was as follows:

'You see, my dear boy, you had a lot of trouble and responsibility. Well, you're a poor man, and that hussy's rolling in gold, and so's Hopkins. It serves them both right, and they got off cheap. Besides, there's another reason.'

'What's that, sir?'

'Well, you see, that silly girl was my patient before, when she came here, and, since you won't give her lying certificates, I fancy she'll come to me again when she wants advice. I don't suppose that I ought to refuse her, do you?'

I didn't.


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